

Sher #2: The Ecstasy of a Spring Morning

Nuskha-e Hamidiyya, Ghazal # 135 p. 155

This ghazal comprising 8 sher's is exceptionally poignant. The radif is used to its full potential in every she'r. Despite two matla's and a beautiful maqta' the ghazal was not selected by Ghalib for publication.

بربنہ مستی صبح بہار رکھتے ہیں

جنون حسرتِ یک جامہ وار رکھتے ہیں

I have the naked ecstasy of a spring morning

I am crazed with longing

for a flower- patterned garment

Vocabulary:

Barahnah: naked, exposed, bare

Junoon: madness, a state of possession (by a jinn), insanity, frenzy (Platts 393)

Masti: drunkenness, wantonness, lust, ecstasy (Platts 1033)

Hasrat: desire, generally of the unfulfilled kind

Jamahvar: woven fabric with a floral design

Asi: Jamahvar resembles spring (bahar); the speaker's naked passion is compared to the naked intoxication of spring. Spring is intoxicated because it has blossomed in a glorious display of color and beauty. The poem's speaker's heart was full with the naked intoxication of spring and the longing for a flower-patterned garment like spring.

Jain: Morning tears the garment of the night, therefore it is naked. Having one garment is almost equal to being naked. Thus longing for a garment produces naked intoxication.

Kantoori: Spring's garment is jamavar because it is speckled with flowers. Spring is symbolic of *junoon* or madness and madness of nakedness. The crazed one longs for a garment like Spring.

MAF: There are lots of interesting semantics of wordplay in the she'r. *Barahnah masti*, is an unusual, powerful expression created by Ghalib (that flies close to the English idiom naked desire) enhances the she'r because of its congruity with subh-e bahar (spring's

morning). Morning in ghazal poetry has the connotation of pristine state of barahnagi/nakedness/bareness because it has torn the garment of night. Morning of spring could mean the dawn or beginning of spring, a season of renewal. Masti, junoon and hasrat are interrelated words with nuances that bring additional, delicate, emotional color to the verse. Spring always produces these emotions in the poet-lover. The longing for a spring like garment that was hidden in the speaker's heart becomes apparent because the speaker wants to be identified with spring.

The opposition between barahnah meaning unclothed, and jamahvar meaning a flower patterned robe or shawl is delightful.

Going deeper into the implications of the relationship between spring and the lover, I am reminded of the heart rending image of the crazed, bruised lover in chains. A flower patterned shawl could be the bruised, scar studded body of the lover. A scar/bruise looks like a flower. Flowers can have scars too. The she'r could be read as the lover craving to declare his passionate ecstasy at the arrival of spring with a body of scars.

This she'r is imbued with an exquisite, Ghalibian agony, very cerebral in the way it is enunciated. It can be contrasted with a cheerful, vision of Spring:

ساقی بہارِ موسمِ گلِ بے سرورِ بخش

پیمان سے ہم گزر گئے پیمان چاہئے

Saqi, the joy

of the season of flowers

is intoxicating;

I've broken my promise

I want a glass of wine