

The hermeneutics of the symbolic imagery of eye in Shadab Hashmi's anglophone ghazals: a study of "ghazal for the girl in photo"

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Abstract

This study attempts to fathom the depth of the optic symbolic imagery in the Ghazals by the Pakistani poetess Shadab Hashmi in the light of modern theories of hermeneutics, vision, imagery and symbolism. It aims to provide hermeneutics of the symbolic imagery of eye highlighting the artistic and aesthetic values her Ghazal teem with, and showing her exquisite craft in verbalizing mental images and expressing intangible ideas in a concrete form which enhances the readers' engagement with the text through wonderful portrayal of reality. The study focuses on "Ghazal for the Girl in Photo", a poem written in response to the photo of "Sharbat Gula", the famous Afghani refugee girl whose photo was published in the "National Geographic" iconic of war and the suffering of refugees around the world. The poem is written in form of an archetypical autonomous Ghazal and is packed with prolific imagery. The most compelling and recurring is the imagery of the most sensory and symbolic human organ; the eye. The study examines the eye-related symbolic images in the poem and delves deeper in the text and beyond to show how the eye, each time mentioned gives mental representation of the unseen subjects of consideration lying behind the text. The study categorizes the eye images into four specific categories: imagery of eye motions, imagery of eye functions, imagery of eye colors and imagery of eye physiology. It concludes the importance of this optic depiction in portraying the sociocultural and psychological scenario of the poem, binding and creating meaning by making the author, the situation and the reader parts of the text.

Keywords: hermeneutics, symbolic imagery, sharbat gula, ghazal

1. Introduction

Conventionally invoking melancholy, love, yearning, and metaphysical questions, ghazal is a lyrical poetic form that has its roots in seventh-century Arabia and jumped to peak popularity in the thirteenth and fourteenth century on the hands of the eminent Persian poets as Rumi and Hafiz. Heading to the eighteenth-century onwards, the ghazal became a cosmopolitan poetic form used by poets writing in diverse languages such as Urdu, Hindi, Pashto, Turkish, Hebrew, German, Spanish and English. Technically, Ghazal consists of a minimum five couplets and a maximum fifteen couplets which are paralleled in length and autonomous in structure, theme and tone. The first couplet introduces a scheme, made up of a rhyme followed by a refrain. Subsequent couplets pick up the same scheme in the second line only, repeating the refrain and rhyming the second line with both lines of the first stanza. The final couplet usually includes the poet's signature, referring to the author in the first or third person, and frequently including the poet's own name or a derivation of its meaning. Ghazal is primarily an expressive poem intended to inspire hearts by reflecting poignant themes with superb language that captivate the reader with the help of variety of literary devices and figures of speech such as metaphors, symbols and imagery. Pakistan has been embracing the art of Ghazal poetry, both sung or written from the very beginning, producing memorable artists like Mohammad Iqbal and Mirza Ghalib. Beside writing in their mother tongue; Urdu, Pakistani writers also produced brilliant pieces of Ghazal in English language. Among them, the author of the valuable and

award-winning masterpiece "Ghazal Cosmopolitan"; Shadab Zeest Hashmi stands prominently. Born in Peshawar city of Pakistan, Shadab Zeest Hashmi, the author of Kohl & Chalk and Baker of Tarifa, is one of the eminent poetesses of Pakistani Anglophone poetry. Her poems have been translated into Spanish and Urdu and published in journals and anthologies worldwide. Hashmi's books of poetry have been marked as "a gift that enriches our literature" and "powerful, gorgeous and entertaining at once". Her poetry meditates on the often-fraught political and cultural exchanges between the United States and the Middle East beside other versatile themes of peace, war, history, women and life philosophies. Her style is "capacious, crafted and lyrical" with conspicuous implementation of figurative language. Ghazal is her most celebrated poetic form where she "revealed a bold original voice with an ability to meld cultures and poetic forms with great skill". "Ghazal for the Girl in Photo" is one of her famous poems. About the poem she says:

"The subject of the "Afghan Girl," Steve McCurry's famous photograph (published in the National Geographic and iconic of war and the suffering of refugees around the world), was, for a long time, a girl without a name. Decades later, when McCurry realized that he knew nothing about the subject whose photograph had made him famous, he went back to her refugee camp in Peshawar, Pakistan, in search of her. He tracked her down with difficulty, as he did not even know her name, took new

photographs of her as an adult, and published her new photographs and her life story. When I read the published details, I discovered that not only is she nearly the same age as myself, she lived in a refugee camp located only a few miles away from where I grew up in Peshawar during the time of the Soviet war. Sharbat Gula's story brought back memories of that time, and I wrote this ghazal in response"

The poem is embossed with striking imagery and symbolism. Addressing the girl in the photo in pictorial method, she sheds light on the historical, sociopolitical and psychological issues that the photo signified striking visual, auditory and olfactory imagery. The most prominent imagery she recurred throughout the poem is the imagery of the eye. This paper endeavors to examine and analyze this unapproached aspect of her poetry, as represented by this poem, and attempts to prove how using symbolic imagery of eye helped her succeed in creating meaning and addressing vital issues adjacent to the photo she is versifying about.

2. The Hermeneutics of poetic imagery

Coming to prominence by Schliermacher (1768-1834), Heidegger's (1889-1976) and Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2000), hermeneutics is the science of interpreting antique documents sketching the meaning of parts by relating them to the whole and vice versa. Traditional hermeneutics refers to the story of the explanation of written texts in the versatile areas of literature, religion and law. Contemporary hermeneutics incorporates not only questions concerning the written text, but everything in the interpretative process. This includes verbal and nonverbal forms of communication as well as prior aspects that affect communication, such as presuppositions, preunderstandings, the meaning and philosophy of language, and Semiotics (Palmer, 1969) ^[13]. The principal notion of hermeneutics is the realization of the essentiality to go underneath the plain text towards understanding something of its author: his insights, prejudices, reasons for writing for the author is represented in each part of the document. Each represented part had therefore to be gathered into an internally consistent whole to make a fully-rounded character. Dilthey (1833-1911) offered further objective ways of doing this, first drew a line between science and the humanities. Science aimed to explain and did so by recognizing laws exterior and indifferent to man: invariant, mathematical, ahistorical. The humanities aimed to understand and retained what was relevant to the individual man: his life experiences, affections, character, social and historical setting. (Palmer, 1969) ^[13].

In literature, especially poetry, hermeneutics has become significant. It provides a vital aid to define the value of a literary texts, specifically as related to interpreting the figurative language. It assists to know how imagination and symbols come to being and that the verbal characteristics we read are not the final thing to be understood. Figures of speech are always built on underlying grounds which need to be sorted out. The role of the studies of imagery is to seek the process through which images of a text are conceptualized via their essential mediator; the symbols. Firstly, it identifies these symbols then interpret the way

through which these symbols connect with the reader. Mello (Mello, 2002) says in this regard:

"The starting point of reading imaginary is the hermeneutics of images, symbols and myths of a work so as to apprehend the imaginary of a particular author, culture or age."

Shadab's imagery adds aestheticism and profundity to her poetry, especially her Ghazals. As a hermeneutic study, this paper mainly attempts to provide the hermeneutics of Shadab's symbolic images of the eye in the selected poem. It brings the text that allows the identification of the optic symbolic images which, beside compositional strategies interweave with the vital moderator's imaginary, who is the reader, to create meaning. Thus, readers, regardless of their sociocultural background, will not only be able to understand these symbols but enjoy reading such profound literary pieces of Ghazals too.

2.1. The Theory of Image

Imagery can be defined as "a writer's use of words or figures of speech to create a vivid mental picture or physical sensation". The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics defines imagery as: "*images produced in the mind by language, whose words may refer either to experiences which could produce physical perceptions, were the reader actually to have those experiences or to the sense impressions themselves*". Images are classified in seven categories: the first five (visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, gustatory) obviously refer to the five senses; the other two either include bodily processes, such as our breathing or heartbeat (organic images) or convey an impression of the subject moving (kinesthetic images). In literature, images are generated by language and through them, a writer recalls or arouses illustrations of physical, sensual perception. Language therefore could be considered a bridge linking percept and concept, between the external world and the human mind. The expression of abstraction in concrete terms is what literary theorists call figuration. Most writers use such expressions to make abstract ideas concrete and easier to communicate and retain by readers. Writers use imagery to represent intangible notions about to world they live in. Two theories of imagery are there to consider: theory of mental imagery and theory of verbal imagery. Mental imagery is demarcated as an output of perceptive procedures consisting in "retrieving, constructing and manipulating the mental representation of objects and/or events, so that they keep many features of to the corresponding percepts" that occurs even in nonappearance of a definite sensorial stimulus. Mental Imagery is as "vicarious sensorimotor experiencing" and have been considered as an influential source of aesthetic enjoyment in life as well as the mutual things readers reminisce about literary texts in the long term. The topic of mental imagery has been a constant attraction to psychologists as well as linguists & literary critics. Mental imagery can be defined as pictures in the mind or a visual representation in the absence of environmental input (Mitchel, 1984) ^[11] An abundance of evidence from brain scanning research shows that the same areas of the brain used for normal perception are also activated by mental imagery (Miyashita, 1995). In general, imagining any cognitive activity seems to activate the same areas of the brain normally involved in that activity (Posner,

1993).

In contrast to mental imagery, verbal images are safe from the accusation of being incomprehensible metaphysical objects sealed in an isolated restricted area as in mental imagery. It is undisputed that texts and speech acts are not matters of mere perception, rather they are communal codes that relate to all the other types of concrete representations we generate as images, statues, diagrams, maps...etc. The firmest notion of verbal imagery is in the early Wittgenstein's claim that "a proposition is a picture of reality, a model of reality as we imagine it," and that this is no metaphor but a matter of "ordinary sense". Wittgenstein emphasizes that a proposition is "a likeness of what is signified". The "pictures" that exist in language "threatening" to "trap" us with their "false models", are "translations, isomorphisms, structural homologies, symbolic structures" which are subjected to a framework of regulations for interpretation. The notion of verbal image is applied to two opposite kinds of linguistic practice. On one hand, verbal imagery is the technique that "deflects attention away from the literal subject of the utterance and toward something else". On the other hand, as in Wittgenstein's manner, verbal imagery a proposition "like a tableau vivant-presents a state of affairs". This view of verbal imagery treats it as just the literal sense of a proposition, if it obtained in the real world, would make the proposition true. In Romantic and modern poetics, the verbal image and the notion of imagery is split in two, the pictorial or graphic image, which is a lower form-external, mechanical, dead, and often associated with the empiricist model of perception, and a "higher" image, which is internal, organic, and living.

For Addison and other eighteenth-century critics, the verbal image is the keystone of all language. Truthful accurate descriptions create images that "come from the verbal expressions" more vividly than the "images which flow from objects" themselves. Sequentially, the outcome of this opinion of poetry, and of language generally, was a procedure of pictorial production and reproduction which was implemented in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century literary theory, accompanied with a decay in the status of rhetorical figures and tropes. This notion was intensified in the Imagists' poetry which favored precision of imagery and clear, sharp language. In modern poetic theory this form of verbal imagery has been given its solidest formulation by Hugh Kenner, who says that a verbal image is just "what the words actually name," a remark that leads toward a view of poetic language as a literal non-metaphoric expression. The poetic consequences of this sort of language theory are an in-depth pictorialism, an perception of the art of language as the art of restoring life to the original impersonations of sense. Recently, the modernist emphasis is on the image as a sort of "crystalline structure", a dynamic pattern of the intellectual, emotional energy embodied forth by a poem. Formalist criticism is both a poetics and a hermeneutics for this kind of verbal image, displaying us how literary pieces encompass their vitalities in modules of "architectonic tension", and indicating the compatibilities of these modules with the proposed content of the text.

2.2 The Theory of Symbol

Symbol, the signified, as labelled by Ferdinand de Saussure is the conceptual component of the linguistic sign that can be thought of as a mental image that speakers can associate

to a string of sounds, the signifier, the physical component of the linguistic sign. Some words visibly denote to items in the external world, hence it appears unavoidable to trace a linkage in our mind between the word entitling that thing and the thing itself. A symbol represents something else with its "whole semantic weight unaltered" (Salvador, 1993). Further, in symbols, the association between the literal and the symbolic levels is often solidly maintained throughout the text or even the author's whole production. Readers may or may not be aware of this association: if they are not, symbols will remain bare images that capture physical perception, perfectly logical at the literal plain. Symbols result from the combination and manipulation of images: images are "the raw material used for producing figures of speech". Cirlot quotes the Hindu philosopher Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, who defines symbolism as "*the art of thinking in images*".

Symbolism as a movement was introduced by the late nineteenth century as a reaction in contradiction to naturalism and realism. It promoted anti-idealistic styles which attempted to represent reality in its persistent particularity, and to uplift the "ordinary" over the "ideal" with dynamic implementation of spirituality and imagination. Symbolists emphasized that art should represent utter truths which could only be described indirectly. Hence, they wrote in a metaphorical and suggestive manner, donating symbolic meaning to specific images.

The most prominent modern theories of symbols are those of Freud, Jung and Peirce. Freud consolidates the symbol to the sign on the base of the joint element of "cross-reference", following the logic of joining representation and symbol. It acquires meaning when the two parts in which they are split into origin are reunified. While Jung views that symbol sustains the element of forwarding on one hand, and on the other hand focuses on the reconstruction of an integer. The subject of forwarding is modified from the present to a participation of a later meaning, of nonexclusively individual origin. Hence, the symbol finds its meaning in compensating and integrating and to be intimately connected with the unconscious, a witness of its need to emerge. For Peirce, the symbol is a genuine sign that maintains the semiotic record of forwarding, but it removes its degeneration by being a source of thirdness, so it allows a unique and unrepeatable significance. The contact with the symbol, produced by the interpreting mind, influences the sequential and potential interpreters, to the point of allowing semiotic evolution. The aim of the interpretation of the symbol is averting former determinism insofar as the symbol discloses and motivates its infinite and unlimited singularity. Though all the three theories share the theme of "referring", even though it postulates different meanings, yet the cross-reference, central in the Freudian conception, overweighs the explanatory intention of Peirce and Jung.

3. Eye Imagery and Symbolism

Eye, visibility, blindness and all other essential semantics linked with eye have been a commonplace conventional symbolism recurrently appearing in language, poetry, myths and legends since ancient times. As the receptor of light, eyes have been always considered the perceiver of the world's diversity and vision has been always related to man's other senses. Myths always associate vision with

knowledge, spirit, light and power. The “Eye of God” mirrors the sense of oneness and god’s reflection of God in creatures. One eye used to symbolize extreme power, two to indicate inferiority and multiplicity of eyes to show supervision and care. Powerful gods, like hindu “Bhagwan” used to have destructive glances, while others, like Greek “Argus” had all eyes on their bodies to protect and care. Ancient “Scorpions”, classical “Gorgo” and “Pliny” and mediaeval “cockatrice” had stares that “strike death into man”. The famous all-seeing gaze of hidden god connotating omniscient attributes. Other myths like cosmic flight showed the concept of eye and space.

In legends, negation of sight indicated negativity and absence of heroic characteristics. Blindness was also paralleled with wisdom as heroic prophets (Tiresias) in Greek plays are blind. They see the truth with their hearts. Night and the suspension of vision symbolled oblivion, mystery and reality to what is hidden awhile sealing eyes represented ecstasy and unity with divine. Folktales also stressed the significance of eye as vulnerable organs of sight that symbolized spirit and inner nature and usually distorted as a penalty for committing taboos. In poetry, sight has been used as mental and spiritual speculation and the reflection of thoughts and feelings. Love poetry has used sight conventional tropes as the symbols of “love fatal glance” and the lover’s surrendering averted gaze, eye contact as a soul regulating power, the beloved’s looks as arrows wounding the heart of the lover and other symbols. Islamic thought also pays importance to eyes as a peculiar identity, source of essence and universal character. Classical philosophy as that of Aristotle and Plato and modern psychology also firmly believe that the eye is a “Neoplatonic window of the soul and of the mind” and a passageway from exterior to interior, as Helkiah Crooke (Cooke, 1618) says:

“The eyes are the discoveries of the mind, as the countenance is the Image of the same; by the eyes as by a window, you may look even into the secret corners of the Soule”

4. Methodology

This study is conducted qualitatively underneath the standpoint of literary studies, in which the data are taken from a ghazal titled “Ghazal for the Girl in Photo” composed by Shadaab Zeest Hashmi. The instrument is the researcher herself who collected data by separating Ghazals from other genres, segregated all imagery types in the poem then selected the eye imagery which is the research focus of the study. Data analysis process was implemented by data content analysis method of the selected images using related theories. Descriptive analysis explanation was used to demonstrate these images and create meaning.

5. Findings and discussion: hermeutics of the symbolic imagery of eye in “ghazal for the girl in photo”

As other poets, Shadab often creates images using symbolism. Her symbolic imagery is not merely descriptive of scenes but expressive of abstract ideas also. All her three volumes “Baker of Tarifa”, “Kohl and Chalker”, and “Ghazal Cosmopolitan” contain prolific symbolic imageries that allude to objects in which “the effect of the imagery is not so much the visual meaning but

rather a symbolic meaning imparted by the image.” Among her poems “Ghazal for the Girl in Photo” stands head and shoulders with its fascinating visual, auditory and olfactory images. Noticeably, the human eye is the most recurring image in all couplets of this ghazal. In this poem, the “eye” each time refers to a broader and deeper hidden idea which reflects a valuable information about the issues about which the poem was written, which needs to be interpreted, understood and enjoyed. The ghazal opens with a striking image of the eye motion of piercing gaze which kept the poet in a jolt of emotions:

“You became the girl with the piercing eyes when you found your country swiped by a stranger”

According to the doctrine of motion and shape from which the notion of polarity and sphericity arises, it is assumed that there is no “straight line”, there is a continuity of convergence and divergence in one sphere. All objects are harmoniously endowed with a single wonderful shape and motion which encounters no supposition in nature and requires least power to produce greater (Turnley, 1865). Similarly, the shape and motion of eye, containing the vigorous and exceptional power of sight, encompasses the divine power prefiguring the whole body and consequently the whole nature. All emotions and passions going inside and outside can be enclosed in the medium of eye. Eye search when they move and behind each search there is intention and attention. The word “piercing” is an eye movement that means a sharp and penetrating questing look. It is deep perspicacious eye movement which searches intensely. Piercing eyes have been used as a symbol of wisdom, sagacity and forward-looking. Shakespeare in *King Henry VI* referred to this meaning saying:

*“These eyes that now are dimm'd with death's black veil,
Have been as piercing as the midday sun,
To search the secret treasons of the world;”*

Piercing eyes are also known as a sign of captivating beauty along with an element of destructive power. A lady with piercing eyes has always been complimented and adored in poetry as a beautiful and powerful. We can quote Lord Pembroke admiring the piercing eyes of his beloved:

*“Your piercing eyes if them I see
Are worse than basilisks to me”*

Richard Allison also went victim for the piercing eyes of his beloved that killed him:

*“Her eyes, like angles, watch them still
Threatening with piercing frowns to kill”*

Thus, the piercing eyes symbolizes physical and spiritual beauty and power. Shadaab attributes these qualities to an innocent refugee to demonstrate that actual beauty may dwell in those who suffer, who loose, and pay heavy prices for wars they never participated in. Piercing gaze may be reflection of the turmoil of emotions within the mind. This eye movement is put in context with the “stranger” who “swiped” the country, hence there are sharp feelings of anger, discontent, contempt towards the stranger who

caused the displacements of Afghans and their families. A piercing look echoes an anxious context, where there is a conflict, a dilemma. On the other hand, “piercing eyes” establishes an interrogative communication telling that the person is in question and extremely observant and perceptive. It seems that the girl wants to communicate the universal tragedy of refugees and wants to ask about this injustice and how long it will take to compensate their loss. Additionally, piercing eyes indicate illusion and delusion as apparently the person may seem absent minded while he is mentally engaged in profound thoughts. This “piercing look” is evidenced to be what is scientifically known as the “power gaze” (Faccault,1977), the impact of which must be experienced and believed as it demonstrates inner power and challenging nature. Afghan women, who were marginalized as weak and unimportant, have been making struggles to get the right of education and employment. With the power of will reflected in such piercing eyes, they strengthened themselves despite all sufferings they went through and immense changes were witnessed in their lives and status in society. This power is what Khalid Hussein labeled as “splendid suns” in his fascinating novel “Thousand Splendid Suns” when he said:

*“One could not count the moons that shimmer on her roofs,
Or the thousand splendid suns that hide behind her walls.”*

The other symbolic image of eye is related to the eye function of tearing. In line 2, Shadab says addressing the girl in the photo:

*“In Kabul snow, a missile turned your mother into coal,
your last tears were wiped by a stranger”*

Scientifically, tears are “drops of saline watery fluid secreted by the lacrimal gland between the eye and the eye lid to moisten and clean the eye.”. Based on the purpose and motif, modern biologists have categorized three kinds of tears: basal tears, which “bathe our eyes each time we blink,” reflex tears, which emerge as an involuntary reaction to an eye injury or exposure to strong fumes like onions or chemicals, and emotional tears, which are provoked during times of distress. Scientists can distinguish among these tears since each has a different chemical makeup.

Symbolically, the girl’s tears in the story are simultaneously basal, reflex and emotional. They are basal trying to moisture her dried eyes that witnessed the horror of war. They are reflex in reaction of the injuries and wounds war strikes caused to her and her family. They are emotional that were provoked by the pitiless war that caused the sad demise of her family and her displacement. Tears here reflect the pessimism, melancholy and nostalgia Alfred Lord Tennyson allotted to them in “Tears Idle Tears”:

*“Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.”*

A key theory about tearing is the therapeutic effect of tears

which known as Aristotle’s notion of *catharsis* from tragedy, which associates tears to the purgation of our psyche. Supporting it, Ovid wrote that “by weeping, we disperse our wrath.... It is a relief to weep; grief is satisfied and carried off by tears.”. Seneca also says: “tears ease the soul.” Henry James’s brother William wrote in his 1890 Principles of Psychology that tears produce pleasure:

“There is an excitement during a crying fit which is not without a certain pungent pleasure of its own.”.

Psychiatrists also asserted the benefits of tears in the ridding of “neuroses”. Thus, tears symbolize relaxation and easing of the soul, and being wiped by the “stranger” indicates the deprivation from this “pleasure of crying” causing perpetual spiritual anguish and agony. Thus, the reader from this symbolic image of the tearing eye can imagine how throttled and tormented is the girl, and no doubt, her body and health are also to be affected negatively, as the modern biochemist William H. Frey proved this scientifically saying:

“Emotional tears play a precise and central role in helping to restore the chemical balance of the body by secreting substances produced by the body in response to stress.”.

On the other hand, Tom Lutz (Lutz, 2001) acknowledges that generally, tears are the outcome of disparate causes: “fear mixed with desire, hope mixed with despair.” And, certainly, tears can be deceptive and manipulating. The girl’s tears also a representation of mixed emotions of refugees who are always tumbling between two fires of nostalgic wistfulness of separation from home and the optimistic hope to return. The finest expressive words that best echoed such huge uproar of emotions are by an Arabic refugee poet who said:

*“If we’ve been deprived of the blessing of living in it,
We won’t be deprived of a grave within it.”*

Another important thing tears also accomplish is to “blind us to outside distractions”, as Lutz explains:

“Crying allows us to turn away from the cause of our anguish and turn inward, away from the world and toward our own bodily sensations, our own feelings. Our feelings overwhelm the world, or at least our ability to process any additional information from our world.”

Because eyes are the gateway to the soul, when a person cries this gateway is blurred and blocked so no outward matter can spoil it. Hence the person is distracted from outwardly matters and reflect upon his inner aptitudes. In the poem, the girl has gone through this process and then these tears, symbolically indicating the war which has made the outward world insignificant and made her focus more on rebuilding her broken self and identity. That’s why we see refugee camps producing marvelous talents, successful writers and exceptional thinkers who change whole lives. Wiping the tears of the girl in the poem by the “stranger” who has caused the tragic death of her mother fairly indicates that she has no more “tears” to shed, no more

senses, nor more care about what will further happen. This condition is psychologically known as “apathy”, the state of senselessness as a natural response to disappointment, dejection, and stress. As a response, apathy is a way to forget about these negative feelings and go ahead in life. Another interesting view about tears is the statement of Jesse Bering, the director of the Institute of Cognition and Culture at Belfast University:

“Tears could be powerful tools. They did more than just signal vulnerability, they were perhaps a way of keeping social and reproductive bonds strong. Maybe good criers were survivors.”

The girl’s tears in the poem became a symbol of a pain which proved to be a gain later, a weakness which became the reason of her strength, just as wars made the Afghan women bolder and more aware of their rights. This is elaborated and personified in the subsequent line:

“Your eyes teach how cold flint ignites flare, how a father’s bones become an orphans roof”

The images of cold rock that flames a blaze of fire reflects how these passive haunting eyes of the girl sparkled the hope of justice and how these looks of Sharbat Gula captured by the photographer and spread all over the world became an icon to defend the rights of refugees. The atrocious war circumstances Afghani women went through proved to be a positive turning point in their lives. The image of a father’s boons becoming the roof for the orphan shows how sacrifices give birth to new lives for others, just as the ray of hope which spread after the photo was taken and the worldwide realization of the sufferings and rights of refugees. The next line contains an imagery from the physiology of Eye:

“History writes itself clear as cornea, your green glare—no whitewashing, no hype is stranger”

Cornea is the smooth and clear glass-like front part of the eye that covers the iris, pupil, and anterior chamber. It helps to shield the rest of the eye from germs, dust, and other harmful matter and also functions like a window that controls and focuses the entry of light into the eye. The poet here compares the history behind the photo girl with cornea in its clarity and vividness. The eyes of the girl immortalized a whole nation’s cause, and a single tragedy of this girl reflected thousands of unknown miseries and irrecoverable losses of refugees during wars. Sharbat Gula missed her parents in a Soviet helicopter missile in 1984 and was forced to live in a refugee camp. With a face filled with childhood dreams, wearing a reddish scarf and haunting green eyes focusing at the camera, her photo was published on a magazine cover and went viral despite her unknown identity. The photo was very expressive about the difficult life in Afghanistan at that time and the suffering that Sharbat Gula and other refugee children who had been displaced with their families to the refugee camps. After 17 years of endless suffering and miserable life, the girl was found in Afghanistan and another photo was taken with her to find that those eyes that once captivated the world with its beauty and hidden secrets became charmless eyes. Her worn-out facial expressions and shabby garments reflected

the misery and pain of the elapsing years of the disastrous refugee life where she couldn’t get basic necessities of life. Thus, those eyes didn’t reflect Sharbat Gula only but reflected a history, a whole nation and a whole life.

The green color of the eye here is important. Doctor Hamadi Kallel, an ophthalmologist surgeon, says that people with green eyes possess “an air of mystery and a quiet self-sufficiency.” Psychology asserts that green-eyed people “possess their own genuine and creative nature, paired with the ability to perform well under pressure. In spite of the hardships of refugee life, Sharbat Gula could finally return to home. Hence the green eyes here are symbol of determination, resistance, confidence and strong will to live. There is also a historical allusion here to the change wars brought to Afghan women and the empowerment reforms made. After the collapse of the Soviet Union the Mujahideen led the country towards fifteen years of civil war which was followed by the birth of Taliban. During Taliban regime schools’ doors were shut at the faces of girls and women could not work outside their houses. After the 11 September in 2001 Afghanistan experienced a democratic presidential election in which Afghans had a women candidate for the presidency. Despite the defeat of such reforms, this provide evidence that Afghanistan has had a history of progressive efforts to provide women’s rights and develop the basis for a more democratic society (Ghosh, 2003). Showing eye as an identifier of emotions, Shadaab ironically “pity” such emperor who couldn’t see the reflection of hatred and rejection in the eyes of Afghani women:

“Pity the empire that failed to decipher the disdain in your eyes, the hard stare of war”

Another eye movement is portrayed to signify that all specific eye features of the girl are consistently related to particular mental states. This is related to the emotional theory of eye. In a recent study published in Psychological Inquiry, researchers entail that expressions developed as a “byproduct of behavior and experience”. Additionally, Daniel Lee and Adam Anderson claim that the capacity to read and interpret emotions can be epitomized to one very dominant part of human physiology: the eyes. According to them the necessity to use our “peepers” in particular circumstances is a physical requirement that became connected with certain social situations. Thus, eyes assist to recognize how others are feeling. Lee says:

“This starts at the function origins of expressions theorized by Darwin, and it seems to be a human tendency to co-opt those evolved features for social function.”

Staring is a prolonged fixed look. In staring, one object or person is the constant focus of visual interest for period of time. Hence the “stare of war” here symbolizes the vacant, motionless and valueless life war causes. “Hard stare of war” also denotes to what is called “thousand-yard stare”, used to describe the blank bleary gaze of war victims especially soldiers who have become “emotionally detached” from the horrors around them. It is the best symbol of the never-ending traumatic war scenes engraved in the minds of all war affected people. Paul warn describes this look and the horror and the untold secrets it hides

within:

*“They call it the thousand-yard stare
You can see it in their eyes with no flare
What he had last seen Was more a
nightmare than dream”*

Staring has always been interpreted as being either hostile, or the result of intense concentration or affection. Helplessly enough, the girl couldn't express her emotions of dislike and contempt but through this look. Staring behavior can be considered a form of aggression, or an invasion. If the empire is strong with his martial apparatus, the people are stronger with their will and hope, hence the look here is a symbol of the battle of wills. Staring conceptually also implies confronting the inevitable. War is imposed on nations under various reasons, and death is unavoidable. This feeling of helplessness along with feelings of power of wills and the determination to fight till the last breath was best described by Welfred Owen when he said:

*“Pale flakes with fingering stealth come feeling for
our faces— We cringe in holes, back on forgotten
dreams, and stare, snow-dazed, Deep into grassier
ditches. So we drowse, sun-dozed, Littered with
blossoms trickling where the blackbird fusses.
—Is it that we are dying?”*

6. Conclusion

This hermeneutic investigation of symbolic imagery of Eye in the Shadaab's "Ghazal for the Girl of Photo" has amply shown how words, when finely elected, have boundless vigor in them that a portrayal gives us "much dynamic ideas than the sight of things themselves". Readers may haven't seen the real photo of the girl, but the artistic imagery drawn in lively colors appeal more to imagination by the words themselves than by the real girl they describe. Shadaab, in the poem, took the natural scenery and gave it more energetic touches, intensified its beauty, and so invigorated the whole piece. The symbolic imagery of eye, whether it is related to the eye movements, eye functions, eye colors or eye physiology, is both poignantly verbal and pictorial that the real picture appears weak and faint. Hermeneutics and other theories of vision, image and symbol have interwoven and formed meaning by making the author, the situation and the reader parts of the text, and immensely shown the literary value of the images of eye and their potent relevance to the sociocultural and psychological background of the poem and its major topic of the suffering of refugees around the world. By interpreting these images, the entire Ghazal became verbal icon which, as Ezra Pound says, "presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time".

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