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“Stylistic Analysis of the Amrita Pritam’s Poem “I Call upon Waris Shah Today.” “Ajj Aakhaan Waris Shah Nu”

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Abstract

This inventive research is work of genius indication in the domain of exploration, an effort in the direction of apprehending the linguistic and literary devices stylistically used in the Amrita Pritam’s Poem I Call upon Waris Shah Today; Ajj Aakhaan Waris Shah Nu. The content analysis approach was used to analyze the poem. The population of the research was contained on Amrita Pritam’s Punjabi poetry; and for sampling her famous poem I Call upon Waris Shah Today; Ajj Aakhaan Waris Shah Nu was selected to analyze statically for the purpose of exploring stylistic devices used in this poem. The finding of the research revealed that the poetess used various linguistic and literary devices in this famous poem of Punjabi language. As the use of metaphor; use of metonymy, use of hyperbole, use of variety, use of personification, use of rhetorical devices can be observed in the poem which makes it valuable work.

Key Words:

Stylistic devices, Punjabi language, Amrita Pritam, Punjabi ode, content analysis

Introduction

Amrita Pritam (1919-2005) was one of the most prominent female writers and poets of our time. She published over seventy books novels, short stories and poems. Amrita Pritam was born into a Sikh family of “Gujranwala”. She was the only child of a school teacher and a poet. Her mother died when she was eleven. Amrita married at the age of sixteen, and divorced in 1960, at the age of forty-one. At the time of Partition, in 1947, Amrita migrated to Delhi. After migration, she started writing primarily in Hindi, instead of her native Punjabi. She has authored two autobiographies, titled, Rasidi Ticket’ and, Aksharon ke Saaye’. Her

novel, 'Pinjar' (Skeleton) about the agonies of Partition riots, was also turned into a movie. Amrita Pritam passed away on 31st Oct 1995 at Delhi (Singh, 2005; Kaushal, 2015).

Amrita Pritam (1919–2005) was a renowned Indian poet and writer, hailed as one of the leading literary figures in the Punjabi language and Hindi literature. She is best known for her poignant poetry, which often explored themes of love, loss, and the socio-political issues of her time. Amrita Pritam's notable works include "Ajj aakhaan Waris Shah nu" (Today I invoke Waris Shah), a poem expressing the anguish of the partition of India in 1947. The poetess is in a state of extreme sadness. She implores Waris Shah, her muse, to see what is happening in her beloved birthplace. Corpses are lying in the fields. Everything she sees has turned red. The land of Heer Ranjha is playing holi with human blood. The partition of India is the root cause of all those evils. Humanity is at stake. The message of love and purity of compassion is lost from Punjab. The poetess hopes that the people of Punjab will listen to her lamentation and stop this nonsensical bloodshed (Lakshmi, 2020).

The poem addresses Waris Shah, a Punjabi poet who is known for his work Heer Ranjha. Pritam asks Waris Shah to rise from his grave and witness the horrors of the partition, and to guide the people towards empathy and peace. The poem emphasizes the pain, violence, and displacement caused by the partition and the need for understanding and unity among all people. The poet also expresses her desire to break free from social norms and traditions that oppress women. Waris Shah encourages the poet to keep fighting and reminds her of the strength of women. The poem is a call to action for women to resist oppression and patriarchy. Amrita Pritam in her 'I Say unto Waris Shah' depicts the effects of partition in Punjab and portrays the bloody chapters of the territorial division of India. The poetess is in a state of extreme sadness. She implores Waris Shah, her muse, to see what is happening in her beloved birthplace (Sunwani, 2005; Gargesh, 2010).

Research Objectives

The main objective of the study was to analyze the Amrita pritam's poem in stylistic way for the purpose of exploring devices used by her in this poem. To accomplish this purpose the researchers used the following research question.

Research Question

1. Stylistically analyze the Amrita Pritam's Poem "I Call upon Waris Shah Today." "Ajj Aakhaan Waris Shah Nu"?

Literature Review

"Literature review is a clear overview of the sources in an organizational pattern and its purpose is to estimate earlier works related to current topic" (Ahmad et al., 2021, p.3). Following is the literature review of present study. In English literature Amare, (2002) stylistically analyzed some selected poems in English by Ethiopian poets. The purpose of this study was to analyze the effect of stylistic approach to reveal the stylistic devices used in this study. Jaafar, (2014). Stylistically analyzed two particular poems of English language, these poems were written by two famous poems named Cummings and Seamus Heaney, these poems were linguistically analyzed to reveal the linguistic and literature devices particularly stylistic devices. Al-Janabi,(2015). A Stylistic Analysis of Two Selected, English and Arabic, war poems, the themes of these poems were similar. This study analyses poem on word, tense and semantic patterns. Bakuuro, (2017), attempted to study a poem in stylistic way for the purpose of pursuing stylishness hidden in the structure of this poem. The findings of this research unveiled that the terminology and topographies were fixed in unfamiliarly way. It also revealed that deviations and parallelisms are used deeply which pulse the rhythm and theme tune of this poem. In conclusion, in this poem the main literary features are used which are giving it distinctive standpoint.

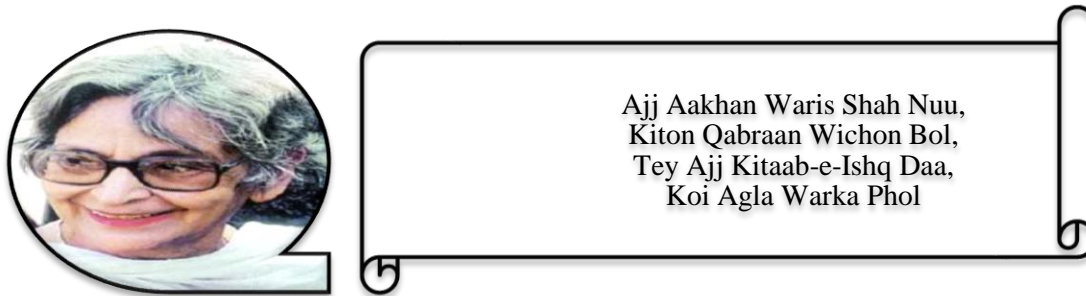
In Urdu literature Rafi, (2013) syntactically analyzed Pakistani Poem in English. While Chandio et al. (2019). Stylistically analyzed the poem “raaqeeb se, to the rival” written by famous Urdu poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz.. The purpose of this study was to reveal the stylishness in this poem, the overall results revealed the bleakness and loneliness immersing generally in the nature of this poem. Meanwhile poems of the poet disclosures the theme tune of philosophy and supremacy, partisan disparity, economic domination, chaos of community. Riaz, (2018). In his doctoral dissertation analyzed the Urdu short stories and their English translation in stylistic way. Arslan, Mehmood & Haroon (2021). Stylistically analyzed of Pakistani National Anthem. But there is no single research in which Amrita Pritam’s poem is analyzed the researchers find this gap and attempt to fill this gap by using following material and methods.

Material and Methods

Methodical study of process is known as the research method. For the present research researchers used content analysis procedure to analyze this poem to explore that which statistical devices are used by the great Punjabi poetess Amrita Pritam in her famous ode of Punjabi language known as “I Call upon Waris Shah Today; Ajj Aakhaan Waris Shah Nu. The population of the study comprises Amrita Pritam’s poetry and for sampling her famous ode I Call upon Waris Shah Today; Ajj Aakhaan Waris Shah Nu was selected to analyze the stylistic devices used in it. Data is presented in the following way.

Data Analysis of the Ode by Amirta’s Pritum

Figure: 01



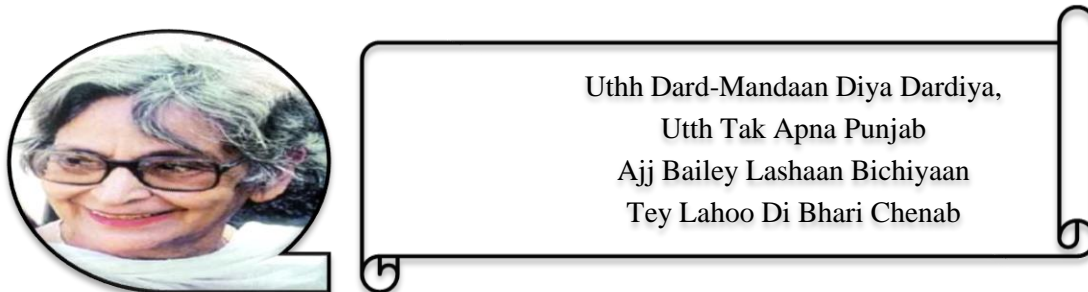
Today, I call Waris Shah, speak from inside your grave and turn, today the book of love’s next affectionate page. In these lines of this odd Amrita Pritum recalls to Warus Shah. I beseech thee, speak up from your grave to love’s eternal treatise, please add another leaf.

Figure: 02



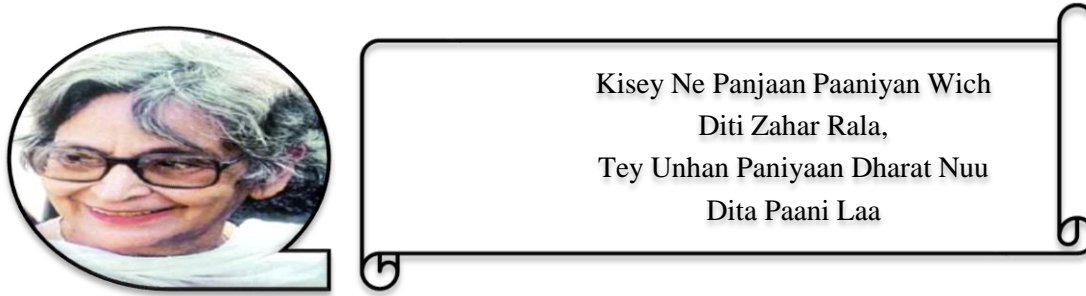
Once, one daughter of Punjab cried you wrote a wailing saga today, a million daughters, cry to you, A single daughter wept once, you screamed out in protest today a million daughters weep and implore you, Waris Shah

Figure: 03



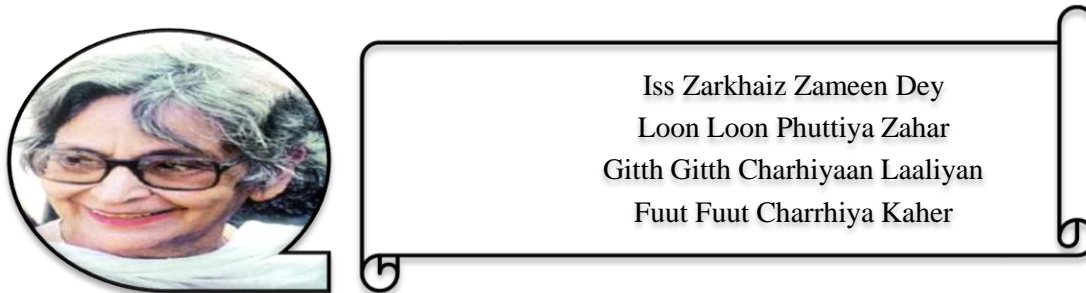
Rise! O' narrator of the grieving rise! Look at your Punjab today, fields are lined with corpses, and blood fills the Chenab. Oh, voice of the anguished Arise, see the plight of your Punjab the fields are lined with corpses, the Chenab flows red with blood.

Figure: 04



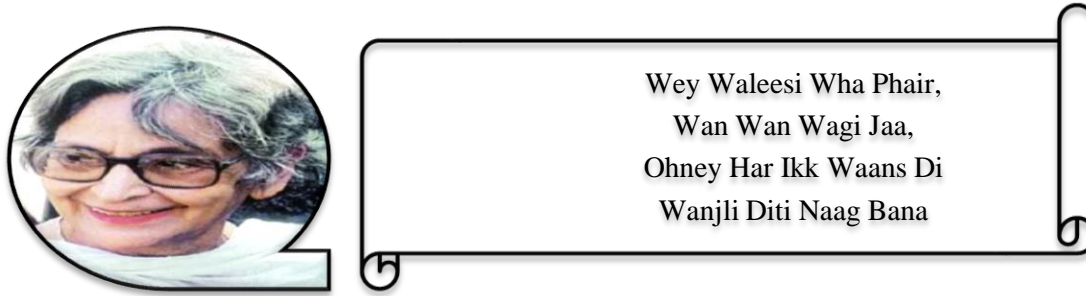
Someone has mixed poison in the five rivers' flow their deadly water is, now irrigating our lands galore. Who has stirred this poison into our rivers' waters? It is this very water that now irrigates our land.

Figure: 05



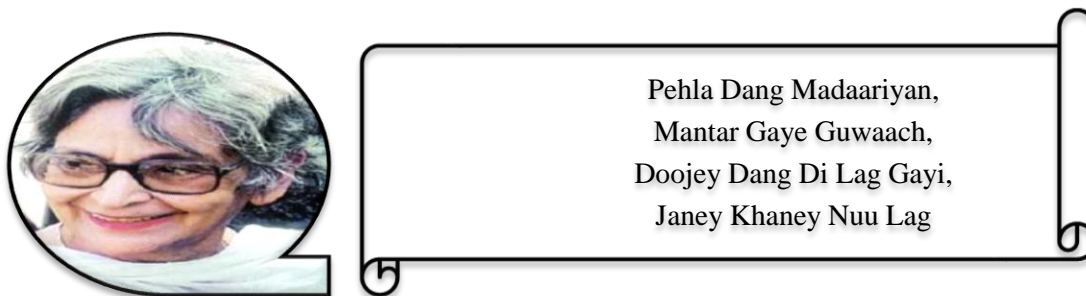
This fertile land is sprouting venom from every pore the sky is turning red from endless cries of gore. This fertile land sprouts venom, from each and every pore the sky has now turned crimson, from all these cries of gore.

Figure: 06



The toxic forest wind screams from inside its wake turning each flute's bamboo-shoot into a deadly snake. It's a terribly ill wind that rages through the woods transforming every bamboo-shoot into a deadly snake.

Figure: 07



With the first snake-bite; charmers lost their spell the second bite turned all and sundry into snakes, as well. Yet every bite after that addicted them all the more.

Figure: 08



Laagaan Keeley Lok Moonh,
Bas Phir Dang Hi Dang,
Palo Palee Punjab Dey,
Neeley Pay Gaye Ang

Drinking from this deadly stream, filling the land with bane slowly, Punjab's limbs have turned black and blue, with pain. Addicted to these waters to be bitten again and again. See how the limbs of Punjab have turned blue with pain.

Figure: 09



Galeyon Tutey Geet Phir,
Takaleyon Tuti Tand,
Trinjanon Tutiyaan Saheliyan,
Charakhrrey Ghuukar Band

The street-songs have been silenced cotton threads are snapped. Girls have left their playgroups the spinning wheels are cracked. The girls have fled the courtyards, the spinning wheels are mute.

Figure: 10



Saney Saij Dey Beriyan,
Luddan Ditiyaan Rohrr,
Saney Daliyan Peengh Ajj,
Piplaan Diti Torr

Our wedding beds are boats their logs have cast away. Our hanging swing, the Pipal tree has broken in disarray.

Figure: 11



Jithey Wajdi Si Phook Pyar Di,
Wey Oh Wanjhli Gayi Guwaach
Raanjhey Dey Sab Weer Ajj,
Bhul Gaye Ohdi Jaach

Lost is the flute, which once blew sounds of the heart. Ranjha's brothers, today no longer know this art. The flute that just knew love has been forever lost.

Figure: 12



Dharti Tey Lahoo Warsiya,
Qabraan Paiyan Chon,
Preet Diyan Shahzadiyan,
Ajj Wich Mazaaraan Ron

Blood rained on our shrines drenching them to the core. Damsels of amour, today sit crying at their door.

Figure: 13



Ajj Sabhey 'Qaido' Ban Gaye,
Husn Ishq Dey Chor
Ajj Kithon Liyaiye Labh Ke
Waris Shah Ikk Hor

Today everyone is, 'Qaido' thieves of beauty and ardor where can we find, today, another Warish Shah, once more.

Figure: 14



Ajj Aakhan Waris Shah Nuu,
Kiton Qabraan WichoN Bol,
Tey Ajj Kitaab-e-Ishq Da,
Koi Agla Warka Phol

Today, I call Waris Shah, “Speak from inside your grave” And turn, today, the book of love’s next affectionate page. Waris Shah, I beseech thee, speak up from your grave To love’s eternal treatise, please add another leaf.

Amrita Pritam is witnessing the bloodbath happening all around her motherland. The condition of Punjab is hurting her deeply. At this critical moment, she resorts to the poet of love and compassion, Waris Shah. He is no more. The people of Punjab have forgotten his words of pure love. They are now fighting and killing their own countrymen ruthlessly. She wants to spread the message of Heer and Ranjha at this chaotic moment. The poetess needs the assistance of Waris Shah badly. She is requesting him to appear again as the moment needs him the most. The people of Punjab have killed enough people that it turned the water of Chenab crimson red. The act of partition has impregnated evil spirits into the hearts of people. Now the green pastures of Punjab have turned into a graveyard. Corpses are lying here and there. Such was the condition of Punjab at the time of partition. Amrita Pritam thinks that some satanic force is responsible for all this hurly-burly. It has contaminated the tributaries of the river Indus with poison. The water is now irrigating the land with poison. It is the poison of “Divide and Rule Policy” which is irrigating the spirit of an Indian. This poison like the diabolic policy is the root cause of what is happening around the poetess.

The fertile land of Punjab is now giving birth to poisonous saplings. Amrita Pritam compares the saplings to hatred of men metaphorically. The hallucination of “otherness” is ultimately a threat to the integrity and unity of India. The poison of revenge has intoxicated the commoners. The beautiful natural landscape of Punjab is now turned into a field of mass slaughter. That’s why Amrita Pritam writes, “Scarlet-red has turned the horizon/ and sky high has flown the curse. The poisonous wind,/ that passes through/ every forest,/ has changed the/ bamboo-shoots into cobras.” This metaphorical cobra is biting the people of Punjab and inserting its venom into their bodies. The poetess is pointing here to the selfish political leaders who are trying to destroy love, compassion, and brotherhood from people’s hearts by spreading its venom. Amidst all of this, the daughters of Punjab are the most affected. They have stopped singing. The “spinning wheel”, metaphor of “rural economy”, has stopped its functioning. Girls are running to save their lives. They can’t attend the trinjan to sing together, to share their sorrows, and to help each other in this critical situation. Even the couples who have married recently to live a happy life, are fleeing to save their lives.

Partition of India snatched everything away from the innocent people of Punjab. It snapped the invisible thread of love existing among people.

The men of Punjab aren’t in the mood to blow the flute. They are indulged in fighting and killing each other. Blood is spread everywhere. According to the poetess, even the dead will start weeping after seeing this horrid picture of Punjab.

In utter anguish, the poetess says that the men of Punjab have turned into villains. They have become the “thieves of love and beauty” for the poet. After seeing all this the writer can’t hold her tears. She desperately needs the help of Waris Shah whose words, she thinks, can stop this turbulence. The refrain used at the end of the poem, emphasizes her sincere prayer to the dead poet.

This is one of Amrita Pritam’s most complicated works as it is symbolically written and can be easily misinterpreted and otherwise misunderstood. I am of the opinion that to understand the poem we first must understand the writer as most of her works were interrelated and almost always on the same topic. Anita Pritam was a female liberation activist of Punjabi roots. The poet lived under the subjugation of the Asian continent by the British forces that, led to the partitioning of Pakistan into east and west India. The poet uses

language under pressure to pass a message to the world akin to a distress call, to communicate about the strife and scramble prevalent in her country. In so doing she uses language as a machine; a vessel to create the plot of her story that has a long history; one full of agony and turmoil. She uses this weapon to unpack her burden out. By extension the poem is a demonstration of a dream comes true. Juxtaposition can be clearly understood from the last line of

Research Findings

The nature of the poem is Ode. The Amrita Pritum's Ode "I Call upon Waris Shah Today" contains five stanzas, the fifth stanza is the longest one; likewise, there are total fifty-seven lines in this ode. The translated version does not have any specific rhyme scheme or metrical composition but it is in free verse. A dirge like rhythm follows through the lines of the poem. The number of the words in each line varies and the verse has a lyrical flow throughout the end. The short lines are in iambic and trochaic meter alternatively, while some long lines contain on anapestic meter as well.

In this poem literary and linguistic devices play a major role. It makes Amrita Pritam's words more convincing and picturesque.

- i. **Use of Metaphor:** In the third line of the first stanza readers comes across the metaphor of "Book of Love" it refers to the famous work of great poet of Punjabi language Waris Shah's poem named "Heer Ranjha". Further in another place she refers "Breath of love" as a metaphor of the sweet songs of love. Moreover, the poetess also hints at the bloodbath in "Blood rained on the earth" and "Princesses of the valley" are the daughters of Punjab who are resting now in the graves.
- ii. **Use of Metonymy:** In "he gave tongue to her silent grief" the poetess uses metonymy here "tongue" means giving voice to someone's feelings.
- iii. **Use of Hyperbole:** Readers comes across a hyperbole in this line. "Today a million daughters weep". In this line the poetess is actually emphasizing the pain of Punjabi daughters here.
- iv. **Use of Metonymy:** "Arise, O friend of the distressed!" is the use of an apostrophe. Here the poetess calls the spirit of great Punjabi poet Waris Shah. Moreover, "Punjab" is used by the poetess as a metonym for the people of Punjab. Moreover, in another place the poetess says "Chenab has turned crimson" in this line the word "crimson" is the use of metonymy. The poetess refers to the cause by using its effect which changes the river's color into red.
- v. **Use of Variety:** The variety is "container for the thing contained"
- vi. **Use of Personification:** Amirta Pritum personifies the river Chenab and portrays it as her grieving companion. Moreover, in another place she personifies the "curse" in the line "Sky high has flown the curse".
- vii. **Use of Rhetorical Device:** in the parting section "I Say unto Waris Shah" the poetess asks a rhetorical question to the readers. It's a popular figure of speech used in such emotional poems to create emotional effect.

Discussion

In her poem 'To Waris Shah', Amrita Pritam captured the suffering of the women in Punjab at the time of Partition. It's a poem about the horrors of the partition of the Punjab during the 1947 Partition of India. And she poignantly captures her anguish over the massacres during the Partition in 1947. She wrote the poem on a train journey from Lahore to

Dehra Dun in the aftermath of Partition. She wrote of the women abducted at the time of Partition and of the children they bore to unknown fathers. 'To Waris Shah' or Ajj Aakhaan Waris Shah Nu is an elegy written by Amrita Pritam. She was one of the most prominent female writers and poets of our time. She published over seventy books novels, short stories, and poems. She was born on August 31, 1919, in Gujranwala of Punjab province, which is now in Pakistan, in undivided India.

At the time of Partition, in 1947, Amrita migrated to Delhi. It was around this time she started writing in Hindi, instead of her native Punjabi. She became a published writer in 1936 when she was barely 17 years old. She joined the Progressive Writers' Movement to inspire people through her literary works. She writes about the land; the destruction of the land and the bodies that are being killed. She refers to the story of Heer Ranjha, in his story one daughter died, and now hundreds and millions of daughters are dying, so she addresses Waris Shah, by invoking his name to speak up; speak from the grave. This hauntingly beautiful poem is addressed to Waris Shah, the author of the immortal epic of love, Heer Ranjha, which is often considered the Bible of Punjabi poetry.

The poem is filled with allusions to Waris Shah's legendary work Heer Ranjha. Here she refers to Heer as 'the daughter of Punjab' and wants Waris Shah to step out of his grave and hear the cries of million Heers at the time of partition. She appeals to Waris Shah to arise from his grave, record the Punjab's tragedy, and turn over a new page in Punjab's history. The poem also talks of the other main character Ranjha, his brothers, and the villainous Uncle comparing the attitudes of the Punjabis at the time of partition, to the evil acts of later.

The fields are lined up with dead bodies, and Chenab is filled with blood. Someone unknown poured poison into the water of the five rivers and the deadly water is destroying the land. The land, which used to be fertile, is sprouting venom, and the sky has turned red from endless cries and tears.

She writes down the sufferings that are happening in Punjab, the bloodshed that is happening, and asks WarisShah to come back from the grave and teach everyone about love and harmony.

Further in the poem, she talks of the land of Punjab, which is known for its greenery but now no greenery, only so much bloodshed; there is blood in the river and hatred in the hearts of the people living.

The poet is alluding to a parting of friends; friends have turned into enemies. The partition has turned Hindus and Muslims into enemies. She writes with the image of a spinning wheel, the Gandhian Chakra which is a symbol for nonviolent movement. She writes that the spinning wheel thread has snapped; all the work that Gandhi has done has been nullified.

The boats have lost their direction, they have no principles or aims and simply just exist which refers to the people who are aimless in their life with no principles or aims. Amrita Pritam writes in her poem, that due to the partition, everything has been poisoned; the bamboos have been poisoned, and how the flutes made out of them are also producing poison. The flute, from which Ranjha used to play his music, has been poisoned and not producing any music. The some results of the present study match and differ with some previous studies, as Short, (2014). Stylistically analyzed linguistic and literature instruction.

Kiran, (2018). a pragmatic-stylistic study of Gulzar's poetry; and Shafiq, (2019), analyzed Bulleh Shah's "Ilmon Bas kren O-Yaar" in Pragma-Stylistic way. Whereas some techniques of analyzing this poem also match with the studies of Zanib et al. (2020) and Memon et al. (2021) which makes it a valuable and master piece work.

Conclusion

Amirta Pritum in this ode depicts the effects of partition in Punjab and portrays the bloody chapters of the territorial division of Punjab province. The poetess is in a state of extreme sadness and she implores Waris Shah, in her muse, to see what is happening in her birth place. Ode to Waris Shah' is a call to the legendary Punjabi poet Waris Shah (1722 - 1798) whose Heer' is considered the Bible of Punjabi poetry. It is filled with allusions to Waris Shah's legendary work. She refers to Heer as the, "daughter of Punjab" (dhii Punjab di), and beseeches Waris Shah to step out of his grave and hear the partition cries of a million Heers. The poem also references many of the main characters of the Heer legend – Ranjha, his brothers, and Qaido (the villainous Uncle), comparing the attitudes of the Punjabis at the time of partition, to the evil acts of later. My own understanding of pure Punjabi being severely limited, this translation would have been impossible without the inputs from Samina Rizwan, who researched the 'Luddan' reference and came up with a plausible explanation. Also, her brother Umar Rafi who started it all by circulating his own translation, which I have used as a reference point.

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