

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF STRUCTURE AND SEMANTICS IN ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF GULSHANI RAZ

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Abstract

The current article is devoted to the comparative analysis of Gulshani Raz by Makhmud Shabistari English versions. There are focused mainly two English translations of Gulshani Raz; by Edward Whinfield in XX century and Florence Lederer in XX century. These two translations versions have lots of distinctive features and structural peculiarities in their own way. Moreover, it is obvious to find semantic and structural approaches of each translator while analysis. The investigations are based on qualitative research and methodology.

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Introduction. The Gulshan-i Rāz opens with a prologue that concisely outlines major themes of the poem. It addresses the place of the human soul and intellect in cosmos, diversity of creation as determinations of one reality, the intellectual-spiritual journey of the soul from the particular to the universal, the guiding role of prophets and Sufi saints, the cosmic role of Prophet Muḥammad, the difference between exoteric and esoteric knowledge, and finally the significance of figurative language in Sufi discourses. The prologue also foreshadows the dominant metaphor of the poem that captures the doctrine of the unity of being.

Theoretical Frame. To understand Shabistari's application of this metaphor one must keep in mind the function of circle in ancient, late antiquity, and Islamic cosmologies as well as its symbolic usage in Islamic esoteric traditions such as Isma'ili and Sufi philosophies. Circle has a central place in Pythagorean, Platonic, Aristotelian, and Neoplatonic cosmologies. Therein, circle is adopted as a shape that can best bring together the idea of a finite universe with that of eternity and perfection since circular motion is the only motion in which the end is the same as the beginning and vice versa. This philosophical visualization of eternal motion was also reinforced by the Ptolemaic world of concentric circles, i.e. the spheres of the stars and planets, an astronomical model that was in use throughout the pre-modern world. In the Islamic world, Abū Naṣr Fārābī (d. 339/950) synthesized Aristotelian and Neoplatonic ideas with the Ptolemaic astronomy to provide a new cosmic model of concentric spheres which are generated and governed by a vertical order of ten intellects.

Methodology. The translators approached to the interpretation the work in very distinguishing methods. It can be seen obvious while reading the translated works. While E. Whinfield unique word by word translation named literal or adequate type of translation as the identical copy of the Gulshani Raz, Florence Lederer implemented other way of rendition such as omission and additional way other way like calque and lexical and grammatical transition. Coming to the Jonhson Pasha`s Translation, the work is just alike to E. Whinfields` one.

Differences between structure Florence Lederer divided the sections and parts of the whole book and changed structure.

For example: She had introduction, 14 parts and Epilogue, additionally, the author claimed editorial Notre section to the translation of the Gulshani Raz. In each part there contained Sub points covering notions and concepts in Sufi Culture such as Eye, Lips, Mole, Curl, Cheek, Earthly beauty and so on. Coming to Introduction part the author pointed eight sub chapters like Life of Shabistari, Sufi poetry, Sufi symbolism, The Beloved, Forms the unreal to the real, The art of Shabistari, The Secret Rose Garden, The central tree of beauty.

Looking at the initial translation By E. Whinfield, we can see no change with the original one in the structure.

Example: Introduction. T H E Gulshan i Raz was composed in A . H . 717 (A D . in answer to fifteen questions on the doctrines of the Sufis, or Muhammadan Mystics, propounded by Amir Said Hosaini, a celebrated Sufi doctor of Herat . The author`s name was Sa`duddin Mahmud Shabistari, so called from his birth -place, Shabistar, a village near Tabriz, in the province of Azarbaijan. From a brief notice of his life in the Illujalis ul `Ushshak, repeated in substance in the Heft Iklim, the Safinai Khushgu, and the Riaz ushsha`am, it would appear that he was born about the middle of the seventh century of the Hejira (A D . and that he died at Tabriz where he h ad passed the greater part of his life, in A. H. 720

Florence Lederer started the Part 1 with the holy words: "IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE COMPASSIONATE, THE MERCIFUL" and introduction.

" It is inward glow that makes the Sufi, not the religious habit." SA'D UD DIN MAHMUD SHABISTAEI was born at Shabistar, near Tabriz, about A.D. 1250. He wrote the Gulshan i Raz, or Secret Rose Garden, as a reply to questions put forth by a Sufi doctor of Herat named Dmir Syad Hosaini. Very little is known of Mahmud Shabistar`s life. He wrote beside the Gulshan i Raz two treatises on Sufiism called Hakk ul pakin and Risala i Shadid. The Gulshan i Raz was introduced into Europe by two travellers in 1700. Later, copies of the poem were found in several European libraries. In 1821 Dr. Tholuck, of Berlin, published extracts, and in 1825 a German translation of part of the poem appeared in another of his books. Afterwards a verse translation and the Persian text was published by Von Hammer Purgstall in Berlin and Vienna. The Gulshan i Raz was translated into English and published, with the Persian text and extracts from Hammer's edition and Lajih's notes, by Mr. Whinfield in 1880.

F. Lederer also acknowledged "I WISH to acknowledge my indebtedness to Professor E. H. Whinfield, whose book, the standard translation of the Gulshan i Raz, has been of the greatest assistance to me in compiling this little volume."

Her book starts not with question and answers but with these verses:

Sample A.

THE EYE AND THE LIP WHAT is the nature of the eye and the lip?

Let us consider.

Coquettish and intoxicating glances shine from His eye.

The essence of existence issues from His ruby lip.

Hearts burn with desire because of His eye,

And are healed again by the smile of His lip.

Because of His eye hearts are aching and drunken.

His ruby lip gives soul-garments to men.

His eye does not perceive this visible world,

Yet often His lip quivers with compassion.

By Edward Whindfield the translation of these verses are given from line 980 till 986

The god is defined in Masculine, while in religion The God does not have gender.

From love to him devotees lost their heads,

And became outcasts from house and home.

He makes one faithful, another an infidel,

'He fills the world with tumult and wrong.

Taverns have been edified by his lips,

Mosques have been illumined by his cheek.'

All my desire has been accomplished through him,

Through him I gained deliverance from infidel lust.

Another sample verses from E. Whindfield

Sample B. QUESTION XIV.

805 What meaning attaches to wine, torch, and beauty What is assumed in being a haunter of taverns

ANSWER X IV.

Wine, torch, and beauty are epiphanies of Verity,

For it is that which is revealed under all forms soever.

Wine and torch are the transport and light of the knower,'

Behold The Beauty for it is hidden from none.

Here wine is the lamp - shade, torch the lamp,

And Beauty the beam of the light of spirits.

By Beauty were kindled sparks in the heart of Moses,

His wine was the fire, and his torch the burning bush.

810 Wine and torch are the soul of that flashing light,

Beauty signifies that greatest of signs.'

Fragment from F. Lederer's *Secret Rose Garden*

WINE, TORCH, AND BEAUTY

TRUTH'S manifestations

Are wine, torch, and beauty ;

Wine and torch are the light and shining of the " knower,"

Beauty is concealed from none.

Wine is the lamp-shade, And torch the lamp ;

Beauty is the Spirit-light, So bright,

it kindles sparks In the heart.

Wine and torch are the essence of that blinding light,

Beauty is the sign of the Divine.

Drink this wine and, dying to self,

You will be freed from the spell of self.

Then will your being, as a drop,

Fall into the ocean of the Eternal.

In Lederer`s version, structure was rebuilt totally and moral also influenced by omission of *Moses* in the lines, for example in line 7 the word *Moses* is omitted while Edward Whinfield did not do this action.

To sum up, as for the popularity of Shabistarī's *Gulshan-i rāz*, lines of the poem have been cited not only in Persian Sufi literature but also in major works of translators of West to date. One can hardly open a treatise of later Islamic philosophy, even though the text may be in Arabic, which does not include some lines from the *Gulshan-i rāz*. Notwithstanding, there is still a lot more to be written about the philosophical and literary features of these two texts in connection to each other. Even though, texts in each translation works differ from each other, the main moral of the masterpiece is kept from semantical, literal point of view.

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