

Abdul Ghani Khan's Pushto Poetry: Evaluation of Themes and Implications for Cross-Linguistic Literary Studies

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Abstract

Abdul Ghani Khan is a revered poet of Pashto, but he is widely unknown to both Pashto and non-Pashto readers in Pakistan. This study is an attempt to introduce Ghani Khan as a poet to Pashto and non-Pashto readers both nationally and internationally. For presenting Ghani Khan's themes and unique style, descriptive qualitative approach was adopted. Five poems were selected purposively from his English translated collection "The Pilgrim of Beauty" and were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's six phases of thematic analysis. The phases included familiarizing with the data, code generation, identifying initial themes, and refining the initial themes, as well as defining the final themes. As a result, 12 "latent themes" were identified and discussed which included love and beauty as blessings, mortality/beauty and immortality/love, love: affliction vs remedy, big questions: absolute truth, sacrifice, escapism, misery, honor, past-glory, rejuvenation, self-realization, and Panther. The study ends with a storyline that was developed to integrate the themes and stylistic individuality of Ghani Khan. The study has implications for the cross-cultural study of literary genres and for applications in Literature classrooms in Pakistani universities.

Keywords: Ghani Khan, Reflexivity in Poetry, Latent Themes, Braun & Clarke's Thematic Analysis, Literary Genre Analysis

Introduction

Ghani is a unique poet of his time and could be considered more modern than the modern poets were (Awan et al., 2014). Awan et al. (2014) argue that he trod very differently from the conventions enshrining his poetry in the traits of freedom of thought and ideological defiance, giving him a

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distinctive position among many modern and romantic poets. However, Ghani's poetry is an umbrella, covering multiple facets of life, encompassing the domains of realism, romanticism, rationalism, mysticism, materialism, nature, ignorance, and exploitation of ordinary men at the hands of local elites (*khans*) and the half-educated preachers (*mullahs*) (Ahmed et al., 2022).

Ghani questioned all kinds of authoritarian ideas and had a sophisticated philosophical thinking which earned him a unique position in poetry. His exquisite poetic style that was full of mystical beads made him a commendable Pashto poet (Ahmed et al., 2022). Ghani's poetry was also compiled in a book titled "Latoon" meaning "Investigation". Apart from this, Ghani was also a painter and sculptor and had written a book on his people namely "The Pathans: A Sketch" (Safa & Sahand, 2022).

In addition, Ghani's work has been subjected to investigation by scholars. Hafeez and Seemab (2019) explored two of Khan's poems 'Saaz' and 'Rishta' studying his poetic language and philosophy using metaphors to derive abstract meaning and conceptualization of life. Similarly, Shah et al. (2021) also compared Ghani's poetry with that of Coleridge, investigating the poems 'Zama Mahal' and 'Kubla Khan' respectively, where the researchers focused on intertextuality exploring their convergence and divergence in thoughts, themes, and linguistic styles. Likewise, exploring the abundance of Ghani's poetry, Iqbal et al. (2022) stepped into the environmental aspect of his poetry to identify his interaction with nature focusing on the notion of eco-centrism, ecological consciousness, and symbiotic inter-relatedness. 'The Pathans' was studied by Ali et al. (2022) stylistically focusing on Ghani's use of the figures of speech including simile, metaphor, anaphora, satire, personification, juxtaposition, hyperbole, symbol, alliteration, and oxymoron, as well as his unique style in employing the literary devices to portray the norms, values, and cultures of Pashtun tribes.

The purpose of this study is to explore the abundance of Ghani's poetry from the perspective of thematic analysis and to sensitize the importance of introducing the cross-linguistic and cross-cultural study of poetry at the undergraduate level in Pakistani universities. Likewise, this study adds to the existing literature available on the poetry of Ghani. Essentially, Ghani is a widely respected Pashto poet in the ranks of Pashto speakers who are exposed to his extensive poetry, but his poetry is not dealt with substantially in research studies, which for the most part leaves him alien to academics and common people who could otherwise have benefited from his thoughts. This study also introduces non-Pashto speakers in to

Pashto literature so that local poets and writers may be acknowledged and appreciated. Besides, the study aims to familiarize the audience with the importance of employing social construction of meaning in poetry developing both the historical perspective and prevailing understanding of the national literature written in local languages. Pakistani literature in the local languages is unexplored due to linguistic barriers, so a small effort was made to make available the local literature to both national and international audiences. The findings of this study suggest ways to expose the stereotypes regarding Ghani as only a Pashtun nationalist poet or anti-religious preacher. His poetry can be related cross-culturally and cross-linguistically, to present a philosophical understanding of God. Hence, this paper made a concerted effort to introduce Khan's poetry with both Pashtun and non-Pashtun speakers in the prevalent English language.

Research Questions

- 1· What is the perception of love in Ghani Khan's poetry?
- 2· How does Ghani Khan encounter the irrational preaching in his poetry?
- 3· What is Ghani Khan's message to the youth perplexed by cultural contradictions?

Literature Review

The following review of literature provides a theoretical context for the research questions of this study and the framework for the interpretation of the expected answers to these research questions.

The Notion of Love in Poetry

The word love means to desire, precisely, desire of the beloved (Stallworthy, 1986). Poetry has a strong tradition of talking about love that ranges from the love for a person, nature, and God (Stallworthy, 1986). Further, the notion of love that is depicted in poetry has an intensity in its expression because a poet can appropriate words to their situation about things either seen directly or through his heart and constitute what is called the language of love (Stallworthy, 1986).

Interaction with Religious Preachers in Poetry

An inherent tendency exists in a man to be religious, no matter how profane one expresses himself, a man has an unconscious struggle to find uniformity with his religious self in his mind (Panecka, 2019). Poetry extends a unique platform to the expression of religion and poets express themselves best in conjunction with their religious beliefs. However, poetry should not be mistaken with theology as poets merely strive to divulge the realities of life experienced by humans along religious or mythical lines (Panecka, 2019). In addition, poets usually invoke the services of religious preachers in understanding the true religion and their role in rectifying society of its moral corruption.

Address to the Youth Entrenched in Cultural Bleakness

Poets consider it a perpetual duty to address the youth in poetry. The aim is to guide the youth as they represent the future of nations (Ali et al., 2018). Allama Iqbal has written poems for children such as "Poems for Children" to instill self-realization in the Muslim youth and considers them the symbol of change. The youth will be able to relieve the Muslims of misery as he has described the Muslims of the sub-continent as engaged birds (Ali et al., 2018). Ali et al. (2018) argue that Iqbal has encouraged the youth calling them nightingales that will lead Muslims through the dark nights if they persevere and work hard.

Poetry reflects the social patterns in a society celebrating the values highlighting the downtrodden and the political, economic, and social landscape (Mushonga, 2018). Acknowledging these opens new arenas for thinking as poetry provides a formidable medium where poets can express their raw, pristine, and deep thoughts about society (Mushonga, 2018). Mushonga (2018) argues that the succinct understanding of a society can be observed by perceiving its socio-political tendencies, socio-economic conditions, and sociocultural outlook.

Safa, and Sahand (2022). probed philosophical thoughts unpacking philosophical elements in Ghani Khan's poetry. The study reveals that the presence of philosophical views does not make him a philosopher as philosophers hold on to rationalism, logic, and reason while poets express their work based on imagination, feelings, and fantasy, unlike philosophers, Ghani believes that everything in the universe rests on God (Safa & Sahand, 2022). This can be a point of inquiry into Ghani Khan's interest in engaging with the religious preacher in his poetry asking about

God. This study only focuses on the philosophical aspect of Ghani Khan, making it restricted to the audience interested in philosophical literature or poetry.

Nonetheless, Ahmed et al. (2022) have probed mystical elements in the poetry of Ghani discovering various themes of mysticism that Ghani explored in his poetry including nature, the existence of God, life and death, divine and human love as well as beauty. Multiple excerpts from Ghani's work were examined and the study concluded that Ghani was not a mystic or Sufi himself, but his poetry did contain unique and rich thoughts on mysticism (Ahmed et al., 2022). Further, Ghani's approach toward mystic thoughts in his poetry was different from the traditional Pashto poets who were either Sufis or had merely dealt with Sufism in their poetry (Ahmed et al., 2022). Hence, this study is narrowly focused on the mystical aspects of Ghani's poetry, and can attract only readers having an interest in mystical literature.

Furthermore, the modernist features of Ghani's poetry were examined for gathering instances of such features. The features included the use of allusions, free verse, themes of cultural pessimism and mistrust in orthodox mindset, usage of sensual words, imagistic setting, and symbolism (Awan et al., 2014). However, the researchers believe that more work needs to be carried out to comprehend Khan's poetry in its entirety and present it to local and foreign audiences because looking at Khan's poetry from one theoretical perspective only limits the scope of his poetry.

Khan et al. (2020) conducted a study using the oriental approach to counter the notion that prioritizes Western literature written in English and renders all other literature from the rest of the world as backward (Khan et al., 2020). Keats and Ghani's poetry was compared to reveal common themes in their poetry as both the poets had a commonality in themes such as nature, beauty, love, and immortality (Khan et al., 2020). Essentially, Keats was a romantic poet and Ghani also had elements of romanticism in his work, although he didn't live in the same era in which Keats lived, i.e. The Romantic Age (Khan et al., 2020). Therefore, the researchers suggest that further study should be conducted to explore romanticism in Ghani's poetry.

This selected review of past studies indicates that a limited work has been done on a thematic analysis of Ghani's poetry. The previous studies either focused on a specific theory such as the modernistic approach and counter-oriental approach or touched upon the mystical and philosophical aspects of his poetry.

Methodology

A descriptive qualitative method was employed for this study. The data was collected from the English translated collection called "The Pilgrim of Beauty", consisting of 141 Pashto poems (Sahibzada, 2014). All the poems were consulted thoroughly before selecting the five poems that were consistent with the research questions of the current study. The five selected poems were: "Love and Beauty", "Love", "Come and Tell Me Pious Priest ", "Oh Young Man", and "Go My Child! Proceed Apace". (For the Pushto version of these poems, see Appendix A)

Method of Data Analysis

Braun and Clarke's (2022) reflexive thematic analysis was conducted using their six phases of theme development. The poems were thoroughly read by the researchers to familiarize themselves with the data and then codes were generated. Then the codes were transformed into initial themes, which were later refined after careful examination; the themes were then defined; and finally, a storyline was developed for all the twelve themes that emerged during probing of the selected poems.

Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA)

Reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) refers to the approach that puts stress on the subjective nature of coding data and analysis due to the active involvement of the researcher in coding and formation of themes, at the same time giving priority to the qualities of "Big Q" paradigm (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Further, Braun and Clarke (2022) argue that Thematic Analysis (TA) and qualitative analysis extend their premises to the social construction of meaning via social processes leaving behind the experiential phenomena. The constructionist approaches to language are focused in probing the rhetorical meanings and consequences of certain patterns of meaning and linguistic practices. Language is viewed as active and metaphorical, producing meaning rather than just reflecting it and language is not seen as a simple conduit for accessing information in constructionist TA (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

Mainly the focus is on the social construction of reality and the meaning frameworks or discourses that surround and form the phenomena of interest, as well as their ramifications (Braun & Clarke, 2022). 'RTA' has theoretical flexibility, which is misinterpreted as its theoretical neutrality. In fact, like other types of thematic analysis, RTA shares numerous

assumptions based on theory about the creation of knowledge, which are related to qualitative paradigms (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Following this thematic analysis, the researchers used the deductive approach. The researchers constantly contributed to their own philosophical and meta-theoretical beliefs during the analysis.

Phases of Thematic Analysis (TA)

Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis was done in the following six phases: familiarizing with the data: generating initial codes: coding as an essential part of the analysis, as data had to be organized into meaningful sections and this process assists in identifying an aspect of the data (semantic or latent content). To an extent, codes were bound to whether data was theory-driven(deductive) or data-driven(inductive). Deductive analysis was approached keeping in mind specific questions; searching for themes: here codes were analyzed, to form a broader theme considering the combination of different codes; and reviewing themes.

The themes were reviewed and refined at two levels: reviewing at coded data extracts level that involved reading extracts accumulated for each theme to observe coherent patterns in it. Level two followed a similar process but with regard to the entire set of data. It involved checking the validity of the themes individually and also considering whether the themes revealed meanings as a whole in the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Then themes were defined and named by recognizing the essence of each theme and identifying the specific aspect the theme covered. A storyline was discovered for each theme that was related to the overall anecdote the data established (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Findings

The researchers followed the six phases of thematic analysis rigorously to explore answers to the research questions. The following tables show only the last four phases including the searched themes, refined themes, definitions of the themes, and a storyline that is developed for the refined themes.

Table 1 *Themes: Searched and Refined*

| Searched Themes | Refined Themes |
|--|---|
| <p>“Love and Beauty”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beauty and love are blessing • Beauty is mortal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love and beauty as blessings • Mortality/Beauty and Immortality/Love |

| | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love is immortal • Temporariness of love • Mortality leads to rebirth • Love is afflictive • Love is remedy <p style="text-align: center;">“Come and Tell Me Pious Priest”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big questions about absolute truth • Life is a sacrifice • Afflictions • Escapism • Meaning of life <p style="text-align: center;">“Oh Young Man”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misery • Self-realization • Pride • Sufferings • Past-glory • Rejuvenation <p style="text-align: center;">“Go My Child! Proceed Apace!”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honor • Steadfastness • Self-accountability • Self-belief • Bravery • Sacrifice • Rejuvenation • Panther | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love: Affliction vs Remedy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big Questions: Absolute truth (meaning of life) • Sacrifice • Escapism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misery (sufferings and afflictions) • Honor (steadfastness, pride) • Past-glory • Rejuvenation • Self-realization (Self-accountability) • Panther (Self-belief, Bravery) |
|--|---|

TABLE 2 *Definitions of the Refined Themes*

| Refined Themes | Definitions |
|--------------------------------|--|
| • Love and beauty as blessings | Both love and beauty for Ghani are blessings from God showered upon man and nature respectively. |

| | |
|---|---|
| · Mortality/Beauty and Immortality/Love | Beauty is mortal for the poet, it wanes in time, contrarily, love is immortal it is not a prisoner of time. |
| · Love: Affliction vs Remedy | The conception of love is also binary; it gives pain, but it is also the remedy for that pain. |
| · Big Questions: Absolute truth | Ghani is often curious about existence, the very meaning and essence of life. |
| · Sacrifice | Ghani's poetry stresses the importance of sacrifice as an essential element of life's endeavors. |
| · Escapism | Ghani seems to believe in getting away from the wickedness and suffering in life into the unknown through questioning it. |
| · Misery | This theme in Ghani's poetry represents pain, suffering, and bleakness. |
| · Honor | Ghani is in a staunch pursuit of honor and preaches steadfastness and pride, which are the building blocks of having honor and being honorable. |
| · Past-glory | Ghani is proud of his past: the "Pashtun" past that he often refers to. |
| · Rejuvenation | Ghani is a believer in standing up once you have fallen and he urges upon candling a new spirit for success and rebirth. |
| · Self-realization | Ghani believes in looking inward and self-accountability for mending their ways and achieving greatness. |
| · Panther | The panther is the symbol of bravery and strength. |

Discussion

Notion of Love

Ghani Khan's concepts of love and beauty are very similar to and different from the other poets. In the theme of "love and beauty as blessings", Ghani Khan portrays love as an endowment of God (Allah) on creation. He says that love is immortal and it defies the constraint of time that has imprisoned

everything else in the world including beauty, because beauty diminishes with time and only love remains persevered. Essentially, he calls humans ungrateful beings for not being content with the blessings of love as the following verses suggest:

مینه حقیقت حسن سایه د حقیقت ده
حسن له زوال شته مینه نه لری زوال
"For beauty must grow old and wane,
But love is deathless, eternal!"
(Sahibzada, 2014, p. 220-221).

Ghani Khan is calling love deathless, which will remain perpetually, and beauty will age and eventually die. However, Ghani's notion of love is unique as he believes that love is a binary enterprise, which gives afflictions, and its blossoms only last for a while, but this pain is remedied only by the love itself. The researchers believe that Ghani's conception of love has emerged from his life experiences. His son died during his lifetime which has given him immense pain that he expressed in various other poems. Meanwhile, he found solace in the company of his grandchildren and daughter-in-law "Nageen", on whom he had written a poem praising her character (Shahibzada, 2014). Further, this binary nature of the notion of love could be observed often in Ghani's verses as the following verses reveal:

هغی وی مینه دودخ دی
ماشومان پکینی جلبا شی
ما وی بنه دودخ بنه دی
له گناه وجود صفا شی
"She said, "Love is hot as Hell,
Lovers burn within it cry."
I said, "hell is ever welcome,
For it cleanses one of sin"."
(Sahibzada, 2014, p. 152-153).

These verses reveal Ghani's conception of love, as he does not shy away from the bitterness that love accompanies, and acknowledges the bitterness is sweetened by the very love that causes it, transformed only in shape.

Encounter with the Orthodox Preachers

Moreover, Ghani is perceived as an anti-preacher poet. Following the local tradition, he calls them *mullahs* and views them as the root cause of conflict in society (Awan et al., 2014). The researchers believe that this

cynicism focused on *mullah* in the analysis of Ghani's poetry is somewhat misplaced. Clarifying this assumption, the researchers suggest that understanding the entity represented by the figure of *mullah* is necessary. However, in Pashtun society specifically, a *mullah* is a person who leads daily prayers in a Masjid (Mosque). They are of two types: *Qari*, someone who has memorized the Holy Quran without its understanding, and *Alim*, a religious scholar who is an established personality with a deep understanding of both the religion and society. Ostensibly, the disgust shown by Ghani is directed towards the first type, who lacks the perception of the intricacies between religion and society. The Pashtun masses consistently visit these types of *mullahs* without making a distinction and seek advice about their daily affairs, leading to the deep dissent visible in society.

Furthermore, the researchers suppose that Ghani might have encountered the *mullah* differently from the traditional perception. For instance, the theme of "Big questions: Absolute Truth", where Ghani is asking about the meaning of life, is essentially a whole bunch of questions that are posed to the *mullah* in the poem "Come and Tell Me Pious Priest". It represents a diversion from the typical mistrust that Ghani is perceived to have in the *mullahs*. This interaction engages him with the second type of *mullah* about the serious thought-provoking questions on existence and life, such as:

واپه واپه ملا جانه
 موندل وصل که بیگار دی-----
 دا خودی خاوری کول دی

"Pious priest! Oh, come and tell me,
 Is to search for a means of worship,
 Or just forced labour, extracting?"
 (Sahibzada, 2014, p. 120-121)

Ghani is asking the *mullah* about a journey to find oneself, asking him whether it is a form of worship or just another tiresome job that humans indulge in.

"Sacrifice" is a consistent theme that emerges in Ghani's poetry, observed in the poems "Come and Tell Me Pious Priest" and "GO My Child! Proceed Apace". The researchers believe this theme is embedded in the life of Pashtun people among whom Ghani was born and bred. Ghani's father Bacha Khan is a prime example of sacrifice who had dedicated his entire life including his family for the uplift and freedom of Pashtun society (Sahibzada, 2014). However, Ghani's life is full of sacrifices when he was sent to the UK at the tender age of fifteen to attain Western education to

perceive their lifestyle for transforming his people. Ghani also spent six years in jail for the cause of uplifting his people (Sahibzada, 2014). Further, the poem "Come and Tell Me Pious Priest" portrays the theme of sacrifice:

که صلیب دې او عیسی دے
داذغو تاج بی په سر
که حسین او کربلا ده

"Or the cross with Christ upon it,
Prickly thorns upon his head?
Or Hussain and Karbala?"
(Sahibzada, 2014, p. 120-121)

Alluding to the crucifixion of Christ (PBUH), and the martyrdom of Hussain (May God be pleased with him) in Karbala, Ghani is asking the *mullah* whether the meaning of life is to sacrifice yourself for your people. The researchers also found "escapism" as a consistent theme where Ghani seems to believe in transitioning into oblivion in the face of wickedness that life presents in the shape of suffering, and the struggle to find the ultimate truth. Ghani depicts this opinion in the encounters with the second type of *mullah* when engaging him in deep questions about life and the purpose of life, such as:

که یو ساز خان ته غږیږی
چی دا خپل غمونه هېرکړی
دا سپرلي دې که یو گل دې
لر پټ شوی د خزانه

"..... Or a self-beguiling tune,
Leaving all its woes behind?
.....That's in hiding for the time,
From autumn's searing wind?"
(Sahibzada, 2014, p. 120-121)

In the poem "Come and Tell Me Pious Priest" researchers argue that Ghani suggests that forgetfulness might be the answer to the daunting problems through music or maybe the meaning of life is to ditch oblivion for a certain period.

Address to the Youth Entrenched in Cultural Bleakness

The theme of "misery" is prevalent in the poetry of Ghani, representing the sub-themes of pain, suffering, and bleakness. The researchers believe this theme is central to Ghani Khan's poetry. The social, political, and

economic situation of Pashtuns reflects this. Ghani was from a family of politicians, and he took part in politics for a limited period (Sahibzada, 2014). The authors suggest Ghani's exposure, as mentioned above, to the Western lifestyle and elsewhere made him realize the pathetic living circumstances of his people. The following verses speak volumes about the theme of misery in the poem "Oh Young Man"

اے ده وړی بچی پلاره
 بی درکه سر گردانه
 "Oh young father of the child-
 Who for want of food is hungry.....
 You're distressed, pre-occupied;.."
 (Sahibzada, 2014, pp. 284-287)

These verses reveal the cultural bleakness of Pashtun society that has rendered their children privy to the necessities of life and are suffering inconsequentially at the hands of manipulators.

Another recurrent theme in Ghani's poetry is "honor". Ghani actively pursues honor and preaches both pride and steadfastness: subthemes that are integral to achieving honor. The researchers suggest that this is a general attribute of the Pashtun people who are very proud of their identity and land. Fundamentally, this theme floats in the poetry of Ghani on multiple levels, whether he is engaged with the "*mullahs*", addressing *the youth*, commenting on *cultural problems*, or expressing *love*. Ghani never compromises on the reins of honor believing it to be the bedrock of all the encounters in society. Irrespective of the circumstances, honorable people will always come out triumphant as they are steadfast and proud in their endeavors. Ghani expresses this belief as follows:

ته د مینځ اسمان وې ستوري
 ستا شمله چې شوه پورته
 په مستی اوننگ به سر وي
 "Brightest star of firmament!
 When the turban graced your head,
Filled with honour and with pride,"
 (Sahibzada, 2014, pp. 284-287)

In the poem "Oh Young Man" Ghani seems to remind the young men about their status when they had their honor intact; they were graceful people, distinctive in society, and people had to follow them. Likewise, in the poem "Go my Child! Proceed Apace", the researchers suggest Ghani is urging the youth to be steadfast in the following verses:

خوب کينې هم په شا نه شي
نه خي پښتانه په شا

Even on dreams, do not retreat,
And never accept defeat,

Never do Pukhtoons withdraw, (Sahibzada, 2014, p. 296-297)

The poet is urging youth that their culture doesn't allow or believe in defeat, but rather standing upright to every obstacle is the way forward.

Nevertheless, the theme of "past glory" can be observed in Ghani's poetry. He is a proud Pashtun and commends his ancestors who had a glorious past, as they were leaders and conquerors. He reminds the young men of their history by taking lessons in the following verses:

ستا د لاس مانې ولاړي
په دهلي په بنګا له دي

"Yet in Delhi and Bengal

There are monuments, which boast,

Of your power and your might!" (Sahibzada, 2014, pp. 284-287)

Referring to the conquests of Afghan leaders in India such as the Pashtun leader Ahmed Shah Abdali who had come to India and had defeated the Marathas and Sher Shah Suri who had ruled India (Qayum et al., 2017). The researchers argue allusion to the past is to develop a new vigor in the new generation.

Consequently, "rejuvenation" is apparent in Ghani's poetry, as he never lost hope despite the troubles and tribulations. In the resurgence with a new spirit, that should overwhelm all the pains and miseries, entering a new world established over the ruins of disbelief and suffering. Ghani constantly preaches the idea of rebirth to the young men, encouraging them through various examples, e.g., history, and reminding them of their harsh living conditions. The researchers believe living in despair and suffering for an extended period has rendered the Pashtun society, particularly young men, numb to the prevailing situations, considering it a norm, against which Ghani is striving to disseminate the idea of pursuing a better future which is better suits the Pashtun society. The poem "Oh Young Men" reveals this:

اي د تپتو سترگو خوانه
پاخه هغه جهان جوړ كړه
د دي باغ خاورې راواخله
ترې نه نوئې بستان جوړ كړه

"Oh young man with downcast eyes!
Rise! Create that other world;
From it once again create,
Scented flowers and perfumed air."
(Sahibzada, 2014, pp. 284-287)

Furthermore, the theme of "self-realization" is observed in this study. Ghani propagates self-accountability: a subtheme, he considers mending one's way of conducting their affairs is significant. This theme resembles the sheer realization that changing their circumstances requires the engagement of self-faculties. No outsider will sympathize and help you unless you are willing to do it yourself. This theme is observed in the poem "Oh Young Man".

اے چي بنڪته بنڪته گوري
نن پيئي ابله سر سر تور
ته خبر ئي چي ته ڇوڪ وي؟
"Oh one with downcast eyes of shame,
Barefoot, and uncovered head!
Do you know what you were once?"
(Sahibzada, 2014, pp.285-287)

Ghani in these verses is explicitly calling out the young Pashtuns, in a way shaming them to make them realize their self-worth and motivate them to work for their betterment. As in Pashtun societies, the idea of head covering reflects respect and Ghani uses that to provoke a sense of self-accountability in the Pashtun society and young men specifically.

Nevertheless, Ghani calls the young men "Panther", boosting them to act and become like a panther. The authors suppose Ghani has experienced a dynamic life both within the country and abroad, realizing the danger double-faced men present to the society including *politicians* and *mullahs* of the first type and some *mullahs* from type two that involve themselves in politics. The incident of the role played by type two *mullahs* in the ouster of Amir Amanullah in Afghanistan was afresh in Ghani Khan's mind and had a significant impact on his life (Sahibzada, 2014). Therefore, Ghani calls the young generation panthers, who must be cunning, strong, and brave, to tackle the wily fox. Ghani addresses young men about such people:

هر چلي دشمن زما
بد خوئي دلوميري دے
زه د غرنو پيرانگ نمه

تل می دے خور لے دے
"Wily is my lifelong foe,
Offspring of the wily fox!
I'm a panther of the hills,
And have always preyed on him!"
(Sahibzada, 2014, p. 296-297)

These lines show Ghani's contempt for the shrewdness of certain elements of society, challenging them in an exquisite display of steadfastness and bravery, defying them in the best possible way and admonishing them, and getting his message across to the Pashtun youth as well, of prudence.

Ultimately, the researchers suppose the emerging themes during the probing of Ghani's poetry reflect the experiences of Ghani and nearly all the themes represent an aspect of his observation of the society and people around him. He is not bound to the themes found in his poetry; rather, the themes emerged because of his perception of the events around him. This makes all the themes seem relatable in terms of the construct of society he represents. Therefore, these themes represent the deep social, cultural, and political milieu of the Pashtun society in this endeavor of the researchers.

Conclusion

The analysis of Ghani's selected poems identified themes including love and beauty as blessings, mortality/beauty and immortality/love, love: affliction vs remedy, big questions: absolute truth, sacrifice, escapism, misery, honor, past-glory, rejuvenation, self-realization, and Panther.

Literature is deemed important for teaching English as a foreign language, which builds interpretive abilities in the target language (Ashrafuzzaman, Ahmed, & Begum, 2021). Literature provokes rational thinking in students (Ashrafuzzaman, Ahmed, & Begum, 2021). However, the selection of a text is crucial in English language teaching, when the text does not resonate with the students, it renders them uninterested as they cannot connect with it, hence leading to the practice of rote learning in developing language skills (Mohaideen, Ismail, & Rasheed, 2020). Choosing between local and foreign texts is crucial since literature divulges the nitty-gritty of life experiences (Mohaideen, Ismail, & Rasheed, 2020). The students will draw optimal benefits from local texts when they understand them well. Moreover, they will be able to improve their language skills. In addition, extending the above discussion, the researchers believe that this study will be pivotal for the notion of incorporating local language literature in

classrooms to enhance the interpretive abilities of students by connecting them with their immediate society. A deeper understanding of the text will also help the students in developing their language skills.

To the end of this discussion, point to some limitations of the study. Firstly, Ghani Khan has written hundreds of poems and a book named "Da Ghani Kulyat" was published in 1987 including almost seven hundred poems. This book was followed by another book namely "Latoon" published in 1995 which includes all his poetry (Sahibzada, 2014). However, the researchers have only explored five of the selected poems from the translated book of Ghani Khan's poetry and this shows that the size of the data is non-representative and cannot be generalized. Secondly, the word limit in this study did not allow the selection of extensive data for analysis, which would require more time. Thirdly, the researchers believe that the translated work from its original language (Pashto) might have impacted the original meaning and thought of the poet. There is a lot of room for research on the poetry of Ghani Khan. A potential research can be conducted using interviews for collecting data from the Pashto speakers, who are able to understand poetry for a greater insight into the themes that emerged from Ghani's poetry in the present study.

In the prevailing scenario of intolerance and unrest in Pakistan, the study recommends that Ghani's message of love be disseminated by making it part of the curriculum of English Literature at undergraduate-level programs in Pakistani universities.

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Appendix A The Pushto Version of the Poems Interpreted in the Study

مینه او حسن

ستوری ته اسمان کښې یوه ورځ ووې هلال
خدائې ادم له مینه ورکړه مونږ له تش جمال
زه به په خندا ورکړم دا خپل خېشت د کمال
ما له که یو څاڅکې مینه راکړې څوک په سوال
مینه حقیقت حسن سایه د حقیقت ده
حسن له زوال شته مینه نه لری زوال



وايه وايه ملاجانہ!

وايه وايه ملاجانہ!
موندل وصل که بیگار دے
دا دلبر دے او جانان دے
که قهار دے او چپار دے
دا خودی خاورې کول دی
که خپل خود چرته موندل دی
که یو خوب د گلاب زړه کښې
نشہ شوے په بهار دے
دا سپوږمی او د سیند غاړه
د کوکو سخی دلبر
که صلیب دے او عیسی دے
د ازغو تاج ئې په سر
که حسین او کربلا ده
بیابان دے او لہلا ده
که څه هسې مشغولا ده
څه د زړه او څه د سر
دا یو دام شهباز جوړ کړے
که یو ساز خان ته غوږی
دا سپرلے دے که یو گل دے
ژوند تپوس دے که جواب دے



مینہ

اوس تازہ وی او فنا شی
 سل گلونہ ترے پبدا شی
 سرے وسیخی فنا شی
 جہان گرم شی رنا شی
 چے ترے وینس شی لا بلا شی
 چے سرے وینس شی شہدا شی
 سرے روند شی نابینا شی
 تل جہان تہ نابینا شی
 ماشومان پکبے جلیا شی
 لہ گناہ وجود صفا شی
 پکبے خان ورک شی تالا شی
 پکبے پتہ سخا دنیا شی
 کاشکی ستا عقل زما شی

ہنہی وے مینہ یو گل دے
 ماوے یو گل چے شی مراوے
 ہنہی وے مینہ دہ اور
 ماوے اور چے چرتہ بل شی
 ہنہی وے مینہ یو خوب دے
 ماوے گورہ ژوندون خوب دے
 ہنہی وے مینہ غضب دے
 ماوے خدائے تہ بینا سترگے
 ہنہی وے مینہ دوزخ دے
 ماوے بنہ دے دوزخ بنہ دے
 ہنہی وے مینہ تیاریہ دہ
 ماوے گورہ تیاریہ بنہ دہ
 ہنہی وے خورہ دلیرہ!

اے زما وطنه

سوی باغ، تالا گلشن دے
 مراوے گل، خاورې چمن دے
 نه بلبل نه لولکي شته
 نه نرگس نه ياسمن دے
 دا گلاب دے ايرې شوے
 که په اور سوے ختن دے؟
 اے پښتونه ستا وطن دے
 اے پښتونه ستا وطن دے
 د دې باغ خاورې راواخله
 ترې نه نوے بستان جور کره
 اے د سوی باغ مالياره
 د نورو جهان جور کره
 اے چې بنکته بنکته گورې
 نن پښې ابله سر سرتورے
 ته خبر نه چې ته څوک وې؟
 ته د مينځ اسمان وې ستورے
 ستا شعله چې به شوه پورته
 شوې به بنکته شعلې نورې
 په مستی او ننگ به سر وې
 ستا دا تپتي سترگې تورې

اے د تپتو سترگو خوانه
 پاخه هغه جهان جور کره
 د دې باغ خاورې راواخله
 ترې نه نوے بستان جور کره
 اے دوران خپر مېرمنې
 اے د وړې بچی پلاره
 به درکه سرگردانه
 اے د سوی باغ مالياره
 اے چې نن بريند بچی ستا
 د خوراک په کشاله دی
 ستا د لاس مانی ولاړې
 په دهلی په بنگاله دی
 اے د بل د در مرثیبه
 پاخه هغه دوران جور کره
 د دې باغ خاورې راواخله
 ترې نه نوے بستان جور کره
 اے په غره په سردرو کښې
 په باغونو په مېرو کښې
 په جندول کښې په تېر کښې
 زما لال پت په ابرو کښې
 اے د زرکو په خندا کښې
 د تنخرو په نارو کښې
 د شېر شاه نازيننه خوبه!
 ته بې پروت تورو تېرو کښې
 کره د غم تېرې راغندې
 ترې د مينې داستان جور کره
 د دې باغ خاورې راواخله
 ترې نه نوے بستان جور کره



خه زما بچیه خه!

یا بـــــــــــــــــه دا تالا وطن
 یا به دا مغروره سر
 خه زما بچیه خه!
 خوب کبئی هم په شا نه شی
 یا به هر پینستون بچیه
 نور خه دی دا سر مې دے
 وینه کبئی مې اور دے
 مقو کبئی مې زور دے
 زه چسپی کله وتے بم
 یا به دشمن خاورې کرم
 یا بـــــــــــــــــه دا تالا وطن
 یا به دا مغروره سر
 هر چلی دشمن زما
 زه د غرونو پیرانگ یمه

ستا کرم تا به (شی) خان کرمه
 خاورې په مبدان کرمه
 بنـــــــــــــــــگلی ازمریه خه!
 نه خی پینستانه په شا
 خان بچیه د خان کرمه
 دا به پرې قربان کرمه
 توپ وهی لمبئی وهی
 دا ورنئی به سمې کری
 توره په مبدان کرمه
 یا به خاورې خان کرمه
 بیا شین گلسنتان کرمه
 خاورې په مبدان کرمه
 بد خوئی د لومبرې دے
 تل مې دے خورلے دے

