

**“Usne baat ki kuch aise dhang se, swapne de gaya hazaroon rang ke<sup>i</sup>”:  
Exploring the interface of Restraint and Rebellion in the Select Works of  
Majrooh Sultanpuri**

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**Abstract**

Lyrics, as a mode of expressing emotions through words, have their own history that can be read both synchronically as well as diachronically. As a form of poetic convention, a lyric is essentially subjective, personal, and centred around the speaker's own emotions, which can be verbal and performative. In Bollywood movies, the tradition of song lyrics is usually considered a mode of expressing the moods and feelings of the lyricist that further contributes to the presentation of the identity, position, and situation of the person the song is pictured upon. As a poetic subgenre, lyric always remains an integral part of performance, as it not only unleashes the temperament of the lyricist but also offers enormous possibilities to readers for its interpretation, both thematically and technically. In such a context, it will not be abrupt and unjust to place the works of an Indian lyricist of the mid-twentieth century, Majrooh Sultanpuri, that are lyrical, situational, discursive, and experimental, as they bring out his position in the lineage of the Progressive Writers' Association. Sultanpuri's lyrics, far more than musical interludes, are at once romantic and radical and show how the lyricist embraces lyrical modernity through writing songs for films based on *masala* aesthetics while maintaining his utmost fidelity to the classical schooling of Urdu poetics. Majrooh Sultanpuri's song lyrics, thus, concurrently remain polemical outpourings, romantic narratives, and a tableau of human psychology. By making a close reading of some selective songs, the present paper attempts to explore how Majrooh's lyrics actually offer a labyrinth of the Progressive restraint and modern rebellious propensity through experimentation, in which the literary artistry and technical brilliance always remain uncompromised.

**Keywords:** Progressive Writers' Association, Lyrics, Romance, Bollywood, Language

“Kahin karti hogi, woh mera intezar / Jiski tamanna mein, phirta hoon bekarar / Door zulfo ki chhaon se, kehta hoon main havaon se / Usi baat ki adaaon ke, afsane hazaar”<sup>ii</sup>

The comity between political creed and the South Asian film lyrics, particularly in Bollywood, offers a cultural-symbolic phenomenon in which lyrics perform as discursive motifs that manifest, question, and redefine dominant political discourses across successive moments of history. In the context of Bollywood, the lyrics, down the ages, serve both as a cultural framework for the collective diffusion of various ideological narratives, ranging from nationalism to ethno-nationalism and a medium for resistant critique against hegemonic inequalities and institutional cruelty. The Bollywood song lyrics are therefore not just an aesthetic integrant, offering musical sensations to us but also an ideologically embedded digressive narrative that interfaces with a ceaseless dialogue between power dynamics and the formation of national identity without failing to bear the resonance of an affective fulcrum.

Emerging with the publication of *Angaree*<sup>iii</sup> (1932) and formalised by Sajjad Zaheer in 1936, the Progressive Writers' Movement, a radical cultural invigoration, calls for a type of artistic expression that would respond to the 'real' human conditions of the age. Heavily influenced by historical materialism and with a staunch stance against fascism and colonialism, the members of the movement pronounce that the objective of the art must be to sustain humanity and expose social contradictions. Hence, the Progressive Writers' Association (PWA), an offshoot of the movement, largely premises its axioms on the decadent nationalist writings and old-fashioned romanticism expressed through enchanting romantic tropes and too much ornateness in traditional Urdu poetry. The reappropriation of the Marxist ideology from the cluster of Progressive Writers' Association to the commercial Bollywood film lyrics remains an overriding issue in the history of South Asian cultural memory. This reappropriation, as may be seen in the works of Sahir Ludhianvi, Kaifi Azmi, Jan Nishar Akhtar, Shailendra, and Majrooh Sultanpuri, is not just a narrative transformation but also an ideological intervention and reinterpretation. In the case of Majrooh Sultanpuri, this transition is characterised by a fine coalescence between the Marxist Progressive ideology and aesthetics of popular Hindi film lyrics. Asrar ul Hassan Khan, whose *takhallus*<sup>iv</sup> was Majrooh Sultanpuri (1919-2000), leaves a laudable mark in the lineage of Bollywood film lyrics not only because of his use of the unconventional form of *ghazal*<sup>v</sup> and an extensive use of *nazm*<sup>vi</sup> in songs but also because of his incessant engagement with a fusion of conventional metaphors with the political undertone in which the role of the traditional Bollywood romantic heroine is reversed, the material condition of a proletariat hero is narrated, and the angst emerging out of betrayal in a romantic relationship is artistically narrated with images. Although Majrooh had to face imprisonment during the Nehruvian era for his insurgent lyrics, his journey as a Bollywood lyricist, beginning with *Shahjehan* (1946) by A. R. Kardar, will always be marked by his practice of *adab*<sup>vii</sup>, maintaining a fine balance between trenchant social realism and romantically restrained vocabulary, and his condensed use of highly abstract imagery used in various Urdu poetic forms.

The interchangeable relationship between the Progressive lyricists and the Bollywood film songs has been in motion since the early 1950s when filmmakers and producers, namely Raj Kapoor and Guru Dutt, attempted to critique social injustice, corruption, exploitation, social alienation, and the plight of the common people, to name a few, in and through their works such as *Awaara* (1951), *Baazi* (1951), *Boot Polish* (1954), *Shree 420* (1955), *Pyaasa* (1957), and *Kagaz Ke Phool* (1957), to mention a few. In fact, the lyrics used in these films, penned by Shailendra, Sahir Ludhianvi, Kaifi Azmi, and Hasrat Jaipuri, were not musical intermissions but speculative wordings that obliquely alluded to the disillusionment with the Nehruvian government that failed to uphold an egalitarian society after the independence. Ashish Rajadhyaksha and Paul Willemen note that the era actually expressed "the emotional and social complexities affecting the artist when the reformism associated with Nehruvian nationalism disintegrated under the pressure of industrialization and urbanization, creating the space for Indian modernism but also generating immense social dislocation" (Rajadhyaksha and Willemen 93). However, with the advent of the commercialisation of the Bollywood culture, "operated through the acquiescence of a depoliticized, alienated and generally stupefied public" (Manuel 9) and aggrandised by the demand to make songs and lyrics more palpable to widespread appeal and commercial durability, popularly known as *masala* aesthetics, the situation became quite challenging for the Progressive poets to strike a balance between commercial fetishism and ideological pronouncement. In other words, the Progressive lyricists undoubtedly had to face a

hard time to incorporate their trenchant dictions in the films that deal with different romantic themes and motifs. Hence, the robust ideology in the Bollywood films after the 1960s had been served in a language that became a space of negotiation and redefinition, offering a symbolic engagement between dominant and hegemonic ideals. Although the masala aesthetics in the Bollywood films make narratives of, said Aruna Vasudev, “absurd romances packed with songs and dances, made fairytales with a moral” (qtd. in Thoraval 55), the lyrical brilliance of Majrooh Sultanpuri not only joins the socialist wings or anti-establishment ethos with romantic diction but also presents different layers of human conditions such as struggle, defeatism, and social inequality while deliberately experimenting with the traditional Urdu poetic forms because he always outstrips the abstract Persian tropes and rhetorics in order to make his lyrical language more accessible to mass appeal. However, this is not to say that Majrooh has ever compromised the elegance and charm of the Urdu language while intermingling it with Hindi film lyrics. In a famous couplet, he remarks, “Main akela hi chala tha jaanib-e-manzil magar, / Log saath aate gaye, aur caarvaan banta gaya”<sup>viii</sup> (Premchand 209) that reveals his celebration of solitude as opposed to loneliness. Writing lyrics for a vast corpus of songs, ranging from *qawwali*<sup>ix</sup> to cabaret, Majrooh never gives up his staunch Progressive tenacity as underneath a fashionable and hare-brained lyric, there remains a profound expression of experiential postulation. Hence, Majrooh’s lyrics are exceptional as they are concurrently synchronous and scholarly.

Although the Bollywood lyrics and the Progressive Writers’ Movement have individually received a good many critical receptions, Majrooh Sultanpuri’s works, both film and non-film, unfortunately remain academically underrepresented in the parlance of both Bollywood lyrics and the Progressive Writers’ Movement. Ganesh Anantharaman’s *Bollywood Melodies: A History of the Hindi Film Song* (2008) traces the trajectory of Bollywood movie songs from their inception to modern days, underpinning the significance of the lyrics as cultural signifiers. Anantharaman’s informative work also portrays how different lyricists, such as Sahir Ludhianvi and Javed Akhtar, tried to connect lyrics with pertinent issues of the time, including nation building, politics, the declination of classical restrained lyrics, the growth of western beats, and the gradual replacement of melody by masala. *Main Shayar Toh Nahin: The Book of Hindi Film Lyricists* (2019) by Rajiv Vijayakar offers an outline of the evolution of Bollywood lyrics, ranging from the works of D. N. Madhok to Amitabh Bhattacharya. Replete with trivia and anecdotes, the work elucidates the importance of lyrics in making a film in the Bollywood culture. “From Melody to Meaning: Exploring the transformation of Bollywood Lyrics Over Decades” (2025) by Saad Ullah Khan, Sadaf Khan, and Mani Sachdev spells out the contributions of Bollywood lyrics in social transformations. The chapter also points out how themes of love, liberation, idealism, realism, and queerism, to mention a few, have been shaping the aesthetics of Bollywood lyrics since *Alam Ara* (1931). “Progressive Poetry and Film Lyrics” (2006) by Ali Husain Mir and Raza Mir presents the contribution of the Progressive writers in writing the Bollywood song lyrics as the authors show how the social realist approach by Progressive poets makes Bollywood lyrics an epithet of marxist indignation and a critique of varied dominant hegemonic discourses. Rakshanda Jalil’s *Linking Progress, Loving Change: A Literary History of the Progressive Writers’ Movement in Urdu* (2014) outlines the growth, development, and decline of the Progressive movement, using works of different Progressive lyricists as passing references to substantiate the central argument. Although Manek Premchand’s *Majrooh Sultanpuri: The Poet for All Reasons* (2021) provides insights into the works of Majrooh Sultanpuri that are interwoven with Majrooh’s poetic craftsmanship and

socialist outlook, a theoretical exploration of Majrooh's lyrics that are essentially connected with his Progressive ideology and lyrical sensibility remains hitherto unexplored. Hence, the present study, based on qualitative research methodology, attempts to explore how the lyrics of Majrooh Sultanpuri serve as an ideological manifesto pertaining to his close connection with the Marxism-based Progressive Writers' Association. Situated between the aesthetics of romance and socio-political diatribe, Majrooh's lyrics, as the paper would like to present, mark the criss-crossing of love, despair, culture, and politics in the commercial structure of Bollywood movies. By making a close reading of some lyrics by Majrooh Sultanpuri, the present study seeks to locate the presence of Progressive strain in the lyrical narrative of the Hindi film songs and show how Majrooh's lyrics craft a labyrinth of cultural representation, emotive fulcrum, and social critique.

In an interview Majrooh Sultanpuri remarks, "I am willing to simplify my lyrics and compromise on their literary content, but I refuse to write anything cheap, smutty or ungrammatical" (qtd. in Vijayakar 125). His lyrics, mostly romantic in temperament, are sometimes mixed with friendly banter, making the lyrics less melancholic and more quipping, such as "Maine dekha ek sapna, kya dekha bolona"<sup>x</sup> (Premchand 208) from *Samadhi*<sup>xi</sup> (1972). Although his romantic duets mostly narrate a successful love story, there always remain elements of little mischief, sallies, and pranks to make the lyrics a space in which both the lover and beloved share equal space of liberty and autonomy. A typical example of Majrooh's playful banter is "Tum ko kitna pyar hain, kitna bekarar hain jiya"<sup>xii</sup> ("Tumko Kitna Pyar Hain" 00:06-00:12) from *Goonj*<sup>xiii</sup> (1974) that portrays the relational dynamic of a couple fraught with pseudo-barney yet profound fondness. Transitioning from hideaway to poignant intimacy, the lyric initially presents how the lover playfully teases the beloved, saying, "Jaaao ji jaaao humne tumhe dekhliya"<sup>xiv</sup> ("Tumko Kitna Pyar Hain" 00:18-00:24) to which the beloved sarcastically responds, "Humne bhi sarkar dekhliya"<sup>xv</sup> ("Tumko Kitna Pyar Hain" 00:25-00:29) and furthers her argument, saying that even in anger, love flourishes in the eyes of the lover. However, the eccentric traits of the beloved that change frequently are not at all exasperating but appealing to the lover, who says, "Pal me nazar tumhari kabhi to dil ke karibsi hain, pal me hai dur ye bhi adaa tumhari azib hain"<sup>xvi</sup> ("Tumko Kitna Pyar Hain" 01:14-01:23). The initial banter in the tone of the beloved gradually changes into an emotional defenselessness, "Ek mere tum hi to ho, tum bhi khafa ho"<sup>xvii</sup> ("Tumko Kitna Pyar Hain" 01:24-01:29). The impassioned intensity, echoing vulnerability, of the beloved is further crafted in the narrative when the beloved asks for a complete surrender to each other, forgetting all previous arguments: "Aao gale lagakar tumhari bahon mein jhul jaye, kho jaye ek duje me sari bato ko bhul jaaye"<sup>xviii</sup> ("Tumko Kitna Pyar Hain" 02:34-02:43). Grippingly, the lover too wants to be teased by the love of the beloved, "Aaj fir pyar se hamko sataao"<sup>xix</sup> ("Tumko Kitna Pyar Hain" 02:43-02:48). The romantic strain of the lyric encapsulates the romance (*shringara rasa*) that hinges upon the pull of parting (*vipralambha*) leading into the elation of union (*sambhoga*). Majrooh's "Gazab ka hain din socho zara"<sup>xx</sup> from *Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak*<sup>xxi</sup> (1988) is a typical romantic lyric that describes the tropes of destiny, seclusion, and the transient character of time. Establishing the trope of *Carpe Diem*, the opening lines "Gazab ka hain din socho zara, Ye deewanapan dekho zara"<sup>xxii</sup> ("Gazab Ka Hai Din" 00:21-00:32) mark Majrooh's use of pathetic fallacy and articulate how the peripheral milieu reveals the delicate internal sensations of the speaker, in which *Deewanapan*<sup>xxiii</sup> is always greater than rationality. Majrooh's presentation of the lovers in mutual seclusion, "Tum ho akele, hum bhi akele"<sup>xxiv</sup> ("Gazab Ka Hai Din" 00:33-00:35) actually brings out the honesty

and candor of the lovers' shared experience inveterate by "Maza aa raha hain, kasam se"<sup>xxv</sup> ("Gazab Ka Hai Din" 00:36-00:40) where the repetitive phrase "kasam se"<sup>xxvi</sup> is used by Majrooh as an epistrophe. The following lines of the lyric, "Dekh lo hum ko kareeb se, aaj hum mile naseeb say"<sup>xxvii</sup> ("Gazab Ka Hai Din" 01:37-01:48) enumerates the idea that the intimate gaze overrides any gap between the lovers who are united by a predestination and hence, the moment and beauty are both transitory: "Ye pal fir kaha, aur ye manzil fir kaha"<sup>xxviii</sup> ("Gazab Ka Hai Din" 02:03-02:08). The initial romantic sensation of the lover gradually transforms into a compulsive thought as he is emotionally preoccupied by the thought of the beloved, "Kya kahu mera jo haal hain, raat din tumhara khayal hain"<sup>xxix</sup> ("Gazab Ka Hai Din" 03:07-03:18). However, the concluding part of the lyric suggests that in spite of the aforementioned corporeal intimacy, the emotional distance between the lovers marks an agathokakological romance where, despite being intimate with each other, the lover feels a vast gap between them: "Phir bhi jaane jaan, main kaha aur tum kaha"<sup>xxx</sup> ("Gazab Ka Hai Din" 03:32-03:37) If the heroine of *Yaadon Ki Baarat*<sup>xxxi</sup> (1973) begins with, "Chura liya hain tumne jo dilko, nazar naheen churaana sanam"<sup>xxxii</sup> (Premchand 164), in the sestet the male voice retaliates, "Sajaoonga lut kar bhi tere badaan ki daali ko/ Lahu jigar ka doonga haseen labon ki laali ko"<sup>xxxiii</sup> (164). How a subtle use of diction can bring a major in the lyrics may best be viewed in Majrooh's lyrics. His fascination with the word *Kajaal*<sup>xxxiv</sup> makes his lyrics not only romantic but also a song of exuberant passion of a lovelorn heart in "Raat kali ek khwaab mein aayi aur gale ka haar hui"<sup>xxxv</sup> from *Buddha Mil Gaya*<sup>xxxvi</sup> (1971) where Majrooh writes, "aankhon mein kaajal aur laton me kaali ghata ka basera"<sup>xxxvii</sup> (Premchand 203), or the man trying incessantly to make his beloved understand the urge he is carrying within himself for her, or in other words, the importance of companionship in "Meri jaan meri jaan kehna mano"<sup>xxxviii</sup> from *Do Chor*<sup>xxix</sup> (1972), in which Majrooh pens: "Kategi na ye dagar bina ek humsafar / Phir kyoон na bande ko apna hi jaano"<sup>xl</sup> (159) .

Besides being performative, many of Majrooh's diegetic lyrics are situational, narrative, and thematic, exhibiting both the emotive containment of the speaker and gravity of the situation. The romantic duet, "Ni sultana re pyar ka mausam aaya"<sup>xli</sup> from *Pyar Ka Mausam*<sup>xlii</sup> (1969) accentuates an ardent longing for a romantic union stimulated by the advent of monsoon, an impetus for a yearned union elevated by "hari-hari chhaya"<sup>xliii</sup> ("Ni Sultana Re Pyar Ka Mausam" 01:08-01:14). While the beloved's plaintive longing in "Balam babua bedardi"<sup>xliv</sup> ("Ni Sultana Re Pyar Ka Mausam" 02:02-02:06) shows Majrooh's innate power to portray the emotional emptiness the character suffers from, the lyric is a testament to the film's thematic corpus. Both the male and female versions of the lyric of "Yaadon ki baaraat nikli hain aaj dil ke dwaare"<sup>xlv</sup> from *Yaadon Ki Baaarat*<sup>xlii</sup> (1973) expresse longing and the promise of eternal companionship through love and bonding: "Badle na apna ye aalam khabhi, jeevan me bichadenge na hum kabhi"<sup>xlvii</sup> ("Yaadon Ki Baarat" 01:29-01:47) and a blissful union between three brothers after prolonged separation, expressed through "Chedo tarane milan ke pyaare"<sup>xlviii</sup> ("Yaadon Ki Baarat Nikli Hai" 00:59-01:03) In "Pyar jab na dia zindagi ne kabhi"<sup>xlix</sup> from *Sitamgar*<sup>l</sup> (1985), Majrooh's line, "Phir sitamgar kon hua admi ya zindagi"<sup>li</sup> ("Pyar Jab Na Diya Zindagi Ne Kabhi" 01:01-01:09), leaves with a choice between life and man to be hailed as a tyrant, alluding to the loss of humanity, an epithet of Progressive literature. His idea of not forsaking at any point in life engages his readers with a deeper understanding of humanity and as such, it may be witnessed in a song from *Imtihan*<sup>lii</sup> (1974): "Ruk jaana naheen tu kaheen haar ke/ Kaaton pe chal ke milenge saaye bahaar se/ O raahi o raahi"<sup>liii</sup> (Premchand 151). The idea of a flower symbolising a baby to rejoin the couple after a separation makes Majrooh's lyrics much

more situational, and this is well-evident in *Abhimaan*<sup>liv</sup> (1970), where the conjugal discordance between the husband and the wife, who had a miscarriage too, is resolved when they together appear on the stage to sing a song in which the idea of a flower (symbolising a baby) is a reminder of the loss the couple have suffered from: “Nanha-sa gul khilega angna, sooni baiyaan sajgi sajna-/ jaise khele chanda baadal mein, khelega wo tere aanchal mein”<sup>lv</sup> (129). Majrooh’s lyrics also personify different non-living objects, attributing them with the features of living beings. In Majrooh’s lyrics, different abstract ideas and natural forces are treated in such a manner as if they immediately become animated and lively in his hands. Besides using sarcasm, simile, and metaphor, what distinguishes Majrooh from his contemporaries is his personification of different objects in order to produce poetry as an inclusive structure, and this can well be noted in *Teesri Manzil*<sup>lvii</sup> (1966), “Tum ne mujhe dekha ho kar meherbaan, ruk gayi ye zameen, tham gaya aasmaan”<sup>lviii</sup> (232). His lyrics also deal with the traditional *shama- parwaana*<sup>lviii</sup> imagery, which presents a woman as *shama* (flame) and her partner as *parwaana* (moth), who eventually dies due to his insensibility in *shama* (flame): “Wo anjaana dhhondhti hoon, wo deewana dhoondh ti hoon/ Jala kar jo chip gaya hain, wo parwaana dhoondhti hoon”<sup>lx</sup> (175). The flame imagery thus remains a very recurrent issue in his lyrics that shows the varied treatment of the same word in different contexts: “Kitne sapne kitne armaan laaya hoon main...koi diya tum jala do na”<sup>lx</sup> (198) from *Mere Jeevan Sathi*<sup>lxii</sup> (1972) or “Kya jaanoon sajan ... jal utthe sau diye”<sup>lxiii</sup> (198) from *Baharon Ke Sapne*<sup>lxiii</sup> (1967).

As opposed to the sombre and profound emotion, some of Majrooh’s lyrics also present the notion of self-expansion and playful reconciliation, abandoning all sorrows, as evident in *Kudrat*<sup>lxiv</sup> (1981): “Chhodo sanam kaahe kaa gam / Hasate raho khilate raho”<sup>lxv</sup> (“Chhodo Sanam Kaahe Ka Ghum” 00:15-00:24) and “hum se gale milate raho”<sup>lxvi</sup> (“Chhodo Sanam Kaahe Ka Ghum” 00:39-00:42). The indubitable attitude of Majrooh is apparent as he replaces the past remonstrances “mit jaayegaa sara gilaa”<sup>lxvii</sup> (“Chhodo Sanam Kaahe Ka Ghum” 00:34-00:38) with the budding joy of “phoolo ki galiyan”<sup>lxviii</sup> (“Chhodo Sanam Kaahe Ka Ghum” 03:45-03:47). The direct passionate appeal of a woman for a sensuous union pervades Majrooh’s “Aao na gale lagalo na”<sup>lxix</sup> from *Mere Jeevan Sathi*<sup>lx</sup> (1972). The note of unrestrained desire has been manifested by Majrooh with the metaphor of fire that pacifies the sexual urge of the beloved, “lagi bujha do na o jaane ja”<sup>lxxi</sup> (“Aao Na, Gale Laga Lo Na” 00:25-00:27). The bold invitation of the beloved for her lover’s attention on her body is quite foreign to a Progressive lyricist but Majrooh places it quite playfully: “Tum ne jo agan lagayi hai, to chooke dekho na kahaan kahaan”<sup>lxii</sup> (“Aao Na, Gale Laga Lo Na” 00:31-00:39). Majrooh’s lyric openly portrays the corporeal commotion of the beloved when he writes, “Dekho seene mein kaisi hulchul machi hai o sajna”<sup>lxiii</sup> (“Aao Na, Gale Laga Lo Na” 00:40-00:47). The creation of an intimate space by putting out lamps actually abandons all external interventions: “Duniya se darte ho to mein, saare deepak aayi hoon bujhake, ab to nahin koyi ek tum ho aur ek hum”<sup>lxiv</sup> (“Aao Na, Gale Laga Lo Na” 01:47-2:00). Moreover, Majrooh’s lyric, with its metaphor of thirst, presents the lady as a complete yielder to sensuality as she says, “Man hi na tarse milan ke, dilbar pyasa pyasa tan bhi mera”<sup>lxv</sup> (“Aao Na, Gale Laga Lo Na” 03:05-03:13). Another popular cabaret-oriented sensational lyric by Majrooh, “Piya tu ab to aaja” from *Caravan* (1971), begins with “Piya tu ab to aaja, shola sa man dekhe aake bujha ja”<sup>lxvi</sup> (“Piya Tu Ab To Aaja” 01:51-02:03) and provides a narrative of fiery desire coupled with the beloved’s restless sensual urge for the return of her lover. The beloved’s appeal for the lover’s presence further shows that it is only the lover’s touch

that can extinguish her fiery sensational body: “Tann ki jwaala thandi ho jaaye, aise gale laga ja”<sup>lxxvii</sup> (“Piya Tu Ab To Aaja” 02:06-02:10). Majrooh’s sensual lyric becomes more dense and profound as it shifts from the fire to the thirst of the beloved, directly referring to a sense of betrayal the beloved has faced due to the false promises the lover has made just because of her thirsty lips, “Pyase pyase in mere labon ke liye, tere hothon ne hazaar waade kiyे”<sup>lxxviii</sup> (“Piya Tu Ab To Aaja” 02:46-02:53). In fact, their haptic memories, now resonating with betrayal, leave the beloved in a sense of retreat as she says, “Bhoolane waale koi jiye to kaise jiye”<sup>lxxix</sup> (“Piya Tu Ab To Aaja” 02:54-02:57). The lyrical ending of this strident composition presents the beloved as a defenseless being who is even ready to accept the lover’s any condition only for the sake of his return and their union: “Meri haalat pe rahe jo tera karam, woh baat bhi mujhko kubool hain o sanam”<sup>lxxx</sup> (“Piya Tu Ab To Aaja” 04:19-04:25). Likewise, Majrooh’s “Aaj ki raat koi aane ko hain baba”,<sup>lxxxii</sup> a lyrical crescendo from *Anamika*<sup>lxxxii</sup> (1973), offers a gradual progression of a lover’s desire that begins with a vow, advances with a restless state of mind, and concludes with an anguished call for union. The refrain “intejaar aur thoda intejaar”,<sup>lxxxiii</sup> (“Aaj Ki Raat Koi Aane Ko Hai Baba” 00:39-00:43), a structural derision, presents the lover’s prolonged anxious state of mind while the phrase “baba re baba re baba”,<sup>lxxxiv</sup> (“Aaj Ki Raat Koi Aane Ko Hai Baba” 00:36-00:38) marks a sigh of relief, suggesting a state of being swamped. In the lines, “Use aane toh de o dile bekadar, phir kar lena jee bhar ke pyar”,<sup>lxxxv</sup> (“Aaj Ki Raat Koi Aane Ko Hai Baba” 00:52-00:58), Majrooh personifies the lover’s heart as restless that projects desire as primal, boundless and impassioned. The lyric also drifts from fascination to precarity as the lover youth is not only suffering from the absence of the paramour “Tu toh na aaya, aaya koi aur saajan”,<sup>lxxxvi</sup> (“Aaj Ki Raat Koi Aane Ko Hai Baba” 02:02-02:07) but also a vulnerable site subject to the intervention of enemies too “Lute hain mujhko meri jawani ka dushman”,<sup>lxxxvii</sup> (“Aaj Ki Raat Koi Aane Ko Hai Baba” 02:16-02:21). Hence, she repeatedly pleads for extrication, “tu bachaale”,<sup>lxxxviii</sup> (02:26-02:27) as she fears that “Aisa na ho lut jaaye re tera pyar”,<sup>lxxxix</sup> (“Aaj Ki Raat Koi Aane Ko Hai Baba” 02:34-02:38). Majrooh’s sheer poetic artistry can also be seen in his use of onomatopoeia, “shubu shubu”<sup>xc</sup> (“Aaj Ki Raat Koi Aane Ko Hai Baba” 00:58-01:12) that makes the whole lyric a tactile experience too. Moreover, Majrooh also extensively wrote *qawwali*<sup>xcii</sup>, which is, like *mujra*<sup>xcii</sup>, not a written form but characterised by enriched lyrical imagery. Since the genre has a strong personality, the diction in a qawwali is also loud, often leading to a verbal battle, such as “Hain agar dushman, dushman zaamana gham naheen, gham naheen/ Koi aaye koi hum kisis se kum naheen, kum naheen”<sup>xciii</sup> (Premchand 221) from *Hum Kisise Kum Naheen*<sup>xciv</sup> (1977) and “Pari ho aasmani tum magar tumko to pana hain, muhabbat kaise hain, haa muhabbat kaise karte hain, zamaane ko dikhana hai”<sup>xcv</sup> (“Pari Ho Aasmani Tum from 01:48-02:01) from *Zamaane Ko Dikhana Hain*<sup>xcvi</sup> (1981). This is not to deny that Majrooh was not confined within the realm of *ghazal*, *qawwali*, *mujra*, cabaret songs, and *nazm*. He also practiced a genre called *rubaayi*, in which the first, second, and fourth line are rhymed. For example, in *Pakeezah*<sup>xcvii</sup> (1971), he wrote, “Chaandni raat badi der ke baad aayi hain/ Ye mulaaqaat badi der ke baad aayi hain / Aaj ki raat wo aaye hain badi der ke baad/ Aaj ki raat badi der ke baad aayi hain”<sup>xcviii</sup> (Premchand 108). However, the poet’s excellence can also be noted in his use of free verse, where he celebrates the absence of rhyme and unstable patterns of meter, “Raat akeli hain bujh gaye diye/ Aake mere paas, kaanon mein mere/ Jo bhi chaahae kahiye”<sup>xcix</sup> (113) from *Jewel Thief* (1967). If the objective of a title song remains to mark an immediate sense of the plot,

Majrooh's lyrics are par excellence at this. For instance, one can cite "Main hoon jhum-jhum-jhum-jhum Jhumroo"<sup>c</sup> (253) from *Jhumroo*<sup>ci</sup> (1961). Another feature of Majrooh Sultanpuri is his frequent incorporation of English terms in his lyrics, making them quite contemporary and popular-culture oriented, such as the frequent powerful calling of the lover to his beloved as "Monica, O my darling!" ("Piya Tu Ab To Aaja" 02:15-02:29) in *Caravan*, the romantic surrender of the lover in "Meri soni meri tamanna, jhooth naheen hain mera pyaar/ Deewane se ho gayi ghalti, jaane do yaar/ I love you" (217) (Oh my Soni, my desire, my love is not a lie / This crazy heart made a mistake, let it go, my friend / I love you; my trans.) from *Yadoon Ki Baaraat*<sup>cii</sup> (1973), or the confession of a besotted lover in "Tell me o khuda abb main kya karu? Sar ke bal ya kadam se chalu"<sup>ciii</sup> ("Aaj Main Upar" 02:47-03:00)

While practicing classical Urdu poetic forms such as *ghazal*, *nazm*, western lyrical fiesta cabaret, indigenous *mujra*, and lyrics for masala aesthetics Bollywood movies, Majrooh Sultanpuri mostly delves deep into the character on which the song is pictured. As a result, his lyrics are both situational and individual. His lyrics, thus, point out the most innate personality of the character and the different whims of life the character undergoes. It cannot be denied that besides being a cluster of dictions, showing the creator's profound depth in poetic sensibility, Majrooh's romantic lyrics underpin several ideas emanating in and through human relational dynamics. For instance, the opening line of "Tum bin jaaun kahaan ke duniya mein aake"<sup>civ</sup> from the film *Pyar Ka Mausam*<sup>cv</sup> (1969) situates the speaker's existential dependence on the beloved. The lyric presents love both as a powerful emotion that can collapse *deevaaren*<sup>cvi</sup> and a crucial destiny that will make the beloved return to the speaker on their lonely trail, "aana hi hogta tumhen mere liye saathi mere, suni raaha ke"<sup>cvi</sup> ("Tum Bin Jaoon Kahan" 01:37-01:49). Likewise, Majrooh's "Dilbar dil se pyare"<sup>cvi</sup> from *Caravan* (1971) remains a steadfast articulation of the speaker's fidelity in love, which is best portrayed in her self-forfeiting to a "lahari naino wale"<sup>cix</sup> ("Dilbar Dil Se Pyare" 01:28-01:30), saying, "Saari duniya haari hamase, hum tujhpe dil haare"<sup>cx</sup> ("Dilbar Dil Se Pyare" 01:20-01:25) Majrooh's lyric becomes the speaker's vitality as she feels a smoldering wish in "nas nas meri sulage"<sup>cxi</sup> ("Dilbar Dil Se Pyare" 04:09-04:10) and pleads the lover to respond to her emotions. The *carpe diem* and mindfulness nature of Majrooh's lyrics is perhaps best shown in a sensual lyric, beginning with "Ab jo mile hain to bahon ko bahon mein rehne de saajna, sachche ke jhooth hain hothon ko hothon se, Kehne de saajna"<sup>cxi</sup> ("Ab Jo Mile Hai To" 00:30-00:39). Although embedded with afferent sensual experiences and an inebriated sensation, "Yun hi nasha chadhta rahe"<sup>cxi</sup> ("Ab Jo Mile Hai To" 01:21-01:25), Majrooh's progressive restraint nowhere makes the lyric a kitsch expression. Majrooh's lyrical brilliance also lies in his ability to juxtapose paradoxical ideas. The lover's ignorance of the profundity of his love for the beloved in "Hume tumse pyar kitna ye hum nahi jaante"<sup>cxiv</sup> ("Humen Tum Se Pyar Kitna" 00:49-00:56) is immediately counterpoised by his confession, "Magar jee nahin sakte tumhare bina"<sup>cixv</sup> ("Humen Tum Se Pyar Kitna" 00:57-01:03). Majrooh's expertise in the portrayal of romantic agony pervades the lyric when the beloved's acute absence makes the lover feel a day like a year, "Din bhi yahan to lage baras ke samaan"<sup>cixvi</sup> ("Humen Tum Se Pyar Kitna" 01:53-01:59) and other's gaze at the beloved concurrently makes him envious and chaotic: "Tumhe koi aur dekhe to jalta hain dil / Badi mushkilo se phir sambhalta hain dil"<sup>cixvii</sup> ("Humen Tum Se Pyar Kitna" 02:50-03:03). Majrooh's lyrical artistry also presents a romantic passion that emanates from an irresistible and frivolous infatuation. This sort of passion surrounds love with hope and trepidation, though it never ceases to offer devotion and mutual fidelity. Such is expounded in a song from *Zaamane Ko Dikhana*

*Hain*<sup>cxviii</sup> (1981) “Puchho naa yaar kya hua, dil kaa qaraar kya hua”<sup>cixix</sup> (“Puchho Na Yaar Kya Hua” 00:12-00:20), which evolves through astonishment at the power of love. The speaker’s absolute yielding to her lover is selfless, “Jo bhi hai mera, main aur mera pyaar, tumpe ek baar sab lutaa dungi”<sup>cxx</sup> (“Puchho Na Yaar Kya Hua” 03:03-03:12) that is eventually assured by the lover’s courageous and protective declaration mixed with bold and challenging intonation, “Chhodo jaane ja, tum bhi ho kahaa? Ghabaraate nahi hum zamaane se, dekho to idhar kis ka hai zigar, ulajhe aapake is deewane se?”<sup>cxxi</sup> (“Puchho Na Yaar Kya Hua” 04:42-05:00). Majrooh’s rich language finally projects love as a mutual happiness transformed from uncertain: “Apni khushi hogi ye zindagi bhi, isake sivaa aage kya hoga”<sup>cxxii</sup> (“Puchho Na Yaar Kya Hua” 05:10-05:19). On the other hand, Majrooh’s speaker also represents the image of a typical masculine lover who lives through euphoria and unworried abandonment. In “Chala jaata hoon, kisi ke dhun me”<sup>cxxiii</sup> from *Mere Jeevan Sathi*<sup>cxxiv</sup> (1972), the flamboyant lover’s world is without prudence and composure: “Ye masti ke, nazaare hai, to aise me sambhalanaa kaisaa meri kasam”<sup>cxxv</sup> (“Chala Jata Hoon” 01:17-01:25). The lover’s romantic anticipation of the beloved is absolutely plebeian, as his eyes are filled with playfulness before meeting the beloved: “Milan ki masti bhari aankhon me, hazaaro sapane, suhaane liye”<sup>cxxvi</sup> (“Chala Jata Hoon” 00:40-00:47). His impassioned anticipation of romantic moments is also replete with playful flirtation: “Vo aalam bhi, ajab hogaa, vo jab mere, karib aaegi meri kasam”<sup>cxxvii</sup> (“Chala Jata Hoon” 02:17-02:25).

Majrooh’s lyrics also showcase histrionic qualities that emphasise the utterance of words through gestures. If the beginning of “Goom hai kisi ke pyar mein dil subaah shaam”<sup>cxxviii</sup> (“Goom Hai Kisi Ke Pyar Mein” 00:15-00:23) from *Rampur ka Laxman*<sup>cixix</sup> (1972) presents the lover, engrossed in love, who hesitates to write the paramour’s name openly, maintaining a secret longing, “Par tumhe likh nahin paaon main uska naam”<sup>cxxx</sup> (“Goom Hai Kisi Ke Pyar Mein” 00:24-00:30), the subsequent lines of the lyric put the lover in a state of open confession, “Keh daaloon apne Sab haal dil ke”<sup>cxxxii</sup> (“Goom Hai Kisi Ke Pyar Mein” 01:23-01:30) and a complete surrender, “Aur kar doon jeevan uske hawaale”<sup>cxxxii</sup> (“Goom Hai Kisi Ke Pyar Mein” 01:31-01:39). The mutual passion expressed by the beloved, “Voh bhi sajanavaa chaahae tumhi ko”<sup>cxxxiii</sup> (“Goom Hai Kisi Ke Pyar Mein” 02:41-02:48) introduces the theatrical qualities of Majrooh’s lyrics, “Naina uthaae to pyaar samajho”<sup>cxxxiv</sup> (“Goom Hai Kisi Ke Pyar Mein” 02:49-02:56) or “Palake jhukaa de to iqaraar samajho”<sup>cxxxv</sup> (“Goom Hai Kisi Ke Pyar Mein” 02:58-03:04). While unapologetic masculine poise in “Bachna ae hasinon lo main aa gayaa”<sup>cxxxvi</sup> from *Hum Kisise Kum Naheen*<sup>cxxxvii</sup> (1977) stages a dramatic pronouncement of the robust arrival of the speaker, Majrooh’s poetic craftsmanship is exemplified in his use of anti-thesis in “Husn ka aashiq, husn ka dushman”<sup>cxxxviii</sup> (“Bachna Ae Hasinon Lo Main Aa Gaya” 02:15-02:18) emphasising the speaker’s distinctive mannerism, “Apni ada hai yaaron se judaa”<sup>cxxxix</sup> (“Bachna Ae Hasinon Lo Main Aa Gaya” 02:19-02:21). However, the speaker’s affirmations, such as “Duniya mein nahin hain, aaj meraa sa deevaana”<sup>cxl</sup> (“Bachna Ae Hasinon Lo Main Aa Gaya” 03:23-03:28), “Pyaar valoon ki jubaan pe, hai mera hi taraana”<sup>cxl</sup> (“Bachna Ae Hasinon Lo Main Aa Gaya” 03:29-03:35), “Chamak raha hai mera hi nashaa” (“Bachna Ae Hasinon Lo Main Aa Gaya” 03:40-03:42)<sup>cxl</sup>, and “Ek hungamaa uthaa doon”<sup>cxl</sup> (“Bachna Ae Hasinon Lo Main Aa Gaya” 05:27-05:30) cannot escape the note of conceited patriarchy in a romantic space. The dramatic nature of Majrooh’s lyrics, especially in his duet songs, never undercuts the lyrical quality. For instance, his “Yeh ladka haaye Allah kaisa hain deewana”<sup>cxliv</sup> offers a romantic contest between the fervent exigency of a lover who seeks instant affirmation and the rational

prudence of the beloved who looks for gradual relational development and castigates any infatuation, saying “Ke dheere dheere dil bekarar hota hai”<sup>cxlv</sup> (“Ye Ladka Hay Allah Kaisa Hai Diwana” 00:33-00:38). The lyric, in Majrooh’s hands, becomes an interplay between the beloved’s entrenched visions, equating love with life’s covenant, “Dil ka sauda hota hain sauda zindagi ka”<sup>cxlvii</sup> (“Ye Ladka Hay Allah Kaisa Hai Diwana” 01:30-01:34), her disapproval in transitory contentment, “Pal bhar ka hansna ho jaye / Jeewan bhar ka rona”<sup>cxlviii</sup> (02:38-02:42), and the lover’s cautions of a lifelong lamentation of the beloved for not accepting him, “Nahin to gaati hi rahogi yeh taraana”<sup>cxlviii</sup> (“Ye Ladka Hay Allah Kaisa Hai Diwana” 04:29-04:33).

The romantic expectation for a meeting between the lovers pervades “Din pyar ke aayenge sajania, teri bahar layenge sajania”<sup>cxlix</sup> (“Din Pyar Ke Aayenge Sajania” 00:33-00:41) where the message of the lover through a “savare vali gadi”<sup>cl</sup> (“Din Pyar Ke Aayenge Sajania” 00:44-00:46) heightens the intensity of the beloved’s heartthrob, making other things around her unattractive. The variations in portrayal of different shades of love are perhaps what distinguish Majrooh from his fellow progressives. Majrooh’s unparalleled poetic quality can also be seen in his use of a single metaphor to narrate the whole story of a song. His use of the metaphor of the moon in “Chaand mera dil chaandi ho tum”<sup>cli</sup> shows the lover’s strong adoration. In fact, Majrooh’s treatment of romance is also playful in the lyric, as the lover’s emotion hovers between an acceptance of momentary separation and conviction about the beloved’s return, “Jaa rahe ho tum jaaao meri jaan”<sup>clii</sup> (“Chand Mera Dil Chandni Ho Tum” 00:40-00:46) and “Laut ke aana hai yahin tumko”<sup>cliii</sup> (“Chand Mera Dil Chandni Ho Tum” 00:33-00:39). Cautioning on the scarcity of true bonding, “Dil se dil hain milta yaar mushkil se”<sup>cliv</sup> (“Chand Mera Dil Chandni Ho Tum” 01:15-01:20), the self-assured lyric speaker proclaims himself as the true refuge of their love, “Yehi to hain sanam pyaar ka thikana”<sup>clv</sup> (“Chand Mera Dil Chandni Ho Tum” 01:21-01:28). If he flawlessly projects the romantic sensation, he is equally, at best, depicting the romantic despair. The title song from *Bandhe Hath*<sup>clvi</sup> (1973), “Dekho yeh mere bande hath”<sup>clvii</sup> presents the presence of a compelling force that stops the lover from attaining his sensuous desires, “Lag ke gale se phir bhi machal naa saku mai”<sup>clviii</sup> (“Dekho Yeh Mere Bandhe Hath” 01:05-01:11). The internal agony of the lover is presented in his inability to respond to the beloved’s call, manifesting the burden of emotional constraint. Besides showing the traditional aesthetics of love, Majrooh also shows the subtle but complex psychological uncertainty the lovers suffer in the course of love. In Majrooh’s lyrics, the restive quest for romance, the agony of propinquity without union, and an emotional intimacy despite physical distance make a unique labyrinth unprecedented in Bollywood lyrics. His “Lekar hum deewana dil / Phirte hain manzil manzil”<sup>clix</sup> (“Lekar Hum Deewana Dil” 01:35-01:43) from *Yaadon ki Baarat*<sup>clx</sup> (1973) exemplifies conditions of relentless lovers whose agony is expressed in “Jis gali mein tum, uss gali mein hum, par yeh majbooriyan yaha”<sup>clxi</sup> (“Lekar Hum Deewana Dil” 02:54-03:02) The lover’s desperate yearning, “Kahin to pyaare kisi kinare, mil jao tum andhere ujaale”<sup>clxii</sup> (“Lekar Hum Deewana Dil” 02:02-02:11) finds an immediate exclamation in “Duniya tere jalwe hain nirale”<sup>clxiii</sup> (“Lekar Hum Deewana Dil” 03:17-03:20), suggesting a sarcastic note towards the world instrumental for the lovers’ separation. Majrooh’s “Kaho kaise rasta bhool pade, achchhe to ho dilbar jaan”<sup>clxiv</sup> (“Kaho Kaise Rasta Bhool Pade” 00:30-00:35) from *Bade Dil Wala*<sup>clxv</sup> (1983) is a dialogue between lovers, in which the beloved, suffering from the bitterness of separation and cruel life, is concurrently ecstatic by the lover’s return and sceptical about the fidelity of their peripatetic existence. The juxtaposition of the double affectionate vocative, such as *dilbar*<sup>clxvi</sup> and *jaan*<sup>clxvii</sup>, in fact, buttresses the speaker’s ardent and passionate articulation.

Dismissive of any question into his own anguish, the lover asks, “Aawaron ki kya pooch rahe, apni kaho dilbar jaan”<sup>clxviii</sup> (“Kaho Kaise Rasta Bhool Pade” 00:40-00:45), while the beloved castigates the lover’s capacity to understand her destitution, calling the lover too delicate, “Hum pe kya kya guzri tum kya sun paaoge, nazuk sa dil rakhte ho rone lag jaaoge”<sup>clxix</sup> (“Kaho Kaise Rasta Bhool Pade” 01:23-01:32). Although the world sees nomads in a derogatory way, the lover emphasises the beloved to be “Banjare kiske yaar”<sup>clxx</sup> (“Kaho Kaise Rasta Bhool Pade” 02:51-02:53) who steadfastly comments, “Hum jiske ho jaate hain uske hi rehte hain”<sup>clxxi</sup> (“Kaho Kaise Rasta Bhool Pade” 02:58-03:01), showing a profound commitment even if that goes against the world’s expectations. The contrast between a lover’s steadfast romantic fidelity and the coyness of the beloved perpetrates Majrooh’s “O mere dil ki chain”<sup>clxxii</sup> from *Mere Jeevan Sathi*<sup>clxxiii</sup> (1972) in which the defenceless assertion of the lover, “Dil tumko hi chaahe toh kya kijiye”<sup>clxxiv</sup> (“O Mere Dil Ke Chain” 02:48-02:53) is nicely counterbalanced by the beloved’s vacillating appearance, “Tum to abhi se ghabra gaye”<sup>clxxv</sup> (“O Mere Dil Ke Chain” 01:30-01:33). However, the ardent passion of the lover reassures the autonomy of the beloved without any vanity, “Ab khud hi sanam faisla kijiye”<sup>clxxvi</sup> (“O Mere Dil Ke Chain” 03:49-03:54). Majrooh’s timeless lines not only show the romantic flair of a mutual partnership but also the speaker’s altruistic dedication to the happiness of a friend and his cheerful involvement in a celebration despite his own discontented romantic dreams and as such may be found in “Diwana leke aaya hai dil ka taarana”<sup>clxxvii</sup>. The dilapidated state of mind of the speaker makes him insecure and his words enervate: “Dekho kahin yaaron thukra na dena mera nazarana”<sup>clxxviii</sup> (“Diwana Leke Aaya Hai” 00:35-00:47). Nevertheless, his yearning for the happiness of his companion remains unmistakable: “Poori ho dil ki sari muradein khush rahe yaar mera”<sup>clxxix</sup> (“Diwana Leke Aaya Hai” 01:41-01:54). Forgoing personal desires, the speaker becomes an epitome of selfless companionship where “Apne bhi hain kuchh khwab adhure kaun ab giney kitne”<sup>clxxx</sup> (“Diwana Leke Aaya Hai” 02:59-03:14) is happily substituted by “Uski khusi ab meri khusi hain, ae dil-e-deewana”<sup>clxxxi</sup> (“Diwana Leke Aaya Hai” 03:31-03:42). His fascination for the idea of ‘gaze’ is manifested through an extremely romantic lyric when he writes in *Kaalia*<sup>clxxxii</sup> (1981), “Jahaan teriye nazar hain meri jaan mujhe khabar hain”<sup>clxxxiii</sup> (Premchand 283). This is also to note that many of Majrooh’s lyrics sufficiently establish his hedonistic vision of life, showing the presence of the ‘id’ in human characters. The seemingly ephemeral nature of life must have provoked the poet to come up with lines in *Batwara*<sup>clxxxiv</sup> (1961), “Ye raat ye fizaayen phir aayen ya na aayaen/ Aao shama bujha ke hum aaj dil jalaayen”<sup>clxxxv</sup> (290). One can note the moment from *Khamoshi*<sup>clxxxvi</sup>: *The Musical* (1996), when the heroine, Manisha Koirala, shows an absolute hormonal rush when she falls in love with Salman Khan, “Aaj main oopar assmaan neeche, aaj main aage zaamana hain peeche”<sup>clxxxvii</sup> (239), or the enthusiastic declaration of the lover in “Jana suno hum tum pe marte hain”<sup>clxxxviii</sup>, which claims that love is a fire that consumes the heart, it is a sacred destination that transcends everything, and hence, the return of the beloved to it is inevitable, “To phir aao, pyar mein jalayein dil, jalke bujh na paayein dil, hai apni manzil yahin pe, aa ab kahin na ja”<sup>clxxxix</sup> (“Jana Suno Hum Tumpe Marte Hai” 00:42-00:59). The utmost form of romance runs through Majrooh’s lyric when he writes, “Pehla nasha pehla khumar, naya pyaar hain naya intezaar, kar loon main kya apna haal, aye dil-e-bekaraar, mere dil-e-bekaarar, tu hi bata”<sup>cxc</sup> (“Pehla Nasha” 01:15-01:38).

While writing for commercial Bollywood film lyrics, Majrooh uncompromising Progressive character always remains a cluster of personal and political apotheosis. Although most of Majrooh’s filmsongs are recognised for their romanticism, his love songs often emerge

as representations of deeper socio-political disputes. His “Bin tere sanam, mar mitenge hum”<sup>cxcii</sup> from *Yaara Dildara*<sup>cxcii</sup> (1991) is such a lyrical fiesta of a passionate and defiant triumph of heart over severance and social hindrances. If the lover considers the absence of the beloved as a death punishment, the beloved feels the return as a predestined obligation compelled by the love’s brutal attachment, “Aanaa hii padaa sajanaa, zaalim hain dil kii lagii”<sup>cxciii</sup> (“Bin Tere Sanam” 01:03-01:10). The subjective emotion in the lyric entails the social intervention when the beloved says that the reunion is subject to the thorn-filled gaze of others, “Sahanii padegii sabki, kaanto bharii nigaahein”<sup>cxciv</sup> (“Bin Tere Sanam” 03:42-03:49) which will be conquered by their forbearance of hardship, “Sab sahenge ham aur hansenge ham”<sup>cxcv</sup> (“Bin Tere Sanam” 04:06-04:09) Majrooh’s powerful presentation of love even makes nature a slave to lovers, overriding all external limitations, “Tum ho mere to ab hain mausam gulaam apnaa”<sup>cxcvi</sup> (“Bin Tere Sanam” 05:05-05:11). The optimistic lover’s urge to endure the short-lived distress and suffering permeates Majrooh’s “Chand roz aur meri jaan chand roz, tere gum ke din mere gum ke din, tere gum ke din mere gum ke din, chale jayenge kaha maan chand roz”<sup>cxcvii</sup> (“Chand Roz Aur Meri Jaan” 00:33-00:57) where the present endurance of anguish, as the lover believes, will essentially lead into a happy future. The righteous lover’s declination to involve in any such that would harm the prestige of the beloved, “Main abhi mang teri bhar na sakunga, ruswayi main teri kar na sakunga”<sup>cxcviii</sup> (“Chand Roz Aur Meri Jaan” 03:34-03:46) actually exemplifies Majrooh’s Progressive schooling, which connects the lovers’ internal suffering with the form of social oppression and like a true Progressive, Majrooh has an ardent faith in a joyful tomorrow when the lover says, “Hath khul jaye dag dhul jaye”<sup>cxcix</sup> (“Chand Roz Aur Meri Jaan” 04:00-04:04). As a romantic lyricist, Majrooh always looks to justify the indomitable spirit of love that enables lovers to be defiant against all hardship and hatred and as such, it may be seen in his lyric, “Tum saath ho jab apne, duniya ko dikha denge”<sup>cc</sup> (“Tum Saath Ho Jab Apne” 00:17-00:24) from *Kaalia*<sup>cci</sup> (1981). Majrooh shows that the resilient nature of love makes the lover fearless of death: “Hum maut ko jine ke andaaz sikha denge”<sup>ccii</sup> (“Tum Saath Ho Jab Apne” 00:25-00:31). It is Majrooh’s powerful depiction of love that openly questions the world for suffering with hatred and boldly asserts, “Hum pyaar ki shabnam se har aag bujha denge”<sup>cciii</sup> (“Tum Saath Ho Jab Apne” 03:50-03:56). The power of love to combat social conflicts or oppressions exemplified by execution in the lyric makes the lovers so strong that their language of protest becomes: “Suli ko bhi zulfon ki zanfir bana denge”<sup>cciv</sup> (“Tum Saath Ho Jab Apne” 02:41-02:48). Although apparently a narrative of the lament of an agonising lover for his former beloved’s deceit, Majrooh’s lyric in “Kya hua tera vada woh kasam woh irada”<sup>cvc</sup> (“Kya Hua Tera Vada” 00:12-00:28) from *Hum Kisise Kum Naheen*<sup>cvi</sup> (1977) is also a social diatribe against materialism. Jilted in love, the speaker here shows his romantic dedication as an existential inevitability, questioning the beloved’s discarding of serious devotion, “Bhoolega dil jis din tumhein, woh din zindagi ka aakhiri din hogaa”<sup>cvcvii</sup> (“Kya Hua Tera Vada” 00:47-00:56). What perhaps distinguishes Majrooh from his contemporary lyricists is his ability to articulate a disdainful issue in a most favourable manner. The language the lover uses to express his contemptuous anguish is a fine case in point where the rhetorical question, calling the beloved a deceitful being and a trader of love, never crosses the limit of sobriety: “Kaun farebi hain yeh bata, woh jisne gham liya pyaar ki khatir, ya jisne pyaar ko bech diya?”<sup>cvcviii</sup> (“Kya Hua Tera Vada” 03:19-03:34). However, Majrooh cannot remain far from his Progressive tenet, based on social realism, as he finally contends the beloved’s betrayal as a mortifying impact of materialism, “Nasha daulat ka aisa bhi kya”<sup>ccix</sup> (“Kya Hua Tera Vada” 03:35-03:39). The progressive propensity in

Majrooh's lyrics is therefore seen in his attempt to trace the passionate love in heartfelt fidelity, not in the capitalist domain and apparent ostentation. His "Tum kya jano mohabbat kya hain"<sup>ccx</sup> situates the speaker's heart not in a commonplace but an intimate space, "Dil ki mehfil sanam yeh mehfil nahi dil hai"<sup>ccxi</sup> ("Tum Kya Jano Mohabbat Kya Hai" 00:33-00:38). But Majrooh's tour de force emerges as he compares richness, which is distant, with love that surpasses any superficiality, "Ameeri hai sitaara, garibi ki hai aansu, yeh aansu hai mohabbat, mohabbat zindagi hain, bas itna janle tu"<sup>ccxii</sup> ("Tum Kya Jano Mohabbat Kya Hai" 00:54-01:11). The lover's cynical disenchantment with the romantic chase makes him sneering against the beloved's unscrupulous nature in a lyric that begins with "Dil lena khel hain dildaar ka, bhule se naam na lo pyaar ka"<sup>ccxiii</sup> ("Dil Lena Khel Hai Dildar Ka" 00:36-00:42) where the lover's disillusionment with her insincere paramour makes him skeptical, "Pyaar bhi jhuta yaar bhi jhuta"<sup>ccxiv</sup> ("Dil Lena Khel Hai Dildar Ka" 00:51-00:55) and the lover cautions others about the deceptive nature of the partner, "Vaadon pe inke na jaana, baton mein inki na aana"<sup>ccxv</sup> ("Dil Lena Khel Hai Dildar Ka" 01:26-01:34). The agnostic nature of Majrooh's sardonic speaker even considers the sacrifice of youth in love will be unsung by the beloved, "Inpe jawaani luta do, ya zindigaani luta do"<sup>ccxvi</sup> ("Dil Lena Khel Hai Dildar Ka" 03:45-03:52). Hence, the lyric remains a strong appeal for an emotional separation to avoid inescapable pain.

Majrooh Sultanpuri's contributions to the Progressive poetry can be seen in his ability to uphold the lyrical integrity amidst the commercial spectrum of Indian film, setting an example for succeeding lyricists like Javed Akhtar and Gulzar. Notwithstanding the dominant neoliberal framework that emphasises consumer preference in film lyrics, Majrooh's influence remains as a testimony to the fact that art can reflect both beauty and resilience. His later compositions continued to reflect themes of camaraderie and resistance, emphasizing that the progressive values might remain relevant across decades. Majrooh's relationship with the Progressive ideology places him as a voice that reverberates across the literary and bollywood history. His songs are represented as evidence of an era when film songs held an enormous political purpose, guiding public consciousness and echoing the dreams and desires of a developing nation. In a nutshell, Majrooh was not merely a lyricist; he was an inventor of modern Indian poetic dialogue within popular culture. His contributions thus ensure that the progressive ethos continues to elucidate the contours of Indian films. Comparing Majrooh with his fellow Progressive Sahir Ludhianvi, Javed Akhtar remarks, "Majrooh was more lyrical than Sahir but, If I may say so, not as responsible as Sahir. He was an extremely talented writer. He was extremely prolific. He has written much more than Sahir ... He took liberties with grammar for the sake of better phonetics. Sahir never did such things" (qtd. in Manwani 244).

## Endnotes

<sup>i</sup> He has spoken in such a style that has rendered dreams of a thousand colours

<sup>ii</sup> Somewhere she must be waiting for me / For whose desire I wander restless / Distant from the shade her flowing hair, I speak to the wind / From the grace of that thought, a thousand tales are born

<sup>iii</sup> Embers

<sup>iv</sup> Pen name

<sup>v</sup> A form of classical Urdu poetry

<sup>vi</sup> Urdu free verse

<sup>vii</sup> Refined Urdu diction

<sup>viii</sup> I set out alone towards my destination, / But people kept joining me, and it turned into a caravan

<sup>ix</sup> Sacred musical form based on Urdu and Persian languages

<sup>x</sup> I saw a dream, tell me, what did you see?

<sup>xi</sup> Tomb

<sup>xii</sup> How deeply I love you, how restless my heart is for you

<sup>xiii</sup> Resonance

<sup>xiv</sup> Go on, I have already seen you

<sup>xv</sup> Lord, I have too seen you

<sup>xvi</sup> At times you glance feels close to my heart, the next moment it becomes distant, this too is your strange style

<sup>xvii</sup> You are the only one I Have, you too are angry with me

<sup>xviii</sup> Come and hold me close, let me rest in your arms, let us loose ourselves in each other and forget everything

<sup>xix</sup> Tease me lovingly again today

<sup>xx</sup> Just think what a wonderful day it is

<sup>xxi</sup> From Eternity to Eternity

<sup>xxii</sup> Just think what a wonderfull day it is, just see this madness

<sup>xxiii</sup> Madness

<sup>xxiv</sup> You are alone and same I am

<sup>xxv</sup> This is so much of fun, I swear it

<sup>xxvi</sup> I swear it

<sup>xxvii</sup> Look at me closely, we have met today by fate

<sup>xxviii</sup> This moment will never return, nor does such a destination

<sup>xxix</sup> How can I describe my state? You are in my thoughts day and night

<sup>xxx</sup> My love, we are still so distant

<sup>xxxi</sup> A Caravan of Memories

<sup>xxxii</sup> You have stolen my heart; do not steal my gaze, my love

<sup>xxxiii</sup> I will adorn the branches of your body even after losing everything / I will give the blood of my heart to color your beautiful lips

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Kohl

<sup>xxxv</sup> Aa bud came to me in my dream last night and became a garland around my neck

<sup>xxxvi</sup> The Buddha has been found

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Kohl in the eyes and dark clouds dwelling in the tresses

xxxviii My love, o my love, listen to my sayings  
 xxxix Two Thieves

xl This journey won't pass without a companion / So why not consider a stranger as your own?

xli O Sultana, love's season has arrived

xlii The Season of Love

xliii Green shades

xliv My lover is heartless

xlv A caravan of memories has set out today from my heart's doorway

xlii A caravan of Memories

xlvii May our beautiful state never change, we shall never part from each other in this life

xlviii Start the sweet melodies of togetherness

xlix When life does not ever give love

<sup>1</sup> Tyrant

li Who is the tyrant? Is it man or life?

lii Ordeal

liii Do not stop anywhere in defeat / Walking on thorns, you will reach the shade of spring / O traveler, O traveler

liv Wounded Pride

lv A tiny flower will bloom in the courtyard, empty arms will be adorned, my love / Just as the moon plays in the clouds, it will play in the shade of your veil

lvi The Third Stage

lvii When you looked at me with kindness, the earth stood still, and the sky came to a halt

lviii Flame-Moth

lix I search for that stranger, I search for that crazed lover / The moth that burned and disappeared, I search for it; my trans.).

lx I have brought so many dreams, so many desires... Won't you light a lamp for them?; my trans)

lxi My Life Partner

lxii How would I know, my beloved...A hundred lamps have ignited

lxiii Dreams of Spring

lxiv Nature

lxv Let it go, my love, why carry sorrow? / Keep smiling and blooming with joy

lxvi Keep holding me close

lxvii all grieves will melt away

lxviii blooming flowers

lxix come and embrace me

lxx My Life Partner

lxxi O dear, put out the fire

lxxii Come and touch where the fire you ignited burns

lxxiii O my dear! See what a commotion is taking place in my chest?

lxxiv If you are frightened by the world, I have put out all the lamps, now there is only you and me

lxxv Not only my heart longs for union, my body is also thirsty, my love

lxxvi O my love, come to me now, my heart burns like a flame; come and soothe it

lxxvii Hold me in such a way that the fire in my body calms down

lxxviii Your lips made a thousand promises for the sake of my thirsty lips

lxxix How can someone live after forgetting?

lxxx Whatever mercy you grant to my fragile state, I accept it, my love

lxxxi Tonight someone will have to come

lxxxii Nameless

lxxxiii a little more waiting

lxxxiv Oh my lord, oh my lord, oh my lord

lxxxv O impatient heart, let him come, then love to the heart's content

lxxxvi You did not come but someone else came, dear

lxxxvii I am plundered by my youth's enemy

lxxxviii You save me

lxxxix Let this not happen that your love gets destroyed

xc sweet sweet

xci Sufi Islamic sacred song

xcii A traditional South Asian dance form

xciii Even if the world is our enemy, we have no worries, no worries / Let anyone come; we are no less than anyone, no less at all

xciv We are No Less Than Anyone

xcv You are a celestial angel, yet I long to claim you, what is love? Yes, how does one love? I must show the world

xcvi I Must Show the World

xcvii Pure

xcviii The moonlit night has arrived after a long wait / This meeting has happened after a long time / Tonight, my beloved has come after so long/ Tonight has come after a long wait

xcix The night is lonely, the lamps have extinguished / Come close to me, whisper in my ear / Say whatever you desire

c I am a dancer, dancing and swaying

ci Dancer

cii A caravan of Memories

ciii O Khuda! tell me what should I do now? Should I walk by the strength of the head or feet?

civ Having entered in this world, where will I go without you?

cv Love's Season

cvi Walls

cvii companion, you will have to come for me to these empty, deserted paths

cviii Lover, dearer to me than heart

cix lover's undulating gaze

cx Although the whole world has lost to me, I have lost my heart to you

cxi Each nerve in me is aflame

cxii Now that finally we have met, let these arms be interlaced in each other's embrace, darling, let the truth and falsity be, let the lips speak to lips, say it so, my darling

cxiii may this intoxication keep rising like this

cxiv Even I do not know how much I love you

cxv yet I cannot live without you

cxvi Here a day is felt like a year

cxvii My heart burns if someone looks at you, I control my heart afterwards with a great difficulty

cxviii I Will Have to Show the World

cxix My friend, do not ask what happened to my heart's peace

cxx Whatever is mine is myself and my love, I will surrender everything to you

cxxi Leave it, querida, where are you lost? We are not afraid of the world, look here and see who has the courage to entangle with your mad lover?

cxxii Our happiness will be this life, whatelse can there be beyond this?

cxxiii I keep going lost in someone's tune

cxxiv My Life Partner

<sup>cxxv</sup> When these are the sights of such joviality, how come one remains restrained, by my promise  
<sup>cxxvi</sup> In eyes filled with the fun of union, with thousands of dreams to cherish  
<sup>cxxvii</sup> That moment will also be strange when she will come close to me, by my promise  
<sup>cxxviii</sup> My heart is lost in someone's love from morning to evening  
<sup>cxxix</sup> Laxman from Rampur  
<sup>cxxx</sup> But I cannot write you her name  
<sup>cxxxii</sup> I will confess my heart's all motions  
<sup>cxxxii</sup> And I will surrender my life to his care  
<sup>cxxxiii</sup> That lover also wants you  
<sup>cxxxiv</sup> If I lift my eyes, know it as love  
<sup>cxxxv</sup> If I bow my lashes, know it as confession  
<sup>cxxxvi</sup> Watch out, o lovely beauties, I have arrived  
<sup>cxxxvii</sup> We are No Less Than Anyone  
<sup>cxxxviii</sup> A lover of beauty though is its foe  
<sup>cxxxix</sup> My style is different from my friends  
<sup>cxl</sup> There is no bigger lover than me in today's world  
<sup>cxi</sup> In lovers' tongues, there plays my song  
<sup>cxlii</sup> My charm is sparkling  
<sup>cxlvi</sup> I will create a ruckus  
<sup>cxlvi</sup> Haaye Allah, what a crazy boy he is!  
<sup>cxlvi</sup> The heart gradually goes impatient  
<sup>cxlvi</sup> The bargaining of heart is the bargaining of life  
<sup>cxlvi</sup> So that the moment's laughter never becomes the lifetime crying)  
<sup>cxlvi</sup> Or else you will keep singing this song

<sup>cxlvi</sup> Darling, the days of love will come, bringing the promise of spring for you  
<sup>cl</sup> Morning train  
<sup>cli</sup> The moon is my heart and you are its silver radiance  
<sup>clii</sup> If you go, then you must go  
<sup>clii</sup> You will have to return here  
<sup>cliv</sup> The union of hearts happens with difficulty  
<sup>clv</sup> Darling, this is the very address of love  
<sup>clvi</sup> Tied Hands  
<sup>clvii</sup> See, these are my tied hands  
<sup>clviii</sup> Even when I embrace you, I am unable to give in to my longing  
<sup>clix</sup> With a restless heart, I wander from one destination to another  
<sup>clx</sup> Caravan of Memories  
<sup>clxi</sup> We share the same alley, yet such compulsions endure  
<sup>clxii</sup> Somewhere on some lovely distant shore, may I find you between darkness and light  
<sup>clxiii</sup> All the world is but an exhibition of your unique splendour  
<sup>clxiv</sup> How did you lose your way? You just seem to be fine, my dear and life  
<sup>clxv</sup> The Big-Hearted Man  
<sup>clxvi</sup> Beloved  
<sup>clxvii</sup> Darling  
<sup>clxviii</sup> Why are you asking about wanderers? Dear, speak of yourself  
<sup>clxix</sup> What has passed over me, how will you bear to listen? You have such a fragile heart; you will be moved to tears).  
<sup>clxx</sup> Whose friend is a nomad?

clxxi The one I belong to, to the one I remain  
 clxxii O my heart's relief  
 clxxiii My Life Partner  
 clxxiv What can you do if the heart wants you?  
 clxxv You are already getting nervous  
 clxxvi Beloved, now you yourself take the call  
 clxxvii The passionate lover arrives, bearing his heart's melody  
 clxxviii My friend, do not reject my gaze  
 clxxix May all the desires of the heart be fulfilled, may my friend always remain happy  
 clxxx I too have some unfulfilled dreams, but who is going to count those?  
 clxxxi Her happiness is now mine, o passionate heart  
 clxxxii The Dark One  
 clxxxiii Wherever your gaze is, my love, I am aware  
 clxxxiv Partition  
 clxxxv This night, this ambiance may return or may not return / Come, let's extinguish the candle  
 and set our heart on fire today  
 clxxxvi Silence  
 clxxxvii Today, I am above, the sky is below / Today, I am ahead, the world is behind  
 clxxxviii Darling, listen I die at you  
 clxxxix Then come, let's ignite our hearts with love so that they never fade, our destination is here,  
 so come and do not go anywhere now  
 cxc The first intoxication, the first euphoria, a new love, a new longing  
 cxi Dear, I will die without you  
 cxii Beloved Friend  
 cxiii Having no choice, I will have to come, my beloved, the compulsion of love is cruel  
 cxiv We will have to endure everyone's thorn-filled glances  
 cxv We will endure everything and laugh  
 cxvi When you are with me, even the season is my slave  
 cxvii My dear, just a few days more, believe me that our sorrowful days will disappear  
 cxviii I cannot fill your hair parting now, I cannot bring disgrace upon you  
 cxix May the hands be unbound and strains be washed away  
 cc When you are with me, I will show the world  
 cci The Dark One  
 cci I will teach the art of facing death  
 ccii I will quench each fire with love's dew  
 cciv We can even turn the gallows into a chain of your tresses  
 ccv What happened to your promise, that vow, and that resolve?  
 ccvi We are No Less Than Anyone  
 ccvii That day will be last day of life when the heart will forget you  
 ccviii Who is the deceiver? The one who accepts sorrows for love's sake or the one who sells love  
 itself  
 ccix Is the wealth's intoxication so overpowering?  
 ccx What do you know what is called love?  
 ccxi The gathering of heart is not a mere gathering but the heart itself  
 ccxii Wealth is a star, poverty is tear, this tear is of love, love is life, you understand this much  
 ccxiii Stealing heart is a game for the sweetheart, do not even by mistake call it love  
 ccxiv Love is fake, friendship is false  
 ccxv Never fall in their vows, never rely on their words

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