



RESEARCH PAPER

Anatomization of Nassir's Simulacrum

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ABSTRACT

This article throws light on how the renowned Urdu poet, Nasir Kazmi, crafts his poetics by the use of his powerful imagery. His depth of perception, acute observation, sharp senses and fluent stylistics enable him to portray whatever he sees, imagines, and perceives. It is the charisma of his craftsmanship that his poetic pictures, his personified fancies and painted realities make his collection of poetry an album of multicolour paintings or a splendid example of graphic art. Nasir observes his surroundings like a photographer or a painter and then uses his pen like the brush of a creative artist, to draw the sad pictures of deprived segments of society, declining values, gone by time, mysteries of the night, deserted mornings, pale afternoons, lamenting evenings and thus completing an environment full of sense of loss in which the past is a fascinating dream and the present is an undesired reality.

Keywords

Anatomization, Ghazal, Nasir Kazmi

Introduction

Nasir Kazmi is one of the most iconic names of the Urdu ghazal. He strengthened the ghazal tradition at a time when Urdu poetry was in the lure of modern poem and ghazal was losing its charm and most of the poets abandoned the ghazal and turned towards poem. Nasir's ghazal is based on traditionalism. That is why Meer's influence can be seen in his style and craftsmanship. Haideri (2018) has said it rightly: "Nasir Kazmi is devoid of magnification and antagonism the most significant name of Urdu ghazal. If Nasir is called the Meer of the 20th century it will not be insignificant. Acceptance, asceticism, forthrightness, civility, modesty, collective demonstration of personal grief and contemporary awareness all are attributes that were the specialty of Meer and are also the pride of Nassir's ghazal" (p. 393).

Nasir entered the field of poetry at a time when the Urdu poets had either declared the Urdu ghazal as an anthem of the bygone days or they were seeking refuge in the anti-progressive tradition evaluating it as an exquisite genre of poetry. In retrospect, both trends were somewhat extreme. It was not a positive attitude to completely eliminate the genre that ruled the Urdu literature for hundreds of years. And in its defence, the spirit to revive the tradition by turning a blind eye to the present was also contrary to pragmatism. In such a situation Urdu ghazal needed a poet with a creative mind who would keep it alive with all its subtleties and

acclimatize it to modern needs in such a way that no hymn of the past days could slander it.

Luckily in those days, the Urdu ghazal got a creator like Nassir Kazmi who was neither a fan of modern westernization nor a blind imitator of tradition. Nassir's poetry epitomizes that he was a nostalgic being and prefers to live in the past rather than in the present but this does not mean that he was old-fashioned. He was aware of the fact that it is so important to see the reminiscence of mood and the dismissal of tradition independently. Consequently, he writes expressing the tradition. Kazmi (1988) in his book quoted "The tradition is a beacon of light you can find your way in its light but you cannot stay in its shadow. The caravan that stays in its shadow and does not light its flicker independently then this does not prop him. When you do not have the fire inside you then the fire outside does not endow heat" (as cited in Khan, 1988, pp. 51-52).

The above statement glorifies the fact that Nassir was convinced of learning from tradition but he did not likely to rely on it. The study of his poetry also throws light on the fact that he lit the lamp of his poetry with classicism love and later made his own identification. conversation with the night, sad feelings in the afternoon, sympathizing the evening and inviting her home, the quest for morning light like a lost friend, chatting with dumb mounds, beautifying the dreamscape, reliving the past moments, carving, creating a picture or simulating through his words Nassir has learned all this from his precursors. Prominence the similes and imagery found in his poetry. Kazmi said (1988) "Anees taught me how to look at things.....When Hussain (A.S) left his tent with Ali Asghar the listener reaches the Karbala Plains" (as cited in Khan, 1988, pp. 52).

Allegorical poetry is an attribute that can be seen in every everlasting poetic tradition of the literary world. All the poets spread diverse colours with their visual ability on pages and persist to demonstrate their reader's new panoramas. This attribute has also glorified poets of Urdu world. According to Azad Urdu ghazal's Bawa Adam Wali Dakni's poetry was all based on aesthetics. Even today his tradition continues to glorify Urdu poetry. But call it neo-demographic thinking or our sense of inferiority we always find the roots of every element in the west. That's why while discussing imagery we start with the Western viewpoint. Taking the definition of metaphor, Siddiqui (1986) said "Simile is the transformation of the English term image and image refers to the image of a subject that comes to our mind through the words provided by the poet" (p. 48).

Abdullah (1981) calls similitude an image-making and explains the image by saying "Imagery refers to the formation of a portrait that, with the help of words, brings tangible objects into visual perception as they are but the image is not an external instinct or intention of the architect but appears without any strategy or intention in thoughts for the sake of justification or visualization during manifestation" (p. 22). Nomani (n.d.) coins the term visualization for imagery (p. 8). And Ahmad (2005) calls it allegory (p. 89). While according to Iqbal Akbar, there is no decisive alternative to metaphor in Urdu, whether it is Shibli's visualization or Farooqi's allegory according to him pictures, portraits, etc. do not have a comprehensive sense of the image. Kamali (1969) said about this "Words such as images and symbols raise primarily a specific image that lacks the broader meaning of the word imagery" (p. 342).

Hussain (2005) is also not much different from all of these, however, in search for word image, he stretches a comprehensive term like an example and says “We are using this term as an English word image. Image means a copy, imitation, statue, portrait, or sculpture of something. In psychology, it refers to the remembrance, residual impression, or conceptual map of a past cognitive experience. In psychology, sometimes it is interpreted as an image and sometimes as an idea, although the systematic word for imagery is a simile. Maybe a concept or idea conveys the best meaning of the word image, but both of these words are used in a specific sense by us, so we have not chosen either of them. We have picked simile to all other words because it has the meaning of image and similarity moreover this word has not been committed to any specific meaning with us” (p. 178).

In every sense, whether you call the image an imitation or ruminates about it as a sculpture two things are sure. First, this term did not come to us from the west and secondly, we do not need to see it in the context of the image. Be it Persian, Arabic, or purely Indian poetry, eastern people have always been crafting word figures in every age and arranging them wisely. And this theme is relevant today too and is deliberated the soul of striking verse. Nasir Kazmi's poetry is alive due to its volatility, reminiscence, and full of passion, the secret of its enormity is the eternal imagery that is scattered on the pages of Kuliyaat Nasir. Kazmi (1992) in his poetry

“Ishaq main jeet hui ya maat

Aaj na chair ye baat

Rang khuly sehra ki dhoop

Zulaf ghane jangal ki raat

Yaar ki nagri koson dhoor

Kese katy gi bhaari raat” (p. n.d.).

Kazmi (1989) said in his poetry book

“Zuban e sukhan ko sukhan bankpan ko tarse ga

Sukhan kadha meri tarz e sukhan ko tarse ga

Naye pyale sahi tere dhour main saaqi

Ye dhour meri shrab e kuhan ko tarse ga

Badal sako tu badal do baaghban warna

Ye baagh saya e sarr o saman ko tarse ga” (p. 138).

It seems that what his eyes see, what his ears heard, and what his thoughts articulate he has put them all in chanting words. In the above-mentioned verses, each canto surrounds all the images that can be perceived visually. Although there is no allegory found in the above-mentioned rhymes, but in the first example, the status quo of a loser, and in the second example, an upset poet who was not appreciated despite his persuasive words. The rest of the couplets have clear visual experiences.

When Nasir Kazmi goes downhill in the valleys of the past. He speaks to the passers-by, addresses the surrounding objects, paces the elapsed scenes, and then presents the whole scene in front of the reader. This setup can be seen in the subsequent illustrations, Kazmi (1992) said:

Ghoonge teelo! Kuch tu bolo

Kon is nagri ka raja tha?

Kin logon ky hain ye dhaanche?

Kin maon ne in kw jana tha?

Kis devi ki hai ye muratt?

Kon yahan puja krta tha?

Kis gori ky hain ye kangan?

Ye kentha kis ne pehna tha? (P. 88-89).

Nasir also presents the people of the past as if they had just left us and their remembrance is not an indication of the desire to inhabit a mystical place rather, this all is real and still exists in our surroundings. Perhaps that is why Nasir Kazmi does not consider nature as mere romanticism, but in his opinion, what it was, was the captivation of a constant struggle. Kazmi (n.d.) says “nature is not a romantic thing, it is a great refined civilization that has been nurtured by humans for centuries, and its metaphors are its living symbols. The visualization of a city where there are trees, birds, pigeons, sparrows, and a wide sky is not romantic. Think of the people behind it, how the people who planted those flowers and trees would have lived” (as cited in Mushtaq, n.d., pp. 203).

A special feature of Nasir's depiction is an auditory illustration. It feels like he is listening to something every moment and conveys it to people through his words. Be it “Barg ne” or “Pehle Barish” Nasir repetitively snoops the sound of the rain and tells it to others. In Kazmi (n.d.) poetry he said:

“Hai yehi sa,at e ejaab o qabool

Subah ki lay ko zara ghour say sun

Kuch tu kehti hain chatak kar kalyan

Kya sunati hai saba ghour say sun

Barg e awaara bhi ik mutrib hai

Tayer e naghma sara ghour sy sun

Rang mannat kash e awaaz naheen

Gul b hai aik nawaa ghour sy sun” (p. 110).

Kazmi (n.d.) says:

“Phir sawan rutt ki puwan chali tum yaad aye

Phir patton ki pazaib baji tum yaad aye

Phir koonjen boleen ghaas k hary samandhar main

Rutt I peelee phoolon ki tum yaad aye

Pehle tu main cheekh k roya aur phir hansane laga

Badal garja Bijli chamki tum yaad aye” (p. 15).

A significant feature of Nasir's ghazal is the endurance found in it he sees an idea, a state, an emotion, and a scene with all its details and shows it to others. That is why his Ghazal is said to have a complete idea in itself and a certain qualitative continuity is seen in it. This continuity sometimes proceeds in the form of a story and creates a mythical atmosphere whose every colour is beautiful, every sound is praiseworthy and every feeling is beautiful. Especially the experiment conducted in “Pehle Barish” is the best example in this regard. Even in this fictional environment, he keeps the reader aware of his every situation. In the following poems, one can see the fictitious atmosphere which is not usually seen in the Ghazal before. Nasir (n.d.) poetry about this:

“Dou roohon ka pyasa badhal

Garaj garaj k baras raha tha

Dou yadon ka charhta darya

Aik hi sagar main girta tha

Dil ki kahani kehte kehte

Raat ka anchal bheeg gia tha

Raat gaye soya tha lekin

Tuj sy pehle jaag gia tha” (p. 42).

“Tere ghar k darwaze par

Suraj nange paoun khara tha

Diwaron sy aanch aati thi

Matkon main pani jalta tha

Aik taraf kuch kache garh thy

Aik taraf nalaa chalta tha

Aangah ki dewar ka saya

Chadar ban k phail gya tha" (p. 43-44).

Speaking about this fictional atmosphere of Nasir's ghazal, Hashmi (2008) says "Creating a story in ghazal is a unique experience of poetry many poems in the world and especially in Urdu have been written in fictional style, but Urdu Ghazal had not gone through such an experiment before. Nasir Kazmi was the first one to do this experiment and also successfully completed it" (p. 123). While combining the features and abstractions to bind the idea, visualization is a natural process in every era and that is very common in Nasir's poetry, so different kinds of visualization can be seen in his verses, but in this regard, the visualization of night, memory, evening, silence, and sadness is very high in his cantos. Kazmi (n.d.) sees all these disjuncture in different feminine figures:

"Bheeg chalin ab raat ki palken

Tu ab thak kar soya ho ga

Mera saathi shaam ka taara

Tuj say aankh milata ho ga

Shaam k chalte haath nay tuj ko

Mera salaam tu beja ho ga" (p. 22-23).

"Kidhar chale gaye wo hum nawa e shaam e firaak

Khari hai darh pay mery sar jhukaye shaam e firaak

Wo shakh e khoon hii sahi dil ka koi rang tu ho

Ab aa gae hai tu khaali naa jaye shaam e firaak

Bujhi bujhi si hai kiyon chaand ki ziya Nasir

Kahan chali hai ye kasa uthaye shaam e firaak

Ye reengti chali aati hain kya lakeeren si

Ye dhoondti hai kise saye saye shaam e firaak" (p. 54).

The night is a remarkable character of Nasir's poetry, it is his companion of loneliness and he prefers the darkness of the night to the light of day. However, his attachment to the night is not obsessed with despair or despondency, rather he saw the night in the context of his unique creative abilities. Kazmi (2010) Emphasizing this fact and says that "actually the night is very important in his poetry, it is not the dark night which our modern poets call the metaphor of darkness. The night is a symbol of creation, everything in this world is created in the night, Juice in flowers fills in the night, waves rise in the seas at night, fragrances are formed in the night, and the greatest revelation was revealed in the night" (as cited in Rehman, T, 2010, pp. 119).

Kazmi (2010) In his poetry, demonstrates this vast world of night in different ways.

“Hijar main aah o baka rasm e kuhan hai lekin

Aaj ye rasm hi duhrao keh kuch raat katty

Dill dukhata hai wo mil kar bhi magar aaj ki raat

Usi be darad ko lay auo keh kuch raat katty” (p. 92).

“Damm ghutta jata hai afsurda dili say yaaro

Koi afwaah hi phelao k kuch raat katty” (p. 98).

“Aisa bhi koi sapna jaage

Saath mere ik dunia jaage

Wo jaage jise neend naa aye

Yaa koi mere jesa jaage

Raaton main ye raat ammar hai

Kal jaage tu phirr kya jaage” (p. 130-131).

He was a sensitive being and was not unaware of the atmosphere around him. He had to undergo partition when he was just a boy. The devastation caused by partition is unforgettable for any sensitive person. For Nasir, this tragedy caused more pain because he has to leave his ancestral home. No sooner had he recovered from the woes of partition than another trauma the “Fall of Dhaka” freshened his wounds. Another partition after partition proved fatal for a man like Nasir. After December 1971, he became silent and suffered this pain surreptitiously. He mourns the partition event and criticizes the insensitive social attitudes in simple words using similes and creating sharp pictures that the heart fills with grief and the reader gets lost in this painful ambiance.

There is no shame in accepting the fact that Nasir's poetry is a living history of his era. The poet described what he saw. Ahmed (1985) illuminates this aspect of Nasir Kazmi and describes that “Nasir's poetry is not the acquaintance of his era but the essence of his era. In this regard, he himself has given the example that if you open a perfume bottle, the fragrance will come, but you will not see flowers or a garden. Nasir's poetry is a bottle of perfume” (p. 30).

There is no doubt in saying that Nasir supported the Urdu ghazal at a time when other poets were seeking refuge in the vastness of poems. He not only adopted it but also gave space to numerous new topics in it and proved that the ghazal's capacity was not limited, but the poet's imagination was limited. Nasir not only made ghazal a means of communication, but by doing several experiments on it, he proved

that ghazal is not a genre of the past, but is a favourite of all times. Nasir has set such parameters of illustration in ghazal's field that it is very hard to find such an example among today's poets, this is what makes him unique from the rest of all.

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