

An Exploratory Study of Distress and Redemption in Ghalib's ''Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat''

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to explore the human pain, loss, and the search for the salvation in Mirza Ghalib's invaluable Urdu ghazal "Yeh na thi hamari qismat". The paper takes up the qualitative approach to see the sights for tenderness and salvation in Ghalib's poetry. The paper uses Herman's trauma theory by Judith Herman as framework for the study and translation on Ghalib's poetry by Ralph Russell. Through trauma theory applied to Ghalib's poetry, we seek to discover the psychological aspects of the suffering and redemption portrayed in the ghazal which will, in the turn, illuminate the complex interrelationship between the personal traumas and the search for meaning and peace. Moreover, this study reveals the stress of suffering, trauma recovery and survival in a subtle manner and this illustrates the enduring power of the ghazal as well as the universal appeal to audiences the world over regardless of age or nationality. Through the interaction of poetry and trauma theory, Ghalib's poem is still able to deliver abiding life messages.

Keywords: Mirza Ghalib, Trauma Theory, Ralph Russell, Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat

Introduction

Mirza Ghalib (1797-1869) emerged to be the most famous Urdu/Persian poet of the Mughal age in the India. The ghazal genre is Ghalib's virtuoso performance, dealing with the themes of love, loss, the philosophy, and the complexities of being human. His works still enjoy a high status because of the intellectual profundity, linguistic richness, and contemporary relevance, and so, Ghalib is one of the leading figures of Urdu literature. Among one of the most popular Urdu ghazals of Mirza Ghalib is "*Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat*" which is resolutely themed on loss, desire, and even surrender. Ghalib, the poet, through his artful verses talks about life's uncertainties and the prisoners of fate, and thus creates a sense of sorrow becoming a acceptor. The adorning theme of the ghazal is the human feelings and opinions of the existence highlighting it a masterpiece of the urdu poetry.

The translation of "Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat" from Mirza Ghalib by Ralph Russell supplies the English speaking readers with a chance to get in touch with the timeless beauty of the Urdu ghazal and capture its deep ideas of life with their own feelings and emotions. By turning the original verses into an image of the art, Russell is very respectful to the heart of Ghalib's creations. Here, he utilizes the sensitivity, imagery, and the artistic expression. The translation, in this case, becomes that bridge, which further enriches the significance of the



studied literary work and encourages deeper insight into Ghalib's unique poetic genius, which would otherwise be lost in a translation.

Herman's Trauma Theory by psychiatrist Judith Herman deals with the psychological outcomes of trauma, as well as complex trauma that includes a lot of abuse or violence. It highlights the idea that trauma is considered to be functional when the sense of safety, identity and also agency is disrupted. Herman's framework highlights three stages of recovery: recollection, lament and recollect and then relinking with the daily life. The theory has one positive side in that it helped to develop and gave a grounds for therapies of the affected.

Significant of Research

This research contribution strengthens the scholarly understanding of Urdu literature by giving a sophisticated analysis of Ghalib's poetry beyond the traditional themes of love and longing to account for the psychological phenomena of suffering and salvation. This paper though trauma theory, demonstrates the psychological complexities of Ghalib's poetry hence depicts the human experience of trauma, resilience, and healing. In addition, the study promotes the interdisciplinary dialogues among literature, psychology, and trauma studies, indicating the importance of literary analysis in comprehension of psychological phenomenon and psychological research in general as well. The value of Ghalib's poetry cultural wise applies to the entire Urdu speaking community and the whole world at large. Ghalib's work that studies tales of woe and deliverance in the poem *"Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat"* is represented as everlasting and having echoes everywhere. The research results may be utilized to revolutionize the teaching practices in literature and psychology courses, providing educators with the necessitated ideas of how trauma theory can be employed in many literary texts to raise the student comprehension in both disciplines.

Overall, this research work widens the scope of our perception of Ghalib's poetry and triggers the scholarly interaction between the spheres of literature, psychology, and traumatology, which brightens our for understanding of the human condition.

Research Questions

- 1. Why does Ghalib's "Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat" convey the feeling of the pain and sorrow?
- 2. How does redemption and resilience manifest in the ghazal?
- 3. What enrichment does the translation by Ralph Russell give us to illustrate the trauma theory within the context of poetry of Ghalib?
- 4. Which linguistic and thematic tools does the poet employ to reveal the psychological complexity of the suffering and then the renewal?

Objectives of Research

- To assess the portrayal of pain and trauma in Ghalib's "Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat" from a psychological perspective.
- To unravel and evaluate the ideas of redemption and also resilience as presented by the ghazal.
- To clarify the role played by Ralph Russell in this process of situating Ghalib's work within the Turkish trauma theory as indicated by Herman's.
- To study the linguistic and thematic elements of the ghazal in order to reveal the psychological features of the suffering and then redemption.

Literature Review

Mirza Ghalib is no doubt one of the most amazing poets of Urdu and also Persian of the 19th Century who still mesmerizes at his work through the depth and the emotion that his poetry exudes. In the course of centuries, many scholars, and critics were analyzing Ghalib's works



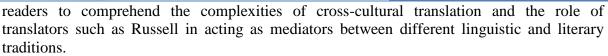
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with regard of his clever language, his thematic focus on the love, loss, and also existentialism, as well as the social-political background of that period. In his seminal work, "Ghalib: The opening of that volume, "The Man, The Times, The Poet," by eminent scholar Ralph Russel, contained a biography of Ghalib that described his personal life, his lifelong struggle with poverty and opium addiction, and also his enduring heritage in Urdu literature. Analysis by Russell gives very significant insights to the external factors, culture inclusive, which helped to shape the poetry of Ghalib in the 19th century India (Russel, 1999). Furthermore, in "The Secret Mirror: The essay called The Literary Form and History in Ghalib's Poetry has been written by the very renowned critic and translator, Frances Pritchett. She discusses the formal properties of Ghalib's poetry including his prowess in various poetic forms of ghazal and gasida. Pritchett's examination of Ghalib is a confirmation of the poet's originality in poetic form, enabling him to tread beyond the limits of the regular conventions, therefore giving a new definition to the Urdu poetry (Pritchett 1989). Moreover, contemporary scholars like Asaduddin Durrani in "Ghalib: By means of "The Poet and His Age," the poetry of Ghalib is studied from new perspectives, which puts his work in the context of 19th-century India. The treatise of Durrani unveils, however, how the poem of the poet Ghalib represents the dynamic political environment of his own era, dominated by the colonialism, social disorder and the decline of the Mughal empire (Durrani, 2000). In her article "Interpreting Ghalib: "Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat (Ifsheh, 2007)" While analyzing the ghazal Jalal looks in depth at its central themes and motifs. Jalal goes deeper into Ghalib's affair with mastership of the issue of predestination (gismat) and its power on the destiny. Jalal eulogizes Ghalib's poem through close reading and textual analysis where presents the verves between human free-will and divine destiny in the ghazal.

Furthermore, in his book "The Rebel's Silhouette: In his "Complete Shabistan-i Ghalib," translator and scholar Aijaz Ahmad gives a sophisticated reading of "Yeh Na Thi Hamari *Oismat,*" placing it in a broader social context. Ahmad brings existential themes extant in the ghazal to light, scrutinizing Ghalib's musings on mortality, desire, and the transience of human relationship. Readers can gain the critical awareness of Ahmad's interpretation on how the prevalent existential attitude in Ghalib's poetry is relevant to today's sensibilities (Ahmad 1991). Moreover, in "Ghalib: Khalid Hameed Shaida, the translator and critic, brings in a cultural angle to his analysis entitled "The Indian Beloved," positioning the song within the culture of 19th-century India. Shadi observes Ghalib's imagination and symbolic use of metaphors in the ghazal, inferring nostalgia, annihilation and the illusory nature of worldly pleasures. The analysis of Shaida gave readers a kind of deeper understanding of the sociocultural forces and how they shaped Ghalibis poetry to become a resonating poem with readers across ages (Shahida, 2004). In her article "Translating Ghalib: Hussain (2015) takes a critical view of the work of Ralph Russell in translating 'Yeh Na Thi Hamari Oismat' of Ghalib questioning the intricacies of verse conversion process into English. Hussain discusses Russell's choices with reference to language, meter and rhyme scheme, highlighting his concern to retain the aesthetic and emotional values of the orthodox ghazal. Hussain carries out a textual analysis, assessing the ability of Russell's translation in representing the spirit of Ghalib's poetry and in ensuring its universal message to people from different linguistic cultures.

Furthermore, in his essay "Between Two Worlds: In his article, Mufti (2009) tries to contextualize the translation of Ghalib by Ralph Russell within the broader picture of urdu-English literary exchange. Mufti talks about the cultural and political implications of the Russell's project, making this translation the sample of how larger relationships of colonialism, globalism, and literary canons are at work. The analysis by Mufti enables



Moreover, in "Ghalib: In the documentary "Life and Letters," Russell (2013) ponders on his translation of "Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat," and there is information on his style and method. Russell refers to the issues he had with interpreting the subtleties of Ghalib's language and imagery into the English language, stressing his attempts to remain as true to the original as possible but at the same time ensuring readability and the beauty of the poetry. Consideration of Russell's has the reader like the art of translation and the subtleties in Ghalib's verse. In this case, Bassnett has questions whether translation is a discipline, a profession or an activity. Furthermore, in "In Other Words: In her teaching manual "A Coursebook on Translation" Mona Baker represents the pedagogical side of Translation Studies, creating practical instruments for students and practitioners to analyze and perform translation tasks (Baker, 2011). Additionally, in "Translation and Conflict: In a Narrative Account," Mona Baker and Gabriel García Ochoa discuss how translation works in conflict areas and what it can do to both heighten and reduce intergroup tensions (Baker & García Ochoa, 2019).

Research Methodology

This research will adopt a qualitative approach which will be comprised of textual analysis and close reading techniques to deconstruct the linguistic and thematic elements of Ghalib's ghazal. Applying Herman's Trauma Theory (in the light of Russell's translation), we will extract major elements: metaphors, symbols, and narrative structure, to illustrate the suffering and redemption as the main theme in *"Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat"*.

Discussion and Analysis

Suffering and Trauma Experience

In the translation of Ghalib's "Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat" by Ralph Russell, the human condition of suffering and trauma is delved into, with a sorrowful view of unfinished love, existential despair, and reminiscent of missed occasions. The poem gives its readers a perspective of Herman's Trauma Theory, which is characterized by the persistence of past trauma on the psyche of the speaker and the long journey to deal with their torment. In the center of this poem we find the theme of unreciprocated love, which is a source of great emotional turmoil for the speaker. "Yeh na thi hamari qismat ke visaal-e-yaar hota" are the words Ghalib starts with, which according to Ralph Russell translation they mean, "It was not in my fate that I should attain union with my beloved." This sorrowful confession is a presage of the speaker's grief at their shattered desires and the anguish of wishing for a love that The use of the word "qismat" (fate) indicates a predestination, in line with Herman's Trauma Theory according to which traumatic experiences seem to be fated thus impossible to escape.

In the poem, the poem writer uses repetition to emphasize the repetitive nature of the speaker's suffering. "*Yeh na thi hamari qismat*" refrain comes up through the verses, emphasizing the speaker's acceptance of their destiny, and the endless loop of pining and despair. The repetitions performed in the poem not only illustrate the degree of emotional suffering but also portray the intrusive nature of trauma that can chase people after the trauma is over. Besides, Ghalib's searching for existential themes makes the poem more pleasing to



sufferings and traumas. The speaker's ruminations about life's uncertainties and the fleeting nature of existence further multiply their emotional outburst, which is one of the reasons of their existential anguish. Through the contemplation of the passage of time and the unavoidable nature of death, the speaker faces the fragility of human life and the deceptive nature of their own aspirations. This existential distress is correspondent with Herman's Trauma Theory which recognizes the immense impact that traumatic experience has on an individual's comprehension of themselves and the world.

Additionally, the imagery in Ghalib's work creates poignant feelings of sadness and nostalgia thereby, making the poem more emotional. The poet goes over the lost moments which bring back the happy memories and some sadness due to the vivid pictures of the moments. In one stanza, remembering, *"Kahaan mai-khaane ka darwaaza 'Ghalib' aur kahaan vaa'iz,"* which Russell translates as, *"Where is the tavern door, Ghalib, and where the preacher?"* This clash of the tavern signaling earthly pleasures and the preacher representing piety and restraint shows the internal conflict of the speaker Moreover, it emphasizes the duality of memory, for the poet experiences the pain of nostalgia and is irreversibly aware that the enjoyment of the past cannot be brought back.

In a nutshell, "YehNaThiHamariQismat"by Ghalib in the translation of Ralph Russell demonstrates a deep sense of contemplation on the ordeal of suffering and trauma. Through its portrayal of unconsummated love, existential despair, and lingering ghosts of forgotten moments, the poem depicts the lasting effect of past trauma on the speaker's psychological condition. Through the exploration of the depths of human emotion and existential turmoil, Ghalib brings readers face to face with their own suffering and provides a means of finding solace just in the common factors of the human experience.

Key Elements of Redemption and Resilience

The ghazal "Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat" by Ghalib mainly focuses on unfoldings such suffering and trauma in general but there are some factors, such as redemption and resilience, that are portrayed in the ghazal. By resorting to those elements, the speaker showcases the moments of hope and power amidst his emotional crisis. An important aspect of destiny in the qasida is the speaker's acceptance of fate, as well as the ability to find meaning and beauty in their suffering. Profoundly apparent in the poem is a strong sense of the speaker's sadness and fatality, yet there is a certain tranquility in the acceptance of what is going to be. In the lines "Is it not true that in case of living longer I would have the same trial," to which a translation by Russell is "Had I lived longer, the same waiting would have been my *lot*," the speaker acknowledges that his spiritual suffering is his fate by default. This admission gives the impression of a kind of absolution thus becoming a virtue through the acceptance of one's lot, even if it is extremely bitter. Meanwhile, the speaker demonstrates the strength of character that enabled him to seek consolation and escape in his poetry and reflection. In ghazal, Ghalib use figurative and metaphoric speech to reveal emotional experiences of the speaker in order to reach a deeper understanding and acceptance. The lines "Kahaan mai-khaan ka darwaaza "Ghalib" aur kahaan vaa"wa"iz", translated by Russell to "where is the tavern door, Ghalib, and where the preacher?" exemplify this double nature of earthly pleasure and spiritual reflection. Although the speakers constantly feels weaknesses for the intoxicating alcohol of the tavern, he also sees that the deeper truths and wisdom are in the preacher. The contrast however highlights that the speaker may have gone through earthly trials yet they have the strength to bounce back if only they will embrace spiritual reflection. Moreover, the speaker's ability to give out their emotions through poetry could be



seen as an act of fearlessness for him/her. In the tradition of Urdu poetry, ghazal stands as a medium to investigate the intricacies of inner world of human beings. Through the process of embodiment of his pain and longing into a poem, the speaker finds solace and empowerment. This creative expression becomes a form of catharsis, giving the speaker a chance to grasp back agency and meaning in the midst of suffering.

In fact, it is possible to say that besides suffering and trauma, Ghalib's "Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat" is in essence about redemption and resilience. The hope and fortitude instances that a person is reconciled with fate and contemplates spirituality and expresses through poetry. These elements represent the survivor spirit and the potential of discovering meaning and beauty in the blackness of chaos.

Ralph Russell's Version is Easier to Understand

The translation of Ghalib's "Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat" by Raph Russel gives the reader a profound sense of the speaker's inner emotional suffering and existential anguish, hence adding depth to our understanding of trauma theory through Ghalib's poetry. The translation by Russell conveys the main message of Ghalib's Urdu text and makes the poem's themes of suffering and trauma broadly applicable therefore our understanding of the concept of trauma theory is deepened.

In a most fascinating way, Russell's translation enhances our understanding of the trauma theory theme by preserving the emotional tone and complexity that Ghalib's poems possess. The choice of words and phrasing enables the author to show the speaker's mood profoundly, for example, the mood of yearning, sorrow and anxiety. Russell attempts to demonstrate this by translating the first lines of the ghazal into "I could not join my beloved; my destiny was suffering," this is what the speaker wants to convey. The direct interpretation of this allows the readers to walk in the same shoes with the speaker emotionally by relating to the effects of the trauma on the psyche, as has been postulated by trauma theory. Besides that, Russell's translation offers also important help to the cultural and historical context of Ghalib's poetry which helps us to better understand what the speaker had experienced as a suffering from the trauma. The re-adaptation of certain Urdu words and poetic entities in Russell's translation functions as a receptacle of the magical and truthful nature of Ghalib. The exactness, which holds true for the reader, explains on the one hand the depth of the speaker's emotional landscape and on the other hand the social environment that causes their sorrows. In order to have a comprehensive look at the relationship between individual and social trauma, the adaptation of Russell is a must for the readers because the audience can enjoy the trauma theory. Also, translation renders more clear idea of trauma due to disclosure that Ghalib's subject remains appealing in modern era. Irrespective of the fact that Ghalib wrote his Ghazals in India during the 19th century, one feels a familiarity with the universal issues of love, loss and angst, which surpass the boundaries of time and culture. Russell in translating keeping this theme in his mind makes sure that the modern reader comprehends these themes and relate their [own] experience with the speaker's trauma. The translation, even while being faithful to the language, manages to establish a closeness between the past and the present which underscores the enduring significance of trauma theory as applied to Ghalib's poetry and the human condition.

Linguistic and Thematic Devices

In "Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat," Ghalib uses diverse linguistic and thematic devices to highlight the psychological aspects of suffering and redemption. These devices add to the poem and help readers to look deeper into the complexities of the emotional journey of the speaker.



1. Repetition: Repetition played by Ghalib, in particular, the refrains *"Yeh na thi hamari qismat,"* is used to stress the speaker's feeling of resignation and his approval of his fate. The repetition emphasizes the continuousness of the speaker's suffering and at the same time stresses the lasting effect of trauma on their subconscious.

2. Imagery and Symbolism: In the poem, Ghalib uses striking imagery and symbolism to induce the speaker's emotional condition. As a case in point, the picture of the tavern door and the preacher is a symbol of the opposition between worldly pleasures and the religious chastity, revealing the spiritual conflict of the speaker and seeking of sense in the midst of suffering.

3. Metaphor: With the help of metaphorical speech, Ghalib expresses the inner turmoil of the speaker and his existential anguish. The use of metaphorical images like *"intezar" (waiting), and "visaal-e-yaar" (union with the beloved)* symbolize the speaker's desire and the unfulfilling aspect of their wants, which elevates the speaker's emotional voyage.

4. Irony: The irony is used by Ghalib to bring to the forefront the paradoxical nature of the speaker's experiences. For example, the speaker's realization that their suffering was predetermined by destiny adds irony to their submission, thus implying an acceptance and rebellion at the same time.

5. Allusion: Ghalib refers to the wider philosophical and cultural matters, making the poem deep in terms of themes. References to such concepts as fate ("*qismat*") and the transient nature of being are the elements that promote the existential reflections of the speaker and provide echo to their pains and redemption.

6. Structure and Form: The form of a ghazal itself functions as a thematic device that enables Ghalib to delve into the intricacies of human emotions through a set of interconnected couplets. At the close of each couplet, the refrain is repeated, and in this way, the main themes of the poem are reiterated, thereby, producing a rhythm and balance which often seems like the cyclical pain being experienced by the speaker.

By these linguistic and thematic means, Ghalib skilfully transmits the psychological subtleties of suffering and salvation in *"Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat"*. The poem turns into a colorful fabric of feelings, so that those, who read it, could dive into the life experience and find comfort among the complications of life's hardships.

Conclusion

Having analyzed Ghalib's "Yeh Na Thi Hamari Qismat" from the perspective of Herman's Trauma Theory in the translation made by Ralph Russell interesting images of suffering, trauma, redemption, and resilience in the ghazal are seen. When examining various linguistic and thematic devices used in the poem, it become clear that Ghalib has mastered those deep psychological nuances that human experience Revelation in Ghalib's suffering and trauma portrays an inner emotional chaos and existential despair in the speaker. The refrain of "Yeh na thi hamari qismat" recurs a number of times, which is testimony to the helplessness of the speaker and the perpetual nature of their suffering. This presentation is adherent to Herman's Trauma Theory, which claims that similar situations lead to psychological suffering and long-term impact on the individual.

Besides, the study has pointed out essential of redemption and resilience in the ghazal. regardless of the overpowering feeling of loss and longing the speaker displays subtle determination in their resignation to the will of faith and attention to the spiritual contemplation. The contrast of worldly enjoyments and boundless enlightenment is the evidence of the inner power of the speaker and his ability to transcend. Furthermore, the translation done by Ralph Russell compiles more aspects of the theory of trauma to the oeuvres of Ghalib as the version of his translation holds the depth of the conveying emotions



and the cultural aspects of the original text. The readers would get the meaning that Ghalib wrote on the same subjects of trauma theory which are commonly addressed by readers of the trauma theory today. Thus, through close analysis of linguistic and thematic tools, we have got a clear sense of the ways the poet uses the subtle components of psychological distress and deliverance. Ghalib uses sharp pictures, figures of speech, and the elements of language like repetition and irony to bring the reader to the twisted nature of of the human soul and the inner peace that can be found in the course of the trials and tribulations of life.

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