



## Style in Fiction: A Stylistic Analysis of *The Bull and the She Devil*

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**Abstract:** *Stylistics is a critical approach which analyses literary texts by using methods and findings of the science of linguistics. The present study is a stylistic analysis of The Bull and the She Devil (1958), a short story written by Zaibunnisa Hamidullah, a pioneering Pakistani feminist writer, who made a significant contribution in the early years of Pakistani English literature. The story, taken from her collection of short stories titled The Young Wife and Other Stories (1958), deals with the theme of sexuality in a repressed patriarchal society. The stylistic analysis has been conducted by using the model proposed by Leech and Short (2007) which is divided into four broad categories i.e. Lexical Categories, Grammatical Categories, Figures of Speech, and, Cohesion and Context. The study concludes that the author through her peculiar, simple yet subtle style is able to effectively deal with a taboo subject without being too explicit.*

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**Key words:** Stylistic analysis, Sexuality, Short Story, Zaibunissa Hamidullah, Leech and Short.

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## Introduction

The explicit dealing of the themes of sex, sexuality and prostitution has been a taboo subject in Urdu as well as English literary tradition in Pakistan. However, there have been a number of dissent voices who, against all odds, wrote on the taboo subjects. In, Urdu literature names like Sadat Hussain Manto, Ismat Chughtai, Rasheed Jehan, Kishwar Naheed and Fehmida Riaz are well-known for breaking taboos in their fiction and poetry (Siddiqui, 2008). Short stories of Manto, Chughtai and Jehan were criticized and banned for obscenity and their writers blamed/charged for the explicit dealing of

the issues of sex and prostitution. Whereas, poets like Kishwar Naheed, and Fehmida Riaz were criticised for boldly expressing the female experience and sensibility in their poetry.

On the other hand, Pakistani Anglophone literature, which shows more political orientation than Urdu literature, does have few voices of dissent though not as infamous as Manto and Chughtai. Tehmina Durani, breaking silence in her autobiography, *My Feudal Lord* (1991) shares a highly personal account of her terrible marital experience with a Punjabi Feudal. Tariq Ali in his *Islam Quintet* challenges the traditional/oriental image of oppressed and passive Muslim woman by portraying bold images of educated, liberated and proactive women. Nonetheless, the taboo subjects of sex, prostitution, incest etc don't find a direct and explicit portrayal in a more political and historical Anglophone fiction from Pakistan as they do in the social-realist Urdu fiction. Sometimes, such taboo subjects are dealt with more subtly and artistically as does Zaibunnisa Hamidullah in her short stories. Her short story *The Bull and the She Devil* deals with the issue of sexuality and its effects on the society in a subtle manner. The story is a fine example of how the author, by using metaphor and other figurative and linguistic devices, remarkably discusses a taboo subject without being too explicit. Hence, she tried to initiate a discourse on a taboo subject without transgressing the cultural boundaries.

Zaibunnisa Hamidullah (1921-2000) was a Pakistani-Bengali writer and journalist. She set an example for Pakistani women by being the first to contribute in various fields. She is credited with pioneering Pakistani literature in English language and feminism in Pakistan. Being a pioneering feminist writer, she highlighted the problems and the suffering of Pakistani women. "The themes of her literary works" says Riaz, "were a combination of traditional and absurd, existential in their approach" (2014, p. 2). The collection of her short stories *The Young Wife and Other Stories* portrays women in different roles as mother, daughter, sister, wife and a daughter-in-law.

The present study is a stylistic analysis of *The Bull and the She Devil* carried out using the model proposed by Leech and Short (2007). The study seeks to analyse that how the writer, through her lexical and syntactic choices, is able to subtly and effectively communicate the complex and taboo subject of sexuality.

### **The Bull and the She Devil: Plot**

The story is written in a simple yet subtle style for it deals with the issue of repressed sexuality in a conservative Muslim society like Pakistan. The story is set in the village of Ghulam Qadir, the protagonist of the story. Ghulam Qadir, a patriarchal peasant who married just three months ago with the young and beautiful Shirin, described by the village match-maker as the ripened fruit brimming with love that would sway to his slightest wishes. Ghulam Qadir shares a mud-house with his widowed elder brother and his young nephew. After the months into marriage, Ghulam Qadir is rather troubled and obsessed for not being able to control his wife's rather charming and luring personality and tender sexuality. Though, he has possessed her physically again and again, yet, there is something beyond his control that makes him so frustrating. His wife and his bull become the recipients of his 'manly' frustration in the shape of insult, anger, and physical beating of the both. He feels his beautiful young wife hasn't been able to quench his inner thirst, his repressed sexual desire.

The story can be divided in two parts. First part presents the protagonist in his fields tilting the land with his bull, reflecting on his marital dilemma - he feels unable to control his wife according his patriarchal needs. He keeps calling her She Devil, a *Shaitan* for she has charmed his elder brother, his nephew and his bull through her sweet talks and gentle ways. While despite his manly powers he hasn't been able to find full satisfaction from her. He plans to finish work early and go back home to have him pleased as his brother and nephew have gone to the city. The scene of the second part takes place at his home and outside in the street. After finishing work when he reaches home, to his disappointment his brother and nephew were already back earlier than expected; hence, his anticipated afternoon with his wife alone goes unrealised. In frustration, he forgets to tie the bull. The bull unnerved by the angry master runs out of the house chased by the latter. To Ghulam Qadir's deep anger and frustration, the bull is only controlled by his wife's tendering of the wild animal while he was being laughed at by the village boys for his inability to control the animal. In a fit of wild rage, Ghulam Qadir injures his wife and kills his brother and nephew with a spade and commits suicide by jumping into well in his fields.

### **The Bull and the She Devil: Thematic Concerns**

In a patriarchal society like Pakistan the discourse/narrative that the patriarchy frames about human nature is erroneous. In the name of maintaining order in society, it programs morality and sexuality both for man and woman as portrayed in that mystified story. The main agenda of the story is to problematize this error of patriarchy. Patriarchal society, says Izugabara, “*depicts good women as lacking sexual desire and men as sexually active, hot and strong...having firmer control of sexuality than women*” (2004, p. 10-11). In the story, the sexuality of the protagonist Ghulam Qadir and his wife Shirin, represented by the Bull, are developed along unhealthy/unnatural lines as prescribed by patriarchy. Since female sexuality is believed to be a source of anarchy and chaos, Shirin is programmed as having suppressed her sexual urges; on the other hand, Gulam Qadir is programmed to express his sexuality as an expression of his manliness and to achieve sexual pleasure from his partner the way he wants. But when they come into contact with each other they fail to develop positive and healthy relationship. Ghulam Qadir finds Shirin’s sexuality so controlled and his utterly uncontrolled. He tries to chain his own sexuality and channelize his wife’s towards him but does not succeed in it. In comparison to his inability to control his uncontrolled sexual urges, his wife’s power to control her sexuality poses a great threat to his masculinity. Under the pressure of prevailing machismo ethos, he tries to prove himself and his wife that he is master of the Bull - his and her sexuality, but he fails in it. He feels humiliated for being a patriarchal man. Society, argues Imtiaz, “*forbids him to recognize “authority” or “power” as an attribute of a woman*” (2012, p. 394) and weakness as a part of his personality. This threat fills his heart with hatred for his wife. Like all patriarchal men, he fails to realize that the problem is not with him and his wife but the way they both have been programmed by the patriarchal society.

It is not only the inactive role in their sexual relation assigned to her by the patriarchal system which has created a ‘void’ in their relation but also the machismo values injected in his mind by patriarchal system. The machismo values teach man to be emotionally detached. Anger is “*the one acceptable feeling in masculine emotional code*” (Wineman, 2003, p. 139), the most highlighting feature of the protagonist in the story. This only feeling associated to him is, unfortunately, the one which does not help one maintain a healthy relationship and ultimately casts a mortal below. Philaretou (2004, p. 152) ) in this regard says the emotional castration of

man makes a man unable to connect to others “*in meaningful, intimate, long-lasting ways...tends to leave them with insurmountable void, an intense and persistent feeling of emptiness and tastelessness*”. The story highlights the patriarchal man’s dual state of being a predator and a victim simultaneously. These characteristics are assigned to him to empower him and subjugate woman but they actually disempower him as they keep him from developing a healthy relation with his spouse which ultimately causes psychological disturbance. It teaches him to possess his woman but does not teach him to earn her love. Through the story, the writer claims that human beings are too complex to be framed in such fabricated stories/discourse about human nature.

### **Stylistics: A Critical Approach**

Stylistics is a critical approach which analyses literary texts by using methods and findings of the science of linguistics. Stylistics developed in twentieth century and it aims to show how the linguistic features of a literary work, such as use of particular words and sentence structures (lexical and syntax choices), contribute to its overall meanings and effects (Barry, 2013, p. 196).

Language is a medium to express human thoughts and emotions that are varied and complex. Writers choose from a wide range of lexical and grammatical choices available to them in a particular language to convey a specific meaning, emotion, thought, mood, effect etc. Different writers may choose different words, phrases, grammatical structures to express even the same thought, concept or meaning. Besides, expressing their emotions and thoughts, the creative writers may also seek to create a literary/aesthetic effect. Their choice of words and grammatical structures is what forms their style. Oloruntoba-Oju states that “style is almost synonymous with variety; it refers in a simple way to the manner of expression, which differs according to the various contexts” (1999, p.127). Style according to Leech and Short is “a selection from a total linguistic repertoire that constitutes a style... style can be applied to both spoken and written, both ‘literary’ and ‘everyday’ varieties of language; but by tradition, it is particularly associated with written literary texts” (2007, p. 09-10) .

Hence, stylistics as a branch of linguistics concerns itself with analyzing style i.e. the way language is used and the purpose and effect it achieves.

Widdowson defines it as “*The study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation*” (1975, p. 3). Short and Candlin argue that “*stylistics is a linguistic approach to the study of the literary texts. It thus embodies one essential part of the general course - philosophy; that of combining language and literary study*” (1989, p. 183).

The purpose of a stylistic analysis is, on the basis of linguistic data, to either validate an existing interpretation of a literary text or to present a new reading challenging the existing readings. Further, stylistic analysis shows how a text as a whole creates a particular meaning and effect through the specific linguistic choices made by its author.

According to Barry (2013) stylistic critics do the following:

- i. They describe technical aspects of the language of a text and then use this data in interpretation.
- ii. In some cases, the purpose of doing linguistics analysis is to simply support an existing reading or intuitions of a literary text.
- iii. In other cases, the purpose is to establish a new reading, which may be based only on linguistic data, and may challenge existing readings.
- iv. The technical account of how meanings are made in literature demystifies the uniqueness of literary text with an ineffable, mystical core which is beyond analysis. Thus, making it a part of common ‘universe of discourse’ subject to linguistic analysis like other discourses.
- v. Stylistics moves beyond sentence grammar to text grammar (discourse) to show that how the text works as a whole to achieve (or not) its purposes such as, to amuse, to create suspense, or to persuade. (p. 207)

Following Barry’s above list, the present study attempts a linguistic analysis the short story and then interprets the linguistic data to discuss the thematic concerns; and the effect the linguistic choices create on the reader and the purpose they serve for the author. The stylistic analysis of the given story has been carried out using the checklist of stylistic categories proposed by Leech & Short (Leech and Short, 2007).

There are four general headings under which these categories have been placed. These are:

- Lexical Categories
- Grammatical Categories
- Figures of Speech,
- Cohesion and Context

Leech and Short acknowledge the incompleteness of their model and note that their model is merely an attempt to shape or systematize a field which is still much unclear (Leech & Short, 2007, 33). However incomplete the model may be, still it provides the major areas where the style of the author can be explored.

## **Stylistic Analysis and Discussion**

### **Lexical categories**

Lexically speaking, the most frequently used elements in the story are nouns and verbs. Less than half out of all the nouns used are abstract nouns; concrete nouns form a large part of the total number of nouns. There is an unequal proportion between concrete and abstract nouns with former outnumbering the later. Concrete and abstract nouns along with the qualifying adjectives are used to portray a vivid sketch/image/picture of the surrounding and of the character's physical appearance. Abstract nouns along with adjectives also describe the psychological and emotional makeup. Verbs along with adverbs or adverb phrases describe the material (visual) and mental actions of the characters mostly in terms of manner, frequency and place.

The theme of the story is how men's uncontrolled sexuality and women's repressed sexuality cause destruction. Story also deals with the dual state of male and female as oppressors and oppressed simultaneously. The theme of the story is mainly developed through the characterization of Ghulam Qadir and Shirin, a typical patriarchal couple, and the bull, a metaphor for their sexuality. The lexical items including nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs explaining their appearance, tone, actions and temperament, collectively build/develop the theme of the story.



### Adjectives and nouns

The adjective-noun clusters which describe Ghulam Qadir's physical strength and appearance such as *powerful arm, thick crop of unruly black hair, bushy eyebrows, sturdy frame, hairy chest, blood stained hairy hands*, help create an image of him as more of a beast than a human on the readers' mind. The author's more explicit portrayal of him as a beast is reflected through the words like *demanding animal, eyes that had cunning of a wild animal, mortally wounded animal*. The lexical items describing his actions and inner state reflect a dual state of Ghulam Qadir in the story. On the one hand, the adjective-noun clusters which describe his actions such as *angry vicious twist, angry shout, sudden jerk, mighty pull, quick lunge* create a ferocious image to delineate him as a powerful man or an oppressor. On the other hand, the adjectives and nouns describing his inner state such as *parched, a tinge of pleading, puzzlement, fear, despair, doubt, apprehension, a dull ache, tormenting hunger, hunger...a deeper more disturbing one* contribute towards his depiction as an internally disturbed and painful soul in need of something. The bull, in the context of Ghulam Qadir, represents his uncontrolled sexuality. The nouns and adjectives used to describe the bull in Ghulam Qadir's context/case such as *stubborn creature, capable of doing much damage* and at one place using the phrase to call it *the most amenable of animals* when he had not been married to Shirin, actually stand for/depict the stubborn, uncontrollable and rebellious sexuality which, try as he might, would not come under his control.

On the contrary, the adjectives and nouns used for Shirin create her image as contradictory to that of Ghulam Qadir's. The story is written from Ghulam Qadir's point of view, therefore, the readers see Shirin through his eyes only. Since he is a patriarchal man, he sees her only as an object for his delight so the words describing Shirin such as "*fair complexion*", "*softness and roundness of her slender form*", "*black hair flowing gracefully around her and reaching to her knees*" and "*Curled eyelashes*", however positive they may seem, reinforce the stereotypical perception of a patriarchal man about woman who considers her a mere object/body. These words are associated only to her apparent characteristics. They do not put light on her inner characteristics which reflect the limitation of patriarchal man who is physically attached but emotionally far away/detached from his partner; for whom her inner being, her heart is a remote area to which a patriarchal man has no access. The nouns and adjectives describing the bull in Shirin's context are like *a calmed creature, like a baby lamb*, it became *calmer*. They



actually symbolize the controlled sexuality of Shirin something within which her power lies which perturbs Ghulam Qadir. Shirin's control over her sexuality also portrays her as powerful. Her appearance to Ghulam Qadir as "*an individual in her own right, a separate being, a stranger*" reflects that within the oppressive frame of patriarchal society in which women have been denied power, exercises power in some way and retains her individuality.

### **Adverbs and verbs**

The verbs and adverbs indicating, on one hand, the actions and on the other hand, the psychological state of Ghulam Qadir, lead readers' attention towards his dual state as an oppressor as well as oppressed, predator as well as victim/prey, authoritative as well as powerless. The words describing his actions such as *shouted out loud, spitting in disgust, propped viciously, gave a vicious twist of (its) tail, thrusting angrily, tethered, caught, clenched, dragged, hit, struck, hitting and joying in it* indicate/create an image of a patriarchal man who is oppressive and authoritative with a dominant feeling of anger within him. In contrast to his outward actions, the verbs which describe his inner state such as *know not, could not tell, longing to be told, longing to be reassured, wanted to get, wanted her voice to soften to him* manifest his confusion and longing. Together both group of verbs and adverbs used for him represent his enigma. They show that though he appears powerful, he is not at peace and unable to comprehend his own feelings. It shows that patriarchal society though intends to make man powerful but ironically/actually it makes him weak. It makes man powerful and stable only from the outside but not from the inside. Though it asserts his completeness, but actually creates a sense of incompleteness within him.

Another group of phrases including *anger rising high infuriated him, doubt disturbed and tormented him, anger against his wife infuriated him, heavy hot beat of anger drummed at his temples, the anger within him mounting in intensity until it turned the mild headache of the morning into a throbbing, tempestuous one, Ghulam Qadir galvanized into action by the words* reflect/manifest another important aspect of his personality. The verbs that are used in these chunks reflect that he is not acting rather he is being acted upon by some internal or external forces; he is not controlling his emotions and thoughts rather they are controlling him. These thoughts and emotions work as agents of Patriarchal society. He is helpless at the hands of those forces. The verbs and adverbs which describe the actions of Shirin such as "*haunted, bewitched...so thoroughly, would not give peace*"

though show a negative power from Ghulam Qadir's perspective but suggest that though she is an oppressed but still she is exercising power in some way. Her accents also have a *persuasive* power.

The verbs and adverbs that describe the actions of the bull in the case of Ghulam Qadir are "*ignored him now, defied him even, refusing to allow him...to tether it.*" They all reflect Ghulam Qadir's failure in controlling his sexuality. They reflect his helplessness that despite his efforts, every time he is compelled to satisfy his sexual needs. On the contrary, in Shirin's context the verbs and adverbs used for describing her and the bull's action such as "*succeeded in doing what he could not, calmed the creature and led it back as easily as it had been a baby lamb, by bringing the bull passively home, allowed her to lead to its stall and tie it up*", reflect Shirin's ability to control her sexuality; what she has been taught to do in patriarchal society. In this regard Shirin is more powerful than his husband Gulam Qadir for she is always able to *tie up* the bull (sexuality) where he fails so miserably.

### **Grammatical categories**

The analysis of the grammatical structures used by the author in the story brings to the surface certain peculiarities of the author's style. Many of her sentences are sentences only from a graphological point of view however syntactically they seem to be the part of the previous sentence. From graphological point of view a sentence is any structure that starts with a capital letter and ends at/with a full stop. Although, these sentences cannot stand on their own but since they fulfill these two criteria therefore they can be considered/are sentences from graphological point of view. Consider the following examples (The sentences in italics are sentence from graphological point of view):

1. Almost he could hear her speak. *Speak in those soft, persuasive accents that irritated him so.* (p. 42)

**Possible Structure:** Almost he could hear her speak in those soft, persuasive accents that irritated him so.

2. To him she was, those first few weeks, a body. *A body and nothing more. A body beautiful and soft that eased the so long suppressed desires of his sense.* (p. 43)

**Possible Structure:** To him she was, those first few weeks, nothing more than a soft and a beautiful body that eased the so long suppressed desires of his senses.

These sentences are not complete in themselves since they convey incomplete information; they cannot make sense without taking into account the previous sentence of which, from the traditional point of view of language/grammar, they should have been a part. In examples 1 and 2 the sentences in italics could have been made the part of the previous sentences as shown in through the possible structures but the author preferred to write them as separate sentences. It is because she wants them to be considered as equally important as the ones they should have been a part of. By making them stand as a separate sentence instead of keeping them in a subordinate position she bestows them with salience. By making them stand as separate sentences author tries to indicate that the load of information they carry is no less than those which are complete in the syntactic/true sense and therefore as important as the previous sentences. She uses this structure to give emphasis to the given piece of information it carries. She could have used the structures suggested by us as the possible structures but it could not have bestowed them with the salience they achieve in the structure the author has used as shown in 1 and 2. This structure in italics makes the information more noticeable/makes it seem noteworthy.

Within this type of structure two different patterns have been found. The first kind like sentence 1 starts with a verb which the previous sentence contains whereas the second kind like sentence 2 starts with the noun which is present in the preceding/proceeding sentence.

- 1a. She would be *smiling*. *Yes, smiling that strange half smile that set his heart beating so furiously. Smiling to herself as she cooked his meal.* (p. 42)
- 1b. He *hated* the bull now. *Hated it as much as he had loved it formerly.* (p. 47)
- 1c. As he washed his hands he *cursed* her again. *Cursed her again with every fiber of his being.* (p. 48)
- 1d. Yes, she had *bewitched* this wise, grey bearded brother of his. *Bewitched him so thoroughly that, instead of appreciating his anger against the bull, he was forever reprimanding him on his treatment of it.* (p. 48)

- 1e. By God! That rascal would *run off* again. *Run off and shame him once more!* (p. 48)
- 1f. Her face *smiled up* at him once again. *Smiled up at him sweetly and mockingly, with eyes in which love and hate alternated.* (p. 51)
- 2a. She had been standing at the window staring up at the stars and, though he was hot with desire and knew that his hunger could easily be assuaged, he had suddenly become aware of *another hunger* within him; a deeper, more disturbing one. *A hunger that he had never known before, but which had emerged even as he had held her in his arms and eased the hunger of his senses.* (p. 45)
- 2b. This She Devil had bewitched not only his bull, but *his brother* and his nephew as well. *His brother, who was as dear to him as a father; indeed had been a father to him all these years, for he was twenty years his senior and had brought him up as his son.* (p. 48)
- 2c. Did he not heed every one of her soft spoken suggestions about household matters? And his nephew, Allah Wasaya, how he hated him! That handsome strapping youth on the verge of manhood with something of the weakness of womanhood within him. *A something that made him waste his time playing on a flute, gazing up at the moon or planting flowers round the house.* (p. 48-49)

In these sentences the author gives additional information which she considers (very) important and which she wants the readers to take into consideration. It is due to this reason she writes them as full-fledged/separate sentence as she wants them to stand out as full-fledged sentences complete in themselves. As a part of the previous sentence they might not attain that much attention as they do when they stand on their own. In all the examples of pattern 1, subject has been missing and the sentence starts with a verb which is not acceptable in strict grammatical terms. In most of these examples, she keeps the part of the sentence qualifying the verb as a separate and hence important piece of information as in 1b, 1c, 1d and 1f. She reserves another sentence for revealing this additional information about the verb which shows the importance she gives them. In all the examples of pattern 2, the sentences in italics start with a noun given in the previous sentences. They are

immediately followed by a subordinate clause. In this case, it is the information about the noun which she wants to make more important/noticeable for the readers.

Her sentences may be syntactically incomplete as shown in the many extracts/examples given above in which the sentence, much against the orthodox view of grammar, starts with the verb the subject of which is present in the previous sentence. Despite this incompleteness of many sentences the text stands as a well-knitted whole. The sentences are closely connected to each other. As the example given above show that despite the fact that the sentences contain only a part of the information carried/contained by the proceeding/preceding sentences, they are made to stand on their own indicating that they are complete in themselves and therefore are equally important. By assigning them equal importance she signifies/emphasizes the equality between men and women in society. Since she is a feminist writer, she puts emphasis on the equally important position of women in the society which does not consider them individuals in their own right who can exist independently, who are able to stand on their own without depending on men. The cohesive quality/cohesion of the text reflects her belief in society as a cohesive whole in which both men and women meet on equal grounds, in which both man and woman exist independently complementing each other unlike in a society in which they are kept in a hierarchical relation to each other.

### **Figures of speech**

Figurative language is a departure from what the competent users of language apprehend as the standard meaning or order of words, in order to achieve some special meaning or effect (Abrams & Harpham, 2012, p. 130). The author has used many figures of speech in order to fulfill a specific purpose and attain an aesthetic effect. Among the literary devices the most frequently used/employed include metaphor, simile, idiom, repetition and alliteration. Nowhere does their frequent use seem unnecessary.

A most significant and frequently used literary device in the story is metaphor. Bull, also a character in the story, has been used as an extended metaphor in the story. The bull remains at center stage and is responsible for the progression of the plot and action. The author uses bull as a metaphor

to discuss the theme of sexuality in a closed/repressed Muslim society. The author through the bull portrays that in patriarchal societies female's sexuality is suppressed, passive and controlled, whereas, man's sexuality otherwise repressed becomes uncontrollable and wild after marriage; hence, it becomes destructive, a negative force, for the self and the society. The author has been successful in subtly dealing with a taboo theme where other writers like Manto had to face charges of nudity for the explicit treatment of similar themes in his short stories like *Thanda Gosht* and *Kali Shalwar*.

The author has used similes to describe the nature of the relationship between Ghulam Qadir and his wife. For instance the use of the simile '*as cold as the pieces of ice they put in the lassi*' (p. 45) concretizes Shirin's passive and controlled sexuality. It puts light on the coldness that characterize Shirin's conduct in her sexual relationship with her husband; her unresponsive conduct in their sexual relation, her lack of sensual desire towards him. It helps readers to concretize the gap between Ghulam Qadir and Shirin's relation. Another very common type of simile used by the village match-maker Amna in the story "*she is as sweet as the scent of champak*"... "*as supple as a reed*" (p. 44) when she advertises Shirin in front of Ghulam Qadir in order to persuade him to marry her it helps create a beautiful image of Shirin in Ghulam Qadir's mind so as to persuade him to marry her. It also helps the readers in visualizing her sweetness and beauty objectified to a male gaze. Another simile "*her curled eyelashes flickered as the wings of bird fallen from tree*" (p. 43) has been used to explain the extent of her fear when scolded by Ghulam Qadir. At another place, the author uses a simile with reference to Ghulam Qadir "*like a man possessed he bent his whole body*" (p. 42). It helps the readers imagine or visualize how he carried out the action. It makes perceptible to their imagination his wild state as if he has been occupied by an evil spirit.

There are some other metaphors used in the story with "She devil" (p. 42, 43, 46, 47, 51) being the most frequently used among them. It has been used throughout the story right from the beginning till the end. The comparison of his wife with a devil is an explicit manifestation of his anger/hatred for his wife and how being a patriarchal man perceives a woman having power. The frequency of this metaphor is indicative of the extent of his hatred for his wife. Whereas this metaphor portrays Shirin in a dark color/light, the metaphor "*overflowing cup of love*" (P. 44) portrays her in a positive light. This is also used by Amna for the same purpose she uses the above mentioned simile for. She compares her with an overflowing cup of love he

can quench his thrust from. This comparison reinforces the stereotypical image of the women in the patriarchal society; the image of woman as an object for man's pleasure. The author at another place compares Ghulam Qadir with a "*demanding animal*" (p. 46). It helps the readers perceive his psychological trauma. With no proactive involvement of his wife, he feels himself a demanding animal who mounts her in order to satisfy his sexual desire and she a body whose job is to let him satisfy his sexual hunger.

The author has used a good number of idioms also. For instance her use of the words "*spat out*" (p. 43) instead of more commonly used terms (which do not indicate the manner in which something is said e.g. uttered, said) gives the readers the information about how he uttered his words. It helps readers visualize Ghulam Qadir uttering the words angrily. She uses yet another idiom "*to give up his spleen*" (p. 43) to express his anger. It is the most dominant emotion in his masculine code therefore the author uses those idioms which show the intensity of his anger instead of most common expression for indicating someone's anger; in other words, she uses these idioms to foreground his anger.

The author has used alliteration also quite frequently. She has used this technique to bestow her writing with an aesthetic appeal. It creates a rhythmic effect to the story.

The author also makes use of hyperbole in the story as in "every fiber of his strength" (p. 50). Through it she intends to put emphasis on the way he carried out the action. Readers visualize the strength with which he performs the given action.

### **Cohesion**

The most noticeable feature of cohesion in the story is the author's use of co-referential links between one sentence and the other. In many sentences, she takes up a word or a phrase from the preceding sentence as she does in the case of the sixth sentence. She starts the sixth sentence by taking up the ending phrase of the fifth one as "...from the outside not from the inside. Not from the inside ..." (p. 42). In the same way 27<sup>th</sup> sentence "*Yes smiling that strange half smile...*", takes up a word of its preceding sentence "*She would be smiling.*". There is ample use of personal pronouns throughout the story. In the story, there are instances of (various kinds) of lexical repetition as the phrase "She Devil" is repeated 9 times and the word Smile has been repeated many times. Elegant variation is also an important feature of



cohesion in the story. All the characters have been referred to with different names/titles throughout the story. For instance names like *a demanding animal*, *man possessed*, *her master* have been used to refer to Ghulam Qadir, *shaitan*, *she devil*, *his woman*, *his wife*, *a bride*, *a body*, *a separate being*, *individual*, *stranger and young wife* for Shirin, *handsome lad*, *advancing youth on the verge of ...* for Allah Wasaya, *liar* for Amna, *faithless creature*, *beast of a burden*, *poor uncomprehending animal* for the bull. These references are not unnecessary substitutes rather (they draw readers attention towards the different aspects of a character/rather they help understand the characters. For instance, *a demanding animal* represents Ghulam Qadir's view of himself as reflected in the eyes of his wife who only assuages his sexual hunger without any active involvement on his wife's part whose sexuality has been suppressed by patriarchal code.

Another cohesive feature of her writing is her use of words from indigenous language. Since the story is set in a Pakistani context, therefore, the objects that are a part of our culture such as *Lota*, *Lungi* and *Lassi* have been referred to in the local idiom. Some Urdu expressions have also been used such as *Shaitan* and *Shabaash*. They add an indigenous feel/flavour/tone to her writing. In order to add this flavour to her writing, some more words such as *motia*, *falsa sherbet* and *champak* have also been used. Although their English equivalents could have been used but the author preferred the indigenous ones over them so that readers might feel more involved.

### **Context/ point of view**

The story is told by third person called limited omniscient point of view. The perspective of the story is limited to the protagonist of the story, Ghulam Qadir, who is a typical patriarchal man. The story narrates the inner tormented world of this character. Although, the action is very limited in the story, yet the narrator describes the actions of other characters and only the actions which are done by other characters in the presence of Ghulam Qadir are described. Therefore, the reader only sees what is within the approach/limit of his (narrator's) vision and nothing beyond. However, though the actions of other characters are described but the readers do not know what is going on inside their minds. Readers see everything from the eyes of Ghulam Qadir; they know very well about what he thinks and feels about them but are unaware of what they think and feel about him. Moreover, in the narrative, the use of the words such as *he knew*, *he remembered*, *he thought angrily*, *he could hear*, *that set his heart beating so*

furiously, he was hot with desire, with astonishment he realized and many other similar phrases reveal the inner world of Ghulam Qadir completely; hence, it demonstrates that the narrator is omniscient limited; all knowing and all seeing only about Ghulam Qadir.

The face he hated so, vanished. Ghulam Qadir stood erect once more, tightened his *lungi* around his waist, tethered his bullock and once again set. The stone splashed right into the middle of the water, agitated ripples disturbed its tranquility and her face, that about his ploughing (p. 42). She would be sitting by the fire now, he knew, her black hair, newly washed, flowing gracefully around her and reaching to her knees. She would be smiling. Yes, smiling that strange half smile that set his heart beating so furiously. Smiling to herself as she cooked his meal. Yes, it was for him that she cooked, for him that she worked, for him that she existed. (p. 43)

The first two sentences given above describe the actions of Ghulam Qadir while the rest give an account of his feelings and thoughts. By adopting this perspective, the author enables readers to look inside his mind and get acquainted with the inner conflict that is tormenting him and hence manipulates the distance between him and them.

### **Thought presentation**

There is strong connection between thought presentation and point of view. The most important function of thought presentation categories especially free indirect speech is to manipulate the narrative point of view. The author uses the presentation of thought for the same purpose for which he/she uses speech presentation i.e. to control readers' sympathies. Hamidullah controls readers' sympathies for Ghulam Qadir by presenting his thoughts mainly in Free Direct Thought where without any authorial intervention readers directly enter into his consciousness and develop an in-depth understanding of his character. When the author provides access to Ghulam Qadir's inner world, the readers see many questions and uncertainties flowing in his mind. They are indicative of the enigma existing inside him.

To possess her was his one object in life now. And yet, had he not already possessed her a score of times and over? Had he not claimed her again and yet again, night after night? Was she not, without any manner of doubt, his woman? His by every claim that man can have over woman? (p. 43)

His questions reveal his doubt regarding his authoritative position and his urge to prove his manliness. The use of free indirect speech in another

instance reveals to the readers his regret over his ill treatment of his wife.

In his annoyance at remembrance of the night before, he picked up a stone and aimed it straight at the animal's head...For it was all the bull's fault. Yes, none other but this devil incarnate of a beast that had made him do it. Even now, even in mere remembrance of it, he was embarrassed. For he had never intended to raise his hand to her. After all, he was a gentle man and a patient one. The whole village would bear witness to this. (p. 45)

It is this free indirect thought that helps reader understand that he is not contended with what he did to his wife, while once again provides a deep/significant insight into his character that though he wants to maintain an image of patriarchal man but when he does it gives him a sense of regret rather than satisfaction. All these free indirect thoughts ultimately develop reader's sympathy towards him as they find him a victim of patriarchal masculine values. The author has also used the technique of Direct Thought and Indirect Thought presentation for the stylistic purpose.

### **Speech presentation**

Vivid direct speeches form a very small part of the story. These speeches, however few in number and length, provide readers with significant insights into the characters' temperament because the words to some extent reflect the world inside individual. The use of direct speech helps create a more vivid image of characters in readers' mind since it reproduces the exact words uttered by the characters without involvement of any intermediate agency and thereby establishes feature of immediacy between the reader and the characters. It produces a natural effect. The characters seem to speak directly to the readers and hence it increases familiarity and decreases the distance between the characters and the readers.

The speeches assigned to Ghulam Qadir are thirteen in number. Other characters have been assigned only one speech act, except Ghulam Qadir's elder brother, who has been assigned two speech acts. His brother's and the village matchmaker Amna's speech appear in protagonist's past recollections. They also throw light on protagonist's personality. On the other hand, the direct speeches of Ghulam Qadir explain his psychological disturbance/trauma and anger. His very first direct speech '*This has cooled me, he told himself, 'cooled me from the outside, but not from the inside. Not from the inside,' he repeated moodily, staring at his bullock resting in the shade.*' (p. 42) suggests that he is an internally disturbed person; there

is something which has caused the internal pain he suffers from. In the following few speeches he repeats certain phrases as,

1. 'Shaitan,' he shouted. (p. 42)
2. 'Curse her! Curse her!!' he shouted out aloud, (p. 42)
3. He repeated, 'That old liar Amna. Told me she had a cup of love brimful with tenderness. Liar!' (p. 45)
4. 'Curse her,' he said spitting once again. (p. 45)
5. 'Faithless creature,' he shouted at the poor, uncomprehending animal. (p. 47)

In these speeches, he curses and exhibits his anger but is unable to utter his emotions and thoughts, the expression of which is not considered acceptable for men in patriarchal society. His another speech act '*Flowers and flutes*,' he muttered angrily to himself, '*just the foolish kind of things that appeal to women...*' (p. 49) suggests that he is a typical product of his society who considers the things which stimulate soft and tender emotions stupid for he associates the tender emotions with women. But at the same time, the reason why he hates and envies his nephew is because of the former own incapability of expressing these tender emotions. However, most of his speech acts show his anger, hatred and psychological trauma but the following speech act shows the tender aspect of his personality; one which has been buried under his patriarchal stiffness/ego. "*Are you happy with me?*" he had asked" (p. 46).

Although, the patriarchal society does not allow him to express tender emotions but since he is a human, he ultimately expresses such words which exhibit his longing for emotional fulfillment. Though, he possesses his wife physically and satisfies his sexual urge but this does not satisfy him for he wishes to possess her heart and wants her to desire him. Despite his reluctance he fails to resist his wife's alluring physical charms and persuasive sweet accents. His failure to resist her charms and her power to capture his thoughts makes him feel insecure as society forbids a man to recognize authority or power as an attribute of a woman. His confusion changes into hatred. The speech act '*She's after my soul as well*,' he shouted. '*She wants to ensnare me as she has ensnared all the others.*' (p. 47) is a manifestation of his insecurity and his hatred towards his wife. In his dual state of oppressor and oppressed, he appears helpless to readers and earns

readers' favour.

Other characters are distanced from the readers for their minds have not been revealed to them. Their speech acts throw slight light on their characters but they actually help author to control our sympathy for the protagonist. Amna's speech represents a stereotypical/patriarchal perception of woman.

He recalled her words: 'You are a fortunate man, Ghulam Qadir,' she had said in her quavering old tones, 'a very fortunate man. For not only is Shirin as sweet as the scent of champak flowers, but she is as supple as a reed and will sway to your slightest wishes, for she is a child nurtured to womanhood in an atmosphere of tenderness and affection. One who, they say, has a heart filled to over-flowing with love of everything living. And,' here the old woman's furtive eyes had peered lasciviously into his, 'that over-flowing cup of love will be yours to drink your fill.' (p. 44)

It reflects how Ghulam Qadir wants his wife to be, is the result of his patriarchal programming. Since she is an individual of patriarchal society, her speech act manifests her knowledge of what patriarchal men look for in their wives. It shows that a patriarchal society injects in minds of its men the image of women as that of a mere object for his sexual pleasure; a servant who will silently obey all his commands. His brother's direct speech also helps the author to manipulate the distance between the reader and Ghulam Qadir. His brother says to him:

....very gravely and anxiously as they sat outside, 'I don't know what has come over you Ghulam Qadir. Your marriage, I thought would bring added joy into all our lives...' instead of this I find that your entire nature has changed since the arrival of your bride. You've become both rude and callous. Not only do you treat your bull with cruelty, but you beat your wife for being kind to it.' (p. 48 )

Through it the reader comes to know that he is not callous and rude by nature. It is only after his marriage; a relation in which he has to exercise his mastership, that his entire nature changes.

## **Conclusion**

The above stylistic analysis of the story has brought on the surface the dominant features of the author's style in all the four categories proposed in the model of Leech and Short. The most frequently used lexical items are

nouns and verbs. The author along with concrete nouns uses abstract nouns in a high frequency. Abstract nouns along with adjectives describe the psychological and emotional makeup of the protagonist. Concrete and abstract nouns along with the qualifying adjectives are used to portray a vivid sketch/image/picture of the surrounding and of the character's physical appearance. Verbs along with adverbs or adverb phrases describe the material (visual) and mental actions of the characters mostly in terms of manner, frequency and place.

Besides other features of her style, the use of co-referential links between one sentence and the other, work to hold the text as a cohesive whole. Through the frequent use of certain figures of speech such as simile, metaphor, alliteration and idioms and the indigenous flavor added through the use of Punjabi/Urdu words, the author is able to create a literary effect that forces the reader to look beyond the literal/superficial meanings of the text. Another peculiar quality of her style is her deviance from the conventional/orthodoxical rules of language use as reflected in her habit of making dependent sentences stand as independent sentences; a quality which also bestow the text with cohesiveness. Her style is impersonal as she does not give her judgments about the characters and also there is a poetic quality due to the use of alliteration.

We can safely conclude that the judicious use of lexical items along with the figures of speech and selection of appropriate tone, point of view and narrative style by the author plays a major role in developing the theme of the story. The author has successfully discussed a taboo theme through her mastery over of the selection of words/images/symbols and structures which otherwise would have been very difficult to deal with.

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