

## A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF SHAH HUSSAIN'S SUFI KALAM FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF INTERPRETATIVE MODEL OF TRANSLATION

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### **Abstract**

*This research depicts that how women were represented in Sufi poetry of Shah Hussain. The use of gender-based language that clearly represented the feminine behavior in the poetry has been analyzed through the target and source language with the help of **stylistic analysis** and **interpretative model of translation**. The significance of this research is that it has explored the classical era of Punjabi poetry in comparison with the translated version of the poem. It explores how in the age of male chauvinism, where glorification of women had its fragment in writings. In his poetry there is a detailed history that made women the subject of his literary work. The research represents the details in discussion that how a female was considered in the past and in which aspect does translation plays a vital role in this domain. The structures discussed in this research are wide and flexible because the poetry was inspired by women's nature, duties, flexibility, emotional insurgence, and social existence. The outcomes of the research validate how poetry translation is an impossibly possible task where the translator is in charge to alter the text as per his perception. Despite a command over the source and target language certain limitations hinder the process of translation. It is a complex task to find alternative vocabulary and contextually appropriate terms while translating any material from literature.*

**Keywords:** feminism, stylistics, translation, Sufism.

### **Introduction**

The concept of love of the Supreme Being- Allah or God – is quite pivotal in Sufism, which is the way of Divine love. Many writers like Rabiah al-Adawiyah of Basrah, Muhiyy al-Din Ibn al-Arabi and Jalal al-Din Rumi elaborated the Sufi philosophy of 'Ishq' (intensified love coupled with a passionate longing for the union). The notion of Divine love is explained elaborately in all genres of Sufi literature because it was considered as the most suitable vehicle of enunciating the subtle transcendent and lofty experiences of love. This research exemplifies the difference in English and Punjabi version of the poem and how translation can be an impossibly possible task in terms of poetry translation.

The presence of metaphorical and figurative language enhances the functional value of symbols in Sufi poetry, which makes the Sufi ideas and concepts more enthusiastically comprehensible. Therefore, Sufi poets incorporate symbolism to build and explain the relationship between the outer (zahir) and the inner (batin) realities of life. The outer reality depicts the underlined meanings and concepts whereas the inner reality is the real essence.

This research paper focuses on the role of women as an agent within Punjabi classical poetry for reshaping the social and moral status of people. The purpose is to single out the aspects of stylistics

to draw a comparison between the source language i.e., Punjabi with the target language i.e., English translation of the chosen Kaafi by Qausain. Shah Hussain is at the forefront of providing an authentic voice to an otherwise 'silent' gender. It nullifies the patriarchal construction of Pakistani society by providing the evidence of female persona as a significant voice in Shah Hussain classical Sufi poetry of 17<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **Research Objectives:**

- To explore the role of translation through stylistic analysis in Punjabi Classical poetry.
- To analyze the use of feministic references in Punjabi Classical Poetry.
- To evaluate how literal translation can divert the contextual meanings.

#### **Research Questions:**

This research will focus on the following questions.

**Q:** How the role of women is being used as a symbol of submissiveness in Punjabi Classical Poetry?

**Q:** How the translated version and the source text are different from each other?

**Q:** To what extent does poetry in translation is able keep the essence of the original work?

#### **Research Significance:**

The significance of this research paper is to depict the role of women in Sufi classical poetry. Since any such comparative research on the persona of women has not been written before in the field of translation studies, therefore it acts as a source for detailed framework to use stylistics as a source for future researchers.

#### **Research Limitations:**

The limitations of this research paper are that the search engines and journal articles used as reference material are limited due to less research on Punjabi Sufi poetry. Therefore, the analysis is mostly self-written consulting limited articles.

#### **Literature Review**

The focus of this section is to build theoretical underpinning of the research. It provides an understanding of the research framework and material that was used to analyze and prepare discussion analysis.

A woman has been personified by many writers and poets in their writings. For instance, Aisling poetry is the kind of genera in which Ireland is personified as a young woman who calls on the poets to come and defend her. William Butler wrote a famous Aisling play called "Cathleen ni Houlihan" in which he represented Ireland as an extremely poor old lady who can be transformed into a young lady only by the sacrifice of a young man for the sake of her love. Therefore, in his play, the misery of Ireland is depicted by the condition of poor old women through which Yeats tries to call on young people to save their motherland by sacrificing their lives for it (rad, 2016).

Moreover, nature is feminized in a number of writing of poets and writer because it possesses the same qualities as a woman. Frequently used feminine features for discussing nature are related to life cycles such as fertility, reproduction, and bounty. Many literary terms in this regard are used by poets in their poetry to exhibit the motherly character of Earth. For instance, wombs and bosoms are used by John Milton in his poem Paradise Lost. (Nature being represented as woman)

In Indian literature, Sufi poets represented the soul as Virahini, a woman who is longing for her beloved, symbolically the God. Its most renowned use is in Hindi Devotional Poetry addressed to Krishna to whom the gopis, or milkmaids, particularly Radha, express their longing for union. After the arrival of Muslims in sub-continent, they also adopted the same genre where they changed the implication of Virahini in their own contexts such as the beloved in their case as either

Allah or Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Moreover, in ginans the devotional poems of subcontinent's Khoja Ismaili communities used virhani to express their love for their Imam. (W.Meri, 2006)

### **Shah Hussain's Background:**

Shah Hussain is considered as the second most important poet of Punjabi Language after Baba Farid Ganj Shakar. Time elapse among both of them is of 250 years which shows the absence of any kind of literary work during that period. Few of the people consider Baba Guru Nanak as the great poet of Punjabi before Shah Hussain, however, many scholars argue that his poetry is not pure Punjabi Classic Poetry. Therefore, Shah Hussain is that gem who bears the title to be called as second great Punjabi poet. (Latif, 2015)

Shah Hussain's real name was Hussain and he was born in 1538. He was the son of a weaver called Nusikhia (apprentice), Sheikh Usman. His family belonged to the Dhudha clan of Rajputs. Few historians proclaim that his grandfather or the great-grandfather had adopted Islam as a religion, however, Dr. Jeet Singh Seetal has acknowledged through citing several sources that Shah Hussain's father was the first person who converted to Islam during the reign of King Feroz Shah Tughlak. (Ejaz, 2011)

Shah Hussain got his early education from Abu Bakar's madrassa in Taxali Gate of Lahore. He was memorizing the Holy Quran when he met the spiritual teacher Shah Bahlol Dariyai of Chiniot. Shah Bahlol asked him to take some water from River Ravi where he got the spiritual support of Hazrat Khizar (A.S) to memorize Holy Quran in few days. Later, Shah Bahlol took the responsibility for his spiritual guidance and ordered him to visit Data Darbar daily in the day whereas pray while standing in the Ravi river in the night.

By his mid-thirties, he got a chance to become the pupil of Sheikh Saad Ullah's who was believed to be the teacher of elites. At an age of thirty-six, while taking a lesson on Tafseer (interpretation) called "Midrak", he came across an ayah of Surah Alankaboot "This world is a place to play". He ran out laughing and totally abandoned the path of organized religion. After that, he was always seen dancing in a red dress with the wine surahi (bottle) and a piala (earthen cup) in his hand. (Hassnain, 2014)

### **His Sufi Poetry (Kafian):**

Shah Hussain's poetry collection is known as "Kafian Shah Hussain" which were taken out by Dr. Mohin Singh Dewana from areas near to River Sindh. All his poetry collection is comprised of total 163 Kafian. Commenting on Shah's poetry, Dr. Mohin Singh said

I have taken this Kalam from a book which was prepared by a Sindhi by incorporating Sub-Continent's Hindus, Sikhs, Sadhus and Sufis Kalaam (Latif, 2015).

Moreover, another historian comments on Shah's poetry as:

"Hussain's only work is a number of Kafias of a high mystic type."

**Kaafi** is a particular kind of Sufi poetry which discusses divine attribution along with Sufi beliefs. The word Kaafi has its origin in Arabic word "Ka'fi" which means completeness and wholeness. Few scholars define it as the genre of poetry which explains one topic, thought or an idea in a complete form with all its intricate elements.

### **Use of Feminine Symbolism:**

Shah Hussain's poetry is enriched with symbols in which he uses the "feminine" character of Eastern Women as the major agent for discussing the impermanence of the world as well as Divine Love. He intentionally used the feminine character to inspire the female sensibilities of the universe that are to inspire productiveness, passion, and tenderness. Moreover, Shah Hussain followed the long-standing tradition of talking in form of a female lover. The feministic references

which he employed in his poetry were Heer (Human), Ranjha (God or Allah), Charkha (Human body), Paika (world), Sus and Ninan (Munkir and Nakir), Doli (Funeral), and Am'bri (Shariah), etc.

As Dr. Asmat Allah Zahid says,

'The reality about the Punjabi language has been accepted now that it is the product of Dravidian civilization instead of Aryan civilization. Maternal system prevailed in Dravidian Civilization and woman was the chief of the tribe. Kids had their surnames after their mother's name instead of fathers and she was considered as the utmost independent individual whose suggestions and views were given esteem respect regarding family dealings. For this reason, classical poets reflect the role of women in poetry in the form of depicting love. Till now, Hindi and Punjabi poetry's foundation is based on this view' (Latif, 2015).

### **Stylistic Analysis**

Stylistics is one of the fundamental parts of Applied Linguistics that frets about investigating the style of different scholarly and non-abstract messages. Complex investigation has no consistent definition as style changes after specific period. Even though it is characterized and clarified ordinarily in the past, however, all the definitions are changed with the change in style. Short expresses that "stylistics is a way to deal with the examination of (artistic) messages utilizing linguistic depiction".

Among numerous strategies and terms, we use while doing an elaborate investigation, foregrounding is especially significant in elaborate examination. Leech and Short (1981: 48) characterize foregrounding as a 'masterfully inspired deviation'. As indicated by Mukarovsky, foregrounding, something contrary to automaticity in a content, alludes to the scope of expressive impacts that happen in writing, regardless of whether at the phonetic level (e.g., similar sounding word usage, rhyme), the syntactic level (e.g., reversal, ellipsis), or then again the semantic level (e.g., metaphor, irony) all of which violate the plan of the content.

It implies that Stylistics isn't as it were worried about what the content methods yet in addition how the writings structure its importance what's more, to discover this, definite Stylistics investigation is done to reveal the extraordinary foregrounding and different procedures utilized by creator or writer. At first Stylistics was worried about the investigation of scholarly messages as it were however, with the advancement of innovation there came headway in information furthermore, presently a day's Stylistics likewise includes the examination of non-abstract writings.

Initial focus of Stylistics was the type of the content; however, later consideration was to acknowledge its various implications also. Where style is a way, strategy, or technique by which something is done, Stylistics is the stage for the investigation of such styles of distinctive exacting kinds and individual scholars. Stylistics gives firm grounds to consider and comprehend the examples and styles utilized by creators or artists through elaborate investigation.

### **Levels of Stylistics Analysis**

Coming up next are the degrees of stylistics. We investigate the content as per these levels.

#### **1. Phonetic level:**

It is an assessment of sounds; at a phonetic level we study the qualities and possible utility of sounds.

#### **2. Phonological level:**

It is the investigation of the sound arrangement of a given language, the Formal standards of elocution.

### 3. Graphological level:

It is closely resembling investigation of language's composing framework, the formalized standards of spellings.

### 4. Grammatical level:

In this level both the syntactic and morphological levels are talked about. The point is to break down the inside structure of sentences in a language and the way they work in groupings. Conditions, phrases, words, things, action words, and so forth should be recognized and gotten through an examination to discover the foregrounding and the deviation.

### 5. The lexical level:

It is the investigation of how individual words and maxims will in general example in various phonetic setting, on the semantic level as far as stylistics.

Therefore, the above elaborated concepts of Stylistic analysis helped to compare the two poems and build an analysis individually representing all the levels with their literary analysis.

## **Research Methodology**

### **Type of Research:**

The type of research implemented is qualitative in nature. It is based on stylistic analysis using the phonological, lexical, pragmatic, and grammatical levels along with Interpretative model of translation by Marianne Lederer to compare the features of the chosen Kaafi from the perspective of translation studies.

### **Research Population:**

The research sample comprises of a Kaafi “Ma’ain ni mai kinon akhan” by Shah Hussain and its English translated version by Qausain.

### **Research Framework:**

Methodology
Data collection
Punjabi and English version of the poem
Discussion analysis
Qualitative (Stylistic Analysis and Interpretative model of translation)
Conclusion and recommendations

## **Discussion Analysis**

This section analyzes the difference between the original Punjabi version of the poem with the translated English version of it. An entire illustration based on phonetic, lexical, semantic, and pragmatic levels is discussed from the perspective of translation studies.



**Shah Hussain's Kaafi (Ma'ain ni mai kinon akhan)**  
**Translation by Qausain**

مائے نی میں کہینوں اکھاں ، درد وچھوڑے دا حال  
O mother O mother, who do I tell, this pain of separation  
وہواں دھکھے میرے مرشد والا، جاں پھولاں تاں لال  
My Master's fire smolders, If I poke, its red hot  
سولاں مار دیوانی کیتی، برہوں پیاساڈے خیال  
Driven mad with spikes, Pain of separation fills my thoughts  
دکھاں دی روٹی ، سولاں دا سالن، آہیں دا بالن بال  
Bread of sadness, sauce of spikes, Make a fire of laments  
جنگل بیلے پھرے ڈھونڈیندی اجے نہ پائیوال  
Wandered jungles and deserts, But not found the ruby  
رانجھن رانجھن پھراں ڈھونڈیندی، رانجھن میرے نال  
wander looking for Ranjhan Ranjhan, But Ranjhan is with me  
کہے حسین فقیر نماں، شوہ ملے تاں تھیواں نہال  
Says Hussain the poor faqeer, Meeting God would be ecstasy

**Stylistic Analysis**

**Phonological Level**

**Refrain:**

A literary device to repeat some words or phrases which can make it musical, memorabkle and seem important. Specifically, to lay emphasis on certain words it is used. As in this poem “

Example:

Mai ni mai (O Mother, O Mother)

Ranjhan ranjhan

**Alliteration:**

Existence of the identical letter or sound at the beginning of neighboring or closely connected words.

Example:

***Ranjhan Ranjhan phiraan dhoudaindi, Ranjhan mairay nal  
wander looking for Ranjhan Ranjhan, But Ranjhan is with me***

**Rhyme scheme:**

In both poems there is a free verse style. As in the original text Shah Hussain writes it in a free manner and similarly Qausain follows the same style in the translated version of the poem. Punjabi as compared to English text follows monorhyme which is that all verses follow the same pattern in both languages.

**Lexical Level**

Nouns	Verbs	Adjective s	Pronoun s	Preposition s	Determiner s	Conjunction s
Mother	Tell	Red	Who	Of	My	If

Pain	Smolder	Hot	I	with	Its	And
Separation	Do	mad	This	for	The	but
Master	Driven		Me			
Fire	Fills					
Poke	Make					
Spikes	Wandered					
Pain	Found					
Separation	wander					
Thoughts	Looking					
Bread	Says					
Sadness	meeting					
Sauce						
Laments						
Jungle						
Deserts						
Ruby						
Ranjhan						
Hussain						
Faqeer						
God						
Ecstasy						
Poor						

**Semantic Level:**

Punjabi Words	English translated meanings
Ma'ain	Mother
akhan	tell
Dard	pain
Vichore	Separation
Dhuan Dhukay	Fire smolders
Roti	Bread
Salan	Sauce
Baalan baal	Make a fire
Ahen	Laments
Laal	ruby
Ranjhan	Ranjhan
Faqeer	Faqeer
Shoh	God

As we can observe from this table that the lexical items are translated into the target language with the surface level semantic meaning. Some of the words are translated as it is such as “ma’ain, akhan, dard” but some words which do not have an equivalent lexical item in English such as “roti” as “bread” and “salan” as “sauce” changes the entire context of Punjabi culture that is present in the original text. Moreover, the term “faqeer” remains the same because on a deeper level “faqeer” does not mean “beggar” as the English translation of it. Qausain tried to keep the real essence here, but this flouts the rules of translation where no translation takes place. The term “ranjhan” which means beloved is also not translated in this poem. Certain lexical boundaries along with inability of equivalence in meaning found in the target language acts as a barrier in translation.

### **Pragmatic Level:**

Such as the interpretative model of translation is concerned it helps to decipher the deeper level meaning through interpretation of the original text as compared to the source text to clarify the real meaning. During the journey of love, the lover tastes and experiences the real essence of love. Both the terms ‘faqir’, and ‘Darvesh’ means a traveler on the way of the God. In Punjabi poetry, the image of a faqir is at the core of the idea of the lover. That is why he occupies the center of the arena in Punjabi classical Sufi poetry such as in Shah Hussain and Bulleh Shah’s poetry.

Shah Hussain’s heart has been lit with the fire of love which does not let him be calm anywhere. He has been in a constant state of separation and eagerness to meet his beloved, which can be easily identified in the above excerpt. Here, Shah Hussain has personified human being with a lady who is immensely in love with her beloved i.e. God here. She calls her mother and complains that to whom she can explain the pain of separation through which she is going. In the next line he uses the word “Dhawan Dhuky” which implies the slow and eternal suffering of his beloved’s separation in his heart so whenever she looks into it, she only sees the red-hot fire in it. She also continues to tell her mother that “Sullan” i.e. Spikes of separation have made her mad and this seems to be written in her fate. In other words, this separation is on her nerves, and she has been facing it for a long time. Moreover, she says that she takes the bread of sadness along with a sauce of spikes (separation) and cooks it on the fire of sighs. Here Shah Hussain is trying to say how wretched life she is enduring for her lover. After this, she explains that I am rambling like a wanderer in jungles and deserts but could not find my ruby. Here it means that she has been tolerating every hardship on her way to God, but she has not found Him yet. The word “Laal” here has three connotations i.e. ruby (stone), lover (human) and God (Allah). She continues to say that she has been looking for Ranjha (her beloved) while he was present within her. Here Ranjha is God and He resides within the Human beings, therefore, there is no need to look for Him in the outer world. As Allah (SWT) says,

‘Neither My Heavens nor My Earth can hold Me, but the heart of My servant, the believer, is a house for Me’.

Therefore, this is the message which Shah Hussain tries to give his audiences that do not run after worldly thing to find God. He is already present within you and waiting for you to recognize His presence. In the last line of the excerpt, he calls himself the “faqir” of Allah and says that he would have gone ecstatic if he gains his beloved. Here the word “Shoh” has been used by Shah Hussain which connotes “beloved” and in other words “Allah”.



### **Grammatical Level:**

On the grammatical level if we compare the two versions, we can see that the same pattern is followed by Qausain in the translated version.

1. Translated as well as the source text; both are in active voice.
2. The use of punctuation marks such as, commas are present in the exact similar pattern.
3. Literal translation is done by Qausain.
4. The structure of stanzas (phrases and clauses) is similar with respect to SVO and SOV of both the languages.

### **Analysis through Interpretative Model of Translation:**

This approach is based on interpretative theory of meaning where sense is transferred in terms of the meaning that it conveys in the target language. The following table in the light of this model of interpretation in translation depicts how theory of meaning works.

Dhuan Dhukay (Fire smolders)	Implies the slow and eternal suffering of his beloved's separation in his heart so whenever she investigates it, she only sees the red-hot fire in it.
Soolan (spikes)	Spikes of separation have made her mad and this seems to be written in her fate.
Jungle belay phiran (wandered jungles and deserts)	Here it means that she has been tolerating every hardship on her way to God, but she has not found Him yet.
Laal (ruby)	The word "Laal" here has three connotations i.e. ruby (stone), lover (human) and God (Allah).
Ranjha	Here Ranjha is God and He resides within the Human beings, therefore, there is no need to look for Him in the whole world.
Faqir	Both the terms 'faqir', and 'Darvesh' means a traveler on the way of the God. In Punjabi poetry, the image of a faqir is at the core of the idea of the lover.
Shoh (God)	Here the word "Shoh" has been used by Shah Hussain which connotes "beloved" and in other words "Allah".

As far as interpretation in translation is concerned it is role of the translator to translate the actual meaning and convey the true essence of literature as it is present in the original text with the context and culture it prevails. The theory of meaning in translation is a process which helps to deverbilize the text and represent the important aspects of the functions of language. That is why this approach is used in translation of poetry as it is most suitable to convey the meaning in poetry while translating.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, despite the rise of feminism in English literature in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, Punjabi classical poetry has maintained its position and patronage till date due to its rich symbolism, people-centric concepts and appraisal of the Beloved who is no other than God, the Almighty. Shah Hussain's identification with women specifically with the women character of romantic folk tales comprises varied implications in the patriarchal social structure of Punjabi society. Therefore, a Sufi poet like Shah Hussain has challenged the basic premises of gender relationship by the symbolic gender reversal. No love is purer than that of a female, which is why male poets transform themselves into female voice to depict sincerity and purity of love. Translation is an impossibly possible task, but when it comes to poetry translation it is quite visible how certain loopholes are found, and the true essence is lost in poetry translation.

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