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Sensing Aesthetic Resonance in the Light of Hyperbolic Explication: An Exploration of Gulzar’s “Leaves in Autumn” and “The River”

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Abstract

This research paper intends to explore the aesthetic resonance of Gulzar’s “Leaves in Autumn” and “The River” in the light of hyperbole. Gulzar, India’s most respected director and screenwriter, has composed poems on nature and its relative subjects. The theme of the selected poems is mounted on nature. Gulzar has elevated the theme and style of the poems using imagination. “The River” portrays the river and the aesthetic changes that take place in him. In “Leaves in Autumn”, the poet has rendered human qualities to the tree, the primary character of the poem. Discovering the aesthetic beauty and the imaginative portrayal of nature are the principal aims of “Sensing Aesthetic Resonance in the Light of Hyperbolic Explication: An Exploration of Gulzar’s “Leaves in Autumn” and “The River””. This research paper has used aesthetic appreciation of beauty with reference to the tenets of hyperbole as its methodology to elicit the pulchritude of nature in the selected poems.

Keywords: *Aesthetic, Beauty, Hyperbole, Nature, Resonance*

Introduction

Aesthetics, a branch of philosophy, studies beauty, taste and sensory values. It is “centered around understanding beauty in art and in nature.” (Berleant 2). Beauty can be experienced and cannot be explicated. It is captured through intuition and experienced with emotions and human feelings. According to Kant, beauty is universal and cannot be measured. The scope of aesthetics “has expanded greatly from centering on the arts and scenic nature to the full range of appreciative experience.” (Berleant 1). An aesthetic experience is an assortment of pleasure, grief and anger.

Hyperbole contributes much to arouse aesthetic effect in a poetic context. Hyperbole is a figure of speech, which means overshooting in Greek. Abram defines it as “the extravagant of fact or of

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possibility.” (120). It is a kind of figurative language and is not meant to be taken literally. In rhetoric, it is at times known as auxesis. It spurs feelings and creates strong impressions in poetry. Gulzar employs hyperbole much in his poetry in order to beautify the subject and stimulate aesthetic sense. Gulzar is an Indian scriptwriter, lyricist and director of the mainstream Hindi cinema since 1970s. He is a poet, short story writer and a fine writer of children’s literature. He is an awardee of Sahitya Academy Award in 2002 and the Padma Bhushan Award in 2004. Primarily, he wrote poems about nature with appealing scenery.

Aim of the present research paper is to elicit the aesthetic sense of Gulzar’s “Leaves in Autumn” and “The River” with the assistance of hyperbole. Present research paper uses aesthetic appreciation of beauty with reference to the tenets of hyperbole as its methodology to elicit the pulchritude of nature from the selected poems. “Leaves in Autumn” and “The River” were composed by Gulzar in Hindi and then translated into English by Pavan K. Varma. “Leaves in Autumn” and “The River” are extracted from Gulzar’s *Green Poems*. Both the poems are enriched with aesthetic appeal and hyperbole.

“Leaves in Autumn” is a nature poem well embellished by aesthetic scenery. It describes the conversations between leaves and branch, branch and tree, tree and earth, and earth and tree. Their conversations validate the presence of hyperbole and elevate the aesthetic sense of the poem. The poem begins with the conversation between leaves and branch of the tree. Leaves said, “We have lived our season and must leave / But you must continue to prosper / You have to nurture the progeny of coming seasons” (Gulzar 21). These poetic lines validate the presence and function of hyperbole. In general, leaves do not chat but the poet has taken an unconventional approach to meticulously discover the conversation between leaves and branch. Phrases like “[. . .] must continue to prosper” and “[. . .] nurture the progeny of coming season” (Gulzar 21) promote the aesthetic sense and instill the naturalistic taste.

Gulzar has knit another aesthetic idea of branch talking to tree, which is also unconventional and evidences the presence of hyperbole. When it was time for the branch to leave the tree, it blessed him as “May my years be added to yours / You have to grow, become even taller / Don’t miss me, other branches will grow in my place.” (Gulzar 21). These poetic lines are benediction deemed by the branch upon the tree. It gradually stimulates the aesthetic sense of the poem. Although the lines voice out departure and instigates farewell mood, the effective presence of hyperbole spurs the aesthetic appeal to a greater extent.

Further, Gulzar records the chat of the tree and the earth. It brings a melancholic tone and mood, yet the poet has replaced it with the aesthetic appeal. Portraying the conversations between the

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tree and the earth have induced aesthetic resonance. The poem makes explicit the naturalistic idea as unconventional but enlightened with imagination. It is obvious that fictitious idea kindles aesthetic effect, the poet has employed the same technique to instill the embellished scenery. Gulzar concludes the poem with the conversation of the earth back to the tree. It reminiscences the childhood of the tree. The poem depicts the filial relationship between the earth and the tree, thereby elevating the aesthetic sense: “Remember, when as a tiny seed you peeped out / And saw the leaves when they first sprouted? / Come again, to be born in my womb” (Gulzar 21). Aesthetic sense is much felt in the phrases like “[. . .] as a tiny seed you peeped”, “[. . .] saw the leaves when they first sprouted” and “Come again, [. . .] born in my womb” (Gulzar 21). The words such as ‘tiny,’ ‘peeped out,’ ‘leaves’ and ‘sprouted’ have enhanced the aesthetic effect of the context. Their chat seems to be retelling history, bidding farewell and a call back to life. Using an Eco-critical approach has illustrated the aesthetic idea of Gulzar undoubtedly.

Like “Leaves in Autumn”, “The River” is also embellished by the aesthetic appeal and the labour of hyperbole. It emphasizes that aesthetic resonance and hyperbole are knit tightly with naturalistic scenery. The poem begins portraying the muttering river, a personified character. Gulzar makes the river an animate by rendering heart to it and the line “Some small desires still alive in his heart” (3) vindicates it. In addition to the hyperbole, the poet has also employed personification to beautify his idea and fragrance the poem with aesthetic sense. The river’s desire is “[. . .] to climb up and flow over the bridge!” (Gulzar 3). The poetic line confirms the presence and primary function of hyperbole, and elucidates the gaiety of the river. Therefore, the joyous mood of the poem stimulates the aesthetic resonance and entertains the readers.

Gulzar has imparted an elevated aesthetic strain in the following lines: “In winter, when the fog settles all over his face / And the wind flutters by wiping his countenance clean / He wants, just once, to soar along with the breeze” (3). These poetic lines reveal the desire of the river. He wished the winter fog to wrap his countenance and clean his face. In addition, he desired to soar along with breeze, which highlights the aesthetic sense of the poet. The words such as ‘fog,’ ‘flutters,’ ‘breeze’ and ‘forest’ of the second stanza spurs the aesthetic resonance. The phrase “[. . .] soar along with the breeze” (Gulzar 3) introduces the romantic tune of motion and entertains minds and hearts with loads of joy.

The poet continues to use his fathomless imaginative caliber to picturize an extraordinary scenery with a naturalistic and aesthetic appeal. He instills the beautiful scenery of the train travelling over the water. The following poetic lines demand an exceptional imagination and cognition to travel along with Gulzar:

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Sometimes, when a train passes over the bridge
The flowing river stops momentarily
With one wish
May be to see once again that girl's face
Who had offered flowers and tulsi to him
For the good husband to find. (3)

Aforementioned poetic lines substantiate Gulzar as a romantic poet. His fictitious idea clues the influential power of nature. He says that the train that passes over the bridge waits momentarily at times, with the desire of capturing an image of the girl who offers flowers and tulsi to him. The girl from the train passes message to her boyfriend through the river. Gulzar places rivers as an intimidator of the girl and her boyfriend. This shows the imaginative capability of the poet. His fictitious idea arouses the aesthetic effect and embellishes the context of the poem. His height of imagination is apparent when he enunciates that the river clicks an image of the girl and carries it to her boyfriend who is away. This underscores the function of hyperbole and the exceptional fragrance of aesthetic resonance. The phrases such as “[. . .] flowing river [. . .],” “[. . .] girl's face” and “[. . .] offered flowers and tulsi [. . .]” (Gulzar 3) adds up the aesthetic strain to the poem and thereby entertains the readers. They kindle emotions and reach cognition with their incredible power indubitably. Delving into “The River” concludes the fact that hyperbole has played a vital role in imparting aesthetic resonance in the context.

Analyzing “Leaves in Autumn” and “The River” shed light up on the style and dexterity of Gulzar. It is evident that he has employed hyperbole in both the poems to a greater extent. In addition, it emphasizes that the function of hyperbole has stimulated the aesthetic resonance of the context of the poems. “The River” has taken a romantic approach to deliver the aesthetic quality, whereas “Leaves in Autumn” has made an Eco-critical approach. However, the poem has not deviated from its goal of entertaining readers with the aesthetic sense. This research paper arrives at a conclusion that hyperbole aids in stimulating aesthetic resonance in any context. As for as Gulzar's poems are concerned, both hyperbole and aesthetic strain seemed to be knit firmly together to enhance the texture of the text.

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