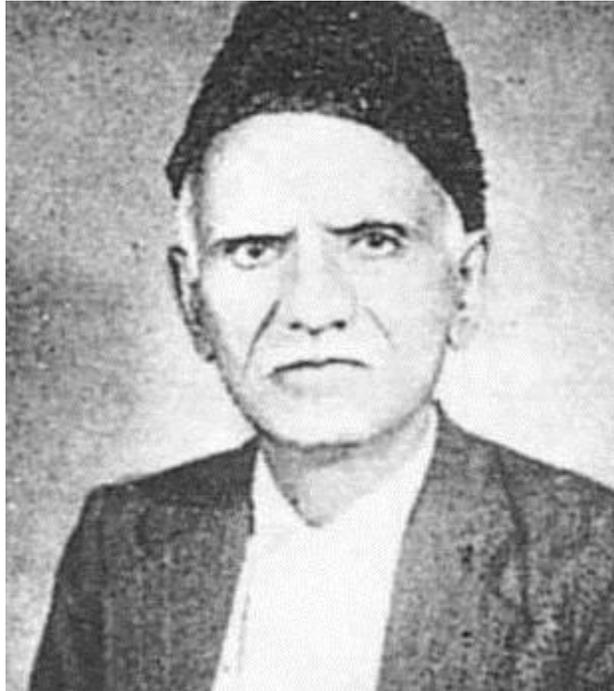


**The Motif of Love and Romance in the Poetry of  
Abdul Karim Gadai**

**Farrukh Aziz Ansari, M.A. Political Science & M.Phil. Pakistan Studies  
Asifa Abbas, M.A. English & M.Phil. Applied Linguistics**



Abdul Karim Gadai (1901-1978)

Courtesy: <http://www.thesindhimes.com/blogs/poet-unprivileged-abdul-karim-gadai/>

**Abstract**

Abdul Karim Gadai is the widely acclaimed modern poet of Sindh. He commands the singular rank in the legions of the Sindhi poets as far as the political/resistance poetry is concerned. Ideas in great profusion seem to be sprouting from his works. Major part of his poetic oeuvre relates nevertheless to the revolutionary resistance poetry. Unrecognized and rated too low notwithstanding, a worthwhile portion of his poetry also pertains to the subject-matter of love and romance. Love in its vast and varied subtleties and shades find an artistic expression through the verses of Gadai. The poet is possessed of exceptional prowess at clothing his words with colorful attire of pictorial and lively imagery and symbolism, which penetrates deep down the imagination of readers. His poems traverse the entire expanse of love including sensuous and spiritual love. The sexual urges are not frowned upon as taboos to be chased away. Rather, the poet believes animal passions are as natural as the other instincts in humans. Moreover, beauty in

relation to the temporal love is highly eulogized in his poetry. The beloved is placed on the highest pedestal of perfection. She is extolled as a goddess of beauty. Furthermore, Gadai Sahab seems very much to be influenced by the pantheistic tradition, which is evidently demonstrated by the mystical flavor with which his poems are intimately imbued. Bluntness, simplicity of style, colloquial language, and absence of a profound intellectual intricacy are the glaring features of Abdul Karim Gadai's poetry. This research paper, setting preset research objectives, attempts to delve into the elements of love and romance reflected in his poetry.

**Keywords:** Gadai, Love, Romance, Spiritual love, Sensuous Love, Imagery, and symbolism.

## 1. Introduction

Abdul Karim Lashari, popularly cherished today with his pseudonym 'Gadai Sahab' (1901-1978), occupies an inimitable stature in the galaxy of the modern Sindhi poets. He was born to a poor and illiterate family at Karimabad of tehsil Thul, Jacobabad district, Sindh (Pakistan). The luck had it, he somehow managed to acquire education up to matriculation (Sadhayo, 1981, 49). Afterwards, given the financial problems facing his family, he had to enter the government service to support his household. He dabbled in a number of jobs; however, finding things going against his grain there, he gave them up all one after the other (Syed, 2005, pp.104-107). He had begun composing poetry in the company of his friend Lutfullah Badvi/Jogi. However, after quitting job, he made poetry and journalism his career (Junejo, 2005, p.545-546). Gadai was a poet, historian, freedom fighter, political activist, dramatist, and a veteran journalist. Above all, he was a poet extraordinaire. He left an inerasable mark on the Sindhi literature.

His poetry is scattered over three books. He also has a prose work to his credit in the form of the historical account of Jacobabad city. His works include:

1. Saanreeh Ja Soor (Poetry)
2. Pakhra Ain Panhwaar (Poetry)
3. Pemaane Te Pemaano (Poetry)
4. Khangarh Khaan Jacobabad Taaen (Prose/History)

Hayat (2005) says that the greatness of Gadai lies not just in his tall stature as a poet. Rather, his entire life like a rainbow is an amalgam of the beautiful colors. Each and every aspect of his personality stands matchless. He was a versatile and prolific writer, a social worker, an eloquent orator, a political activist, and the like. A Bouquet having diverse fragrant flowers is what can be called Gadai (139).

Gadai Sahab earned his recognition as the poet of resistance. The epoch shortly after Pakistan's inception marked the beginning of his poetic journey in a real sense, as he took to giving vent to his sense of disappointment with the state of affairs in the post-colonial Sindh (Sadhayo, 2006, pp.39-43). Major part of his poetic opus has everything to do with disillusionment, and resistance – something he has commanded much applause for. As a point of fact, as stated in the foregoing lines, it was revolutionary poetry whereby late Gadai was catapulted into the limelight as the epitome of Sindhi resistance. Nevertheless, there is also a substantial portion of his oeuvre, albeit not so much appreciated or discovered, pertaining to the

themes of love and romance. In the wayward days of his youth, he composed the poems, like most of the poets, adoring the eyebrows and tresses of his beloved. Many of his early poems center around the motif of 'Ishq' and were sung by his contemporary notable singers. As a matter of fact, Allah Rakhi, the celebrated Sindhi singer stole his heart. She used to sing his poems. Pangs issuing out from the solitary nights of separation from the beloved find an artistic expression in his verses. Gadai Sahab says (2007, p.99):

تارا ڳڻيندي گذري رات پهڙ جي،

جيئن جدائي وارو عين عذاب آ!

English Translation:

*Counting the stars up did I pass the mountainous night!  
Living each moment in solitude and in separation from the beloved is  
Like passing through an inferno!*

### **i. Research Objectives**

The following research objectives have been set to be brought under the critical examination:

1. To investigate the elements of love and romance in the poetry of Abdul Karim Gadai.
2. To ascertain the concept and nature of sensuous and spiritual love as reflected by Gadai in his verses.
3. To appreciate the use of imagery and symbolism in Gadai's romantic poetry.

### **ii. Research Questions**

The present research paper poses the following questions:

1. How is love and romance reflected in the poetry of Abdul Karim Gadai?
2. What is the concept and nature of love expressed in Gadai's poetry, sensuous and spiritual love?
3. How do the elements of imagery and symbolism run through the poetic oeuvre of Gadai Sahab?

### **iii. Significance**

Abdul Karim Gadai's name sticks out a mile in the throng of the modern Sindhi poets. The yeoman's service he outstandingly performed for the Sindhi literature teetering on the brink of extinction was to revitalize it from the trauma of the partition. He was first and foremost the poet of resistance. Like the poets of the post-colonial era, he was disenchanted with the perpetuation of the colonial legacy. As a result, his verses articulated audacious dissent against the post-colonial state of Pakistan, its institutions, and political elite for the betrayal of trust. However, a substantial segment of his poetry deals quite eloquently with the subject of romance. In fact, one of his three poetic works "Pemaane Te Pemaano" is exclusively consecrated to the love poetry. However, as is the case with his political poetry, his verses concerned with romance have not been subjected to a scientific scholarly treatment either. Not a single research paper

---

**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:10 October 2018

Farrukh Aziz Ansari, M.A., M.Phil. and Asifa Abbas, M.A., M.Phil.

The Motif of Love and Romance in the Poetry of Abdul Karim Gadai

evaluating Gadai's poetics of romance is available. Thereupon, the present paper tends to provide a crucial breakthrough in the aforementioned aspect.

#### iv. Methodology

Essentially qualitative in nature, this study employs the grounded theory to the raw data available with the researcher in the form of the poetic texts of Abdul Karim Gadai. According to Hammond and Jerry Wellington (2013), grounded theory prefers inductive method to the deductive one thus allowing researchers the flexibility to, starting from the ground-up, observe patterns "lying rooted" within the data and draw conclusions from individual instances. In it, the process of classification and interpretation begins simultaneously with the data (p.82, 87). Grounded theory is of a greater utility and applicability when there is no theory to explain a phenomenon or process (Creswell, 2007, p. 66).

The poetic opus of Gadai Sahab "Laat Barandi Rahay" is the compilation of original publications numbering three, of the poet. One of these three books "Pemaane Te Pemaano" is comprised in entirety of the love poems by Gadai Sahab. Out of the available pool of the poetics of romance by late Gadai, an opposite sample of poems has been sifted and included in the critical scrutiny with kid gloves.

Like other approaches in qualitative data analysis, grounded theory also builds on coding and categorizing ending up with what may be termed 'saturation' – the point at which no further insight is likely to turn up by the continued exploration of categories (Hammond and Jerry, 2013, 83). Thus, the selected verses have been put to the extensive and exhaustive coding and categorizing process for the emergence of themes having a good deal of precision and high-fidelity. Initially by going through the poetic works of Gadai Sahab, the researcher familiarized himself with the tenor of his love/romance poetry. Thereafter, political poetry or otherwise was filtered out from his poetics of romance. When only the love/romance poems were left with the researcher, he randomly sifted a sizeable number out of them putting the same to the manual coding. A litany of codes was generated in the initial process of 'Open Coding'. However, later on, through the 'Axial Coding' and 'Selective Coding', codes/categories were collated, which ultimately led to the generation of broad themes. It may be clarified here that all this was done inductively without the preexisting theory, etc.

It warrants the researcher spelling clearly out as to which research paradigm he subscribes to. A research paradigm refers to the framework within which entire research project is operationalized. A paradigm is concerned with epistemological, ontological and methodological assumptions (Jonker and Bartjan, 2010, p. 80-81). The researcher strongly believes in constructivism/interpretivism which takes the world as capable of multiple interpretations and seeks to uncover the meanings that human beings invest in social activity (Hammon and Jerry, 2013, p.120). It holds that in the world where reality is inherently a social construction, we are meaning-makers, further believing that a phenomenon tends not to be captured objectively; instead, we need to construct shared understandings of social activity (Creswell, 2007, 20-21).

هي تار هائي پڪاري ٿي يار يار!

English Translation:

*Every corner of resonates with the echo of the beloved!*

According to Qadri (1982), In the company of Lutfullah Badvi, Gadai happened to compose verses. The former was at that time posted as a headmaster in one of the schools at Bahadurpur. He himself was a good poet of a considerable repute. Gadai's initial poems featured chiefly the themes of love and romance. They used to be published in the weekly 'Peghaam', 'Sadaqat', monthly 'Sindhu', and the daily 'Al-Waheed'. Another friend of his, Qadir Bakhsh Haqeer, a noted poet himself, accompanied Gadai Sahab in 'Musha'iras (a poetic symposium). And with time as he went into orbit, he blossomed into an outstanding poet of Sindh (417-418).

In his "Sindhi Adab Jo Tanqeedi Ibhyas" (The critical study of Sindhi literature), Abdul Majeed Sindhi observes that Gadai was a renowned poet extraordinaire in Sindhi literature. His poetry is reflective of the modern trends. His uniqueness lies in the fact that he experimented on almost every genre of the Sindhi poetry. That's why, his verses beautifully blend past traditions with the modernity. In the beginning, he engaged in writing 'Ghazals' (a form of poetry) which mostly told the tale of love and beauty (2006, 593).

Latif in his "Maqbool Tareen Sha'ir" (The most popular poet) argues that Gadai's poetry carries the germs of philosophy, ethics, mysticism, logic, and in brief almost of every subject. Gadai is fixated on love. The latter is a recurrent them with him. He teaches the only lesson – the lesson of love: love for friends, love for foes, love for life, love for universe, and above all, love for humanity. Hate is unknown to him (2005, 53).

**Poetry: The Song of Love**

Poetry down the ages has been the viable agency of expression of inner feelings. Indisputably, spontaneous, pent-up emotions of love find in poetry an excellent outlet for self-expression. Relation between poetry and love is as inevitable as that between body and soul. Every poet is the poet of love. Different poets have differently treated the subject of love depending on their times and climates. "There exist as numerous definitions of love as there exist the poets" (Stallworthy, 1981, p. 2). Love is texture of human soul. It is an immutable law inscribed on the forehead of every mortal. It has the element of universality. Even in the post-modernist epoch marked by cut-throat competition, unbridled capitalism, and consumerism where everything up to body/sex is commoditized to gratify the impulses of men, love has gathered all the more significance than ever. "Love retains its ageless quintessence," as notes Catherine Belsey, "to represent transcendence and immortality - what Jacques Derida calls 'proximity, living speech – that which money can't buy" (1994. P.883). Love takes each and all with its irresistible charm into its embrace. No mortal can elude the overpowering appeal of love. As Gibran describes it, love is but an eternal light written by light on the tablet of light (1993, p.29). It illuminates whomever it possesses. And whoever is possessed by it is immortalized eternity upon eternity in the realm of light.

Love poetry dates back more or less to the fourteenth century poet, acclaimed as the father of the English literature, Geoffrey Chaucer who wrote his masterpiece love poem Triolus and Crysede in which he exalted the courtly love and sentiments springing up there from

elevating the beloved to an infinite superiority. It idolized the beloved as a demigod standing as an epitome of grace and perfection. It says (Chaucer, 1977, p. 408):

*She has not with the leste of hire stature,  
But alle hire lynnes so welanswerynge,  
Weren to womanhode that creature,  
Was never lassemannysh in semynge!*

## 2. Gadai's Poetics of Love

Motif of love and beauty is matrix of Abdul Karim Gadai's poetry. With his idiosyncratic style, richness of expression, marvels and inventiveness of metaphor, fertile imagination, and youthful creativity, Gadai creates a very powerful effect as regards the emotion of love. The simplicity of words couched in a colloquial garb marks him out from his contemporaries. As for the philosophical thought, his poetry may not be imbued with the profound contemplation. Instead, the day-to-day experiences of life of ordinary people are manifested in it. Among such experiences, romance has an unevadable appeal for Gadai Sahab.

Abdul Karim Gadai holds a conception of love quite as hazy as his political philosophy. However, both temporal as well as spiritual love has been dealt with in his verses. Whilst readers may find an artistic portrayal of the enthralling eyebrows and musky tresses of the beloved in his poetry, they also see the hard predicament of a lover ingeniously depicted therein. His beloved is presented as the embodiment of beauty. Gadai places his beloved on the high pedestal of perfection. It merits a mention here that within the broader concept of love, Gadai touches upon many a facet of it. His poetry brings graphically out a vast variety of attitudes and temperaments of both a lover and the beloved. As stated above, many a form of love has been poeticized in his oeuvre, it variously encompasses such themes as love of the beloved, love of mankind, love of Sindh, his soil, spiritual love and sensuous love.

Away from one's beloved, a lover's state is equally as edgy as that of a fish that may be out of water. Gadai feels prickled deep down his heart by the twinges of separation. He aches dolefully for a moment or two for the union with his beloved. He creates quite tellingly the scenario of how each second of long-drawn-out nights goes as a rough and tough going for a lover overtaken by psychological and emotional loneliness. As Ghalib said 'to turn night into day is like unearthing a channel of milk', Gadai pens the similar dilemma of a lover for whom passing time in solitude is like digging gruelingly through a hard rock, as he says (2007, p. 96):

گدائي اوهازجي جدائيءَ ۾ جانان،

سڄو سال غم ۾ گذاري ڇڏيو!

### English Translation:

*In your separation, O my Beloved,  
I dragged myself through grief round the year!*

The bouts of meeting last rather momentarily ending in a trice, but the moments sans the beloved are dragged agonizingly out. The following line has the similar idea underlain in it (Gadai, 2007, p.102):

English Translation:

وصل جي رات ڏوراپن ۾ سڄي وٺي گذري!

*On the complaints was the whole night of meeting passed!*

Wine has long shared a symbiotic connection with poetry. The close symmetry between poetry and wine swirls around in the carafe of poets' minds. Love, wine and poetry are in a sort of an erotic partnership. Poets across the western and eastern societies have glorified wine, bottle, and tavern in a rhetorical metaphor. In Gadai Sahab's works, readers find frequent references to wine and an inn. Gadai artfully crafts evocative yet elliptical imagery of the trinity of beloved, wine and love. The presence of wine adds luster to the occasion. He says (2007, p. 99):

فصل بهار آئي، بوتل جو ٻوڇ کوليو،

ير ۾ آ دلبر، سامهون شراب آ!

English Translation:

*Lo arrives the springtime!*

*With the beloved sitting next to me*

*And wine lying opposite.*

*O fellow, open the bottle!*

Francis Bacon (2014, p. 233) observes, "... as if man, made for the contemplation of heaven and all noble objects, should do nothing but kneel before a little idol, and make himself a subject, though not of a mouth, (as beasts are), yet of the eye: which was given for higher purposes." When in love, a man's eyes see nothing except for the sight of the beloved all around. His ears yearn passionately for hearing the voice of the beloved. He feels out of place when away from her. He feels ill at ease among the company of many. His restless soul finds no solace except for in the presence of his beloved. His emotional equilibrium is greatly affected. The first thing love takes away from a lover is his state of balance thus making him sink deeper and deeper into a state of agony. His life becomes a mare's nest. All of sudden, he is made into a lotus-eater indolently lying down on the job. Smile freezes on his lips. Instead, a visible note of melancholy descends upon him without a fail. He is reduced down to an idle creature that imagines no action and no activity except for the appreciation of his beloved. For Gadai, love snatches the peace of mind. It brings a man to the point of a wanderer Darvesh. As Bacon (2014, P. 231) notes, "...but in life doth much mischief; sometimes like a siren, sometimes like a fury." In the similar way, Gadai Sahab says (2007, p.112):

دل جي لڳڻ جو وقت يي ڪهڙو عجيب هو،  
عقل ۽ خرد تي حسن جو جادو هلي ويو!

English Translation:

*How strange the time was when I lost my heart,  
The Beauty cast a spell on my mind!*

At another place, he says (103):

قسم خدا جو دنيا سندي حسين سان،  
لڳائي دل اهو جنهن کي خدا خراب ڪري!

English Translation:

*Heaven knows, only those that are doomed to a ruin fall into a love trap of the beautiful!*

### 3. Humor in Gadai's Love Poetry

Readers may find many instances of humor created with great virtuosity through such devices as irony and satire in the verses of Abdul Karim Gadai. Gadai Sahab demonstrates exceptional prowess at crafting elements of humor in his poetry. The mild humor creates a very telling effect on readers helping them grasp the intended paradox of the situation in a vivid manner. Humor itself is not really a literary device. It is instead an end-product, the effect, which induces laughter or amusement. Irony refers to situations where things turn out quite the opposite of what is expected. There are a number of types of irony such as structural irony, naïve irony, verbal irony, stable and unstable irony, etc (Abrams, 1999, p.135-136). Gadai's poetry is imbued with a variety of literary devices such as satire, irony, etc. Mild comedy is an important contour of his love verses. He says (2007, p. 96):

خوشيءَ سان مون نامون لکيو يار ڏي،  
پر ڪاوڙ مان دلبر ته ڦاڙي ڇڏيو!

English Translation:

*I wrote to the beloved with glee!  
But she angrily tore that latter to pieces.*

In another poem, he writes (2007, p. 102):

رات ساري ته رقيب جي ثنا ساڻ مونکي،  
سخت بيزار ڪيو، ڪنهن ڪيو دلدار ڪيو!

English Translation:

*The whole night of union, the beloved ruffled my feathers,*

*By lavishing praises on the rival(s)!*

On inflation and marriage, he humorously says (2007, p. 265):

گراني جي اڳ ۾ خبر جي هجي ها،  
گدائي ڪڏهن ڪين شادي ڪجي ها!

English Translation:

*Had I ever known of the inflation,  
I would never have married!*

It merits a special mention here that Gadai Sahab's very name was subject to an unusual paradox. It is fundamentally an oxymoron where two seemingly incongruous and contradictory terms, 'Gadai' (meaning a Beggar) and 'Sahab' (meaning a lord) are used in conjunction. Accordingly, he says (2007, p.98):

پرين قرب واري نظر جي ڪرين ها،  
مقدر ۾ ڇو هي "گدائي" هجي ها!

English Translation:

*If only you tenderly met my gaze,  
Why would I be Gadai (beggar)?*

Like unruly and philandering boys sauntering through the streets and roaming over every other girl that passes by them, Gadai amuses himself being surrounded by fairies in public parks. Moreover, having continuously spurned the love overtures of the poet, the beloved finally gestured her acceptance, which for the poet meant a triumph. He says (2007, p.113):

اڄ عيد ڪر گدائي، آخر جو ان ستمگر،  
ويندي ڪيا اشارا، اقرار جي نموني!

English Translation:

*It is a time for Eid (festivity), as  
The beloved has finally nodded her approval!*

#### **4. Sensuous Love in Gadai's Poetry**

Abdul Karim Gadai does not shy away from giving poignant expression to the youthful impulses. Beyond a shadow of doubt, animal passions are integral to human beings. Realistically speaking, sex is as natural as other human instincts. The great work the nature started millions of years back, is in the pipeline; both men and women are ordained to carry it forward thus

becoming partners and collaborators with the nature in the constructive process. However, that is possible only when two bodies meet!

In his masterpiece *Symposium*, Plato broaches this topic articulately.

Long ago, both of the sex of men and women were actually one sex of men. However, punishing them for their wickedness, God Almighty halved them into two parts. Each of men and women are in actuality one men. A Lover is always hankering after his other part. The desire to be one with the lost half again is what is called love (Plato, 1956, p. 265; Durant, 1995, p.106). In the savage wildness of this bestial passion, lies deep down something sublime and holy, and that is their completion, their reunion! As Kahlil Gibran writes, “Love has no other desire but to fulfill itself” (1964, p.12).

Gadai articulates the undisguised discourse on sensual love. Earthly love and spiritual love are not mutually exclusive. More importantly, sexual love cannot be sublimated. It needs fulfillment. According to the poet, a man can do literally nothing about his sexual urges. He says (2007, p. 324):

توڪان هڪڙي ڳالهه پڇان مان؟

ڪير نه آهي جنسي متوالو؟

جنس جي الفت ڪنهن کي ناهي؟

English Translation:

*Tell me one thing:*

*Who is not fond of sex?*

*Who does not need sex?*

Further, he goes on to say (325):

ڪير انهيءَ کان آجو آهي؟

ماڻهو نيٺ ته ماڻهو آهي.

آخر ڪوئي فرشتو ناهي.

جا شئي آ موجود اسان ۾.

ان جون ڳالهيون آخر ٿينديون!

English Translation:

*Who is exempted from sexual urges?*

*A man/woman is a human being, after all!*

*He/she is not an angel.*

*Why shouldn't we discuss  
Something that resides within us?*

Repression of one's sexual desires/drives is the denial of one's very being. It is self-denial. It is like divesting human beings of their humanity. Anglicization of a human through the inhibition of natural traits is Gadai Sahab's *bête noir*. Further, regulating or proscribing people's sexuality smacks of dehumanization and a crime in itself. Gadai expresses such an idea in more than one place. It must be added here that his notion on sexuality bears a striking similarity to the famous 'Repressive Hypothesis' of Michel Foucault who stirs up mind-altering debate about the three lettered word. The Repressive Hypothesis as it has come to be known, is itself a discourse. In the primitive societies (preceding onset of capitalist economies), people were not disinclined to talk of their sexual orientations; sex was talked about without much reticence, and sexual indulgences had hardly little need for secrecy or concealment. "But soon, twilight fell upon the bright day, thus set in the monotonous night of the Victorian bourgeoisie" (1978, pp. 120-124).

The chief factor lying at the bottom of sex being bottled up is the rise of Capitalism, at the heart of which lies production. Thus, any activity not in consonance with work ethics, and hampering production is condemned and discouraged. Workers' energy needs to be geared at productive activities at mills, factories, and industries. Sex for pleasure was frowned upon as unproductive waste of energy (Foucault, 1978, p.5-6). The Church was central to the banishment of sex as something taboo drawing a line as to what was legal and what was illicit as regards sexual orientation. The bourgeoisie in power controlled the discourse as to how sex to be spoken about, and by whom, and exercised hegemony in this way over the bulk of society.

Gadai had a sharp insight to see the mechanism of thrusting on people the artificialities created by the capitalist-landed bourgeoisie to perpetuate their hegemony. In doing this, they opted the clergy to stifle the creativity of people, proscribe their natural traits as taboos, and regulate their behavior in order to maintain subordination and super-ordination. So, Gadai Sahab rejected such restrictions, reticence and suppressions, asking us why we should strike a blushful unconventional pose while talking on the subject of sex!

### **5. Idea of Spiritual Love in Gadai's Poems**

Plato, the Neo-Platonists, St. Augustine, and Dante, etc., viewed sexual love as the vitiated form of spiritual love. However, interestingly in the Freudian psychoanalytic theories of love, spiritual love is depicted as the perverted form of sexual love. According to Freud, sexuality and sexual love is condemned as baser impulses and in consequence repressed. Goethe believes that love has an inbuilt appetite in the uncorrupted youth to take altogether a spiritual direction (1902, p.178). There has been an endless contestation over the question of nexus between earthly and spiritual love. However, sensuous love is often projected as a stepping stone to the development of Plutonic love. The refined spiritual love thus is sexual love in twilight. According to Durant (1995, p. 109), "...From the hunger of the flesh emanates the loftiest devotion of soul to the other soul. And from the lust of a savage issues forth a poet's adoration – something which forms a man's gamut."

Spiritual love is a recurrent and dominant theme of Gadai's poetry. There are a sizeable number of poems imbued in varying aspects with the idea of sacred love. His works traverse the entire expanse of love. If it entails post-modernist or neo-modernist notions of sex, it too entails at the same time the ecstasy of losing 'self' in the unfathomable abyss of holy love so as to be one with the Beloved. The merger with the Beloved can be achieved only by the unqualified self-surrender and total self-abnegation. In an ecstatic triumph, he declares (2007, p.132):

ملايو خاڪ ۾ مون پاڻ کي دلدار جي خاطر!

English Translation:

*I got into self-renunciation for the sake of my Beloved!*

Gadai Sahab seems to be strongly swayed by the philosophy of pantheism (Wahdatul Wajood). Essentially a metaphysical and religious school of thought, it treats God as being everything and everything being God or a reflection of God. The world is the self-reflection of the Supreme being, that is, God (Levine, 1994, p. 1). Everything that exists has diversity insofar as its general complexion is concerned. However, in its quintessence, every particle in the universe constitutes an all-inclusive divine unity (MacIntyre, 1967, p. 34). Gadai's verses visibly partake of the position that reality in its essence is singular; and all other forms of reality, though superficially manifesting diversity, emanate from it. God and World are ontologically not distinctive. All the profane love may ultimately mature into the eternal love for the Noblest of the beloveds, the God. It is He alone who is the fountainhead of all that is beautiful; all that is perfect; and all that is good. There is peace, freedom and salvation in seeking refuge in His tenderly bosom. He says (2007, p.54):

بيائي کي بن وجهي تون، وحدت جي واٽ وڻجانئ!

English Translation:

*Dispensing with trivial Dualism,  
Walk on the path of Unity/Oneness.*

The beloved is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. He exists independent of time and space. He cannot be confined within the watertight compartments built on such and such religions or creeds. He abides in a mosque, at the same time, a temple is his abode. Simultaneously, he dwells in a church as well. Gadai says (2007, p. 131):

نمازي ٿي، ڪڏهن مون يار کي مسجد اندر ڳولهيو،

ڪليسا جي اندر ڪنهن دم، وڃي مون آٿر ڳولهيو،

ڪڏهن مندر شوالو ۽، ڪڏهن مون جهنگ جهر ڳولهيو،

شهر جي گهر گهٽيءَ ۾، يار کي مون دربدر ڳولهيو!

English Translation:

*I looked for the beloved in a mosque turning myself to prostration!  
I searched for Him inside an altar area of a church!  
I wandered sometimes around temples, and sometimes through jungles  
In search of the Beloved!  
Every inch of the city did I treaded to see my Beloved!*

Gadai holds a very complex notion of spiritual love. It is fundamentally two-faceted or two-dimensional. Gadai assigns his earthly beloved the status of a deity. She is likened to a goddess of beauty. Her profound eyes are comparable to heavenly rivers. Her musky tresses wear a look of a breath-taking dark night of paradise. Her ample bosoms/breasts have surreal beauty of the dream-world. Hence, in her Gadai sees the glimpses of God. Likewise, subscribing to a pantheistic view of the world, his love for the beloved flowers into the love for God.

Like a polytheist, he erects his idol in the person of his beloved. He says (2007, p.100):

نماز ڇا جي ڪٿان جو روزو اوهانجي صورت ۾ سير سارو،  
چميان ٿو هر هر اوهانجي رخ کي صنم خدا جو ڪتاب سمجهي!

English Translation:

*I know nothing of the rituals of Namaz and Fasting!  
Because, they all fall immaterial!  
Worshiping the face of the beloved do I attain solace!  
I kiss thy face, O My Beloved!  
Like a sacred scripture!*

He further says that the sight of the beloved is summum bonum (p.99):

دلبر جو درشن عين ثواب !!

English Translation:

*It is a virtue to look at the face of the beloved!*

According to him (p.99):

پنهنجو عقيدو آهي سهڻا گڏائي،  
دروازو دلبر تنهنجو منبر محراب !!

English Translation:

*I have a unfaltering faith that  
The beloved's house is a worship place, sacred as pulpit and Mihrab!*

## 6. Imagery and Symbolism in Gadai's Poetry

Imagery represents the qualities or objects of sense perception referred to in a poem by allusion, or vehicles of metaphors and similes (Abrams, 1999, p.121). Imagery thus denotes the use of words, objects, ideas, etc. in such a manner as may appeal to our physical senses. It pertains to mental images or a visual representation created by means of words, objects, and ideas, etc. Symbolism is the use of symbols to illustrate qualities or ideas by crating their symbolic meaning, opposite of what they literally mean (Baldick, 2001, p.252).

Gadai's poetry is immensely pregnant with the elements of imagery and symbolism. Gadai Sahab demonstrates a peculiar feel for constructing artistic metaphors and similes to create the moving experiences. He invests poems with such rich, vivid words as evoke a magical aura, such that it penetratively strikes the heart and mind of readers. His verses sound an evocative note of beauty. They invoke sensations acting directly upon emotions. Gadai Sahab is endowed with an aesthetic artistry and perceptive imagination. He embellishes his poems with a rich and ornate tapestry of images borrowing the same from the wide-ranging subjects. The picturesque and colorful imagery such as 'tresses dark as a serpent', 'rosy lips as pinkish petals', and 'the tulips springing up from the droplets of her sweat', etc., takes away breath of readers.

He says (p.260):

هو ڀرپور سڀو ۽ عارض گلابي،

اڪيون ڪيف آور، شرابي شرابي!

English Translation:

*Her burgeoning bosoms and pink cheeks  
Her intoxicating eyes are like wine!*

At another place, the poet likens the cheeks of his beloved to the reddish apples:

رخسار لعل ڇا چوان ڪشمير جا ها سيب!

English Translation:

*What may I call them, cheeks or red pearls?  
Or they are the apples of the Kashmir valley?*

Through the lively imagery, the poet successfully gives a concrete form to experiences and relationships peculiar to him – the relationships, the comparisons, which people in ordinary life hardly pause to ponder over and appreciate. Through the poignant feast of the figurative language, Gadai Sahab presents a specialized view of things. In the following lines, he attempts at the beautiful personification of eyebrows (p.970):

ابرن جي هڪ اشاري، زخمي ڪيا هزارين،

بازار ۾ لڳي ويئي، تلوار ويندي ويندي!

English Translation:

*Thousands went into delirium at the mischief of her eyebrows!  
They pierced like a sharp sword through my heart!*

In the following lines, he says (p.65):

زلفون سپاه نانگ يا سنبل جا گل هوا،

ڳاڙهو لبن تي رنگ هو خونين گلاب جو!

English Translation:

*Her dark tresses were a serpent!  
Her lips were a sumbal flower/bombax ceiba,  
Resembling a red rose!*

Drawing analogies between the beloved and the objects such as moon, flowers, gazelles, etc. has been a time-tasted tradition in poetry. However, such comparisons perhaps reach their zenith in the poetry of Gadai when in comparing a flower with his beloved, he concludes that a rose pales into insignificance in the presence of the beloved. In fact, a rose derives its charm from the beloved (p.113):

سرخي سندس گلن جي، چوريءَ ملي آ گل ڪي،

ڳاڙهو گلاب ٿي پيو، رخسار جي نموني!

English Translation:

*The rose has stolen its rosiness from the pink complexion of her cheeks!  
Which is why a red rose bears a striking resemblance to her cheeks!*

## 7. Conclusion

Gadai's poetry is marked for the colloquial language, simplicity of manner and expression, straightforwardness, and 'poverty' of deeper intellectual intricacy. It essentially relates to the romantic bagatelles, and the silly situations which people in love find themselves in. With respect to intellectual or philosophical basis, Gadai's love poetry displays no linkage between an established framework and itself per se. Yet, pantheism seems to have significantly crept into his conception of spiritual love. Gadai's love poetry dwells on vast and varied themes of love. The poet wades through love in its diverse shades. As Sindhi rightly points out (2006), Gadai's verses present an intriguing glimpse of modernism and individuality. Though like that of his contemporaries, his work abounds in the love poems, he has broached the subject of love in an altogether novel manner (595). His poems give free-flowing ventilation to the Freudian

passions treating sensuous love earthly tallying – the sexual urges about which he has no misgivings, for they are innate in man. The poet dotes immeasurably on his beloved who is venerated to the highest possible degree. She is spoken of as the avatar of perfection. The curls of her hair send the poet into raptures. Varying temperaments and moods of both a lover and a beloved are elegantly dealt with in his poems. As for the plutonic love, the idea implied in a considerable number of verses seems to be that it is in the earthly love that the meaning of the idealized spiritual love can be figured out. There seems to be an interplay between the profane and the sacred. The pervading mystical aroma manifestly informs Gadai's works.

It may be highlighted here that Gadai attached peculiar significance to the conjugal love. Many of his verses explicitly point to his very wife whom he admired heaps. Additionally, while he rejected the repression of sex, he did not in any respect condone debauchery or illicit satisfaction of one's sexual orgies. He was outspoken but was in no way immoral. He religiously adhered to the values, traditions and canons of morality.

He had the loftiest notion about women. Born into a tribal-feudal society of the colonial Sindh, he tore scathingly into the patriarchy at whose cross the womenfolk were persecuted. Gadai's works are an authoritative treatise on women empowerment and socio-economic, and political emancipation of womenfolk. In fact, the perusal of his verses revealed during the study that he treated the subject of women with great sensitivity. Feminine tenderness and delicacy, and grace and sublimity have been exquisitely developed in his delineations of women.

The present research enterprise helped the emergence of some insightful themes underlying the works of Abdul Karim Gadai. The paper started from scratch, and then through codes and categories, got at the heart of the relevant data rooted in the corpus of his poetry. Over the decades, the poetics of romance by Gadai Sahab were underrated and clouded over by the preponderance of the resistance poetry, which Gadai is particularly noted for. Most of the books available on him bring out only one side of the picture, that is to say, Gadai as a revolutionary poet of masses, in consequence taking no notice of the flip- side of his poetry, that is, love. Consequently, no attempt at appreciating and examining it was ever made. Though some of his poems (Ghazals and Nazams) were recorded by Sindh's eminent singers, they failed to attract the attention even among the literary circles, let alone general public. This paper is the first scientific analysis of Gadai's love poetry. People thus far nescient regarding this facet of Gadaism are likely to find in this endeavor much of the substance. It is expected it would lead up to further investigation of Gadaism!

---

---

### References

Abrams, H.M. (1999). *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. America: Heinle and Heinle, pp. 135-136.

Bacon, Francis. (2014). *Selected Essays*. Lahore: Kitab Mahal.

- Baldick, Chris. (2001). *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Belsey, Catherine. (1994). Postmodern love: Questioning the Metaphysics of Desire. *New Literary History*, vol. 25 (no.3).
- Chaucer, Geoffery. (1977). "Triolus and Crysede," John I-I. Fisher, ed. *The Complete Poetry and Prose of Geoffery Chaucer*. New York: Rinehart and Winston.
- Creswell, John W (2007). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. California: Sage Publications.
- Durant, Will. (1995). *The Pleasures of Philosophy*. New York: Services Book Club.
- Foucault, Michel. (1978). *The History of Sexuality*, vol-1. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Gadai, Abdul Karim (2007). *Laat Barrandi Rahay: Shayari Jo Kuliyaat*, edited by Niaz Sarki and Javed Saghar. Kandiaro: Roshni Publications.
- Gibran, Kahlil. (1964). *The Prophet*. London: William Heinemann.
- Gibran, Kahlil. (1993). *Sand and Foam*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Goethe, J.W. von. (1902). *Truth and Fiction*. New York, p. 178.
- Hayat, Qazi Manzar. (2005). "Aa Neth Gadai Marno Par". *Keenjhar: Abdul Karim Gadai No, ed.* Abdul Wahab Sahto. Hyderabad: Sindhi SahatGhar.
- Hammond, Michael, and Jerry Wellington (2013). *Research Methods: The Key Concepts*. Routledge.
- Jonker, Jan and Bartjan Pennink (2010). *The Essence of Research Methodology*. Heidelberg: Springer.
- Junejo, Abdul Jabbar. (2005). *Sindhi Adab Ji Tareekh*, vol. 2. Hyderabad: Sindhi Language Authority.
- Latif, Ghalib. (2005). "Maqbool Tareen Shayer". *Keenjhar: Abdul Karim Gadai No, ed.* Abdul Wahab Sahto. Hyderabad: Sindhi SahatGhar.
- Levine, P. Michael. (1994). *Pantheism: A Non-theistic Concept of Deity*. London: Rutledge.

MacIntyre, Alasdair. (1967). "Pantheism," in Paul Edwards (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol 5. New York: Macmillan and Free Press.

Plato. (1956). *The Symposium*. Translated by W. Hamilton. Penguin Books, p. 265.

Qadri, Ayaz. (1982). *Sindhi Ghazal Ji Osar: Vol. II*. Jamshoro: Sindh University, Institute of Sindhology.

Sadhayo, G. Nabi (1981). "Gadai Ji Shakhshiyat Ain Sha'iri." *Sindh Sujag: Gadai Number*, edited by Imdad Odho. Jacobabad: Sindh Sujag Press.

Sadhayo, Ghulam Nabi. (2006). *Naeen Roshni: Gadai Ji Sha'iri Te Jadeed Tanqeed*. Jacobabad: Gadai Academy, pp. 39-43.

Sindhi, Memon Abdul Majeed. (2006). *Sindhi Adab Jo Tanqeedi Ibhyaas*. Kandiaro: Roshni Publications.

Stallworthy, John. (1981). *Love Poems*. London: Penguin Books.

Syed, G.M. (2005). *Janb Guzariyam Jan Seen*. Jamshoro. Sindhi Adabi Board.

=====

Farrukh Aziz Ansari  
M.A Political Science & M.Phil. Pakistan Studies  
National Institute of Pakistan Studies (NIPS),  
Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.  
[p.scientist12@gmail.com](mailto:p.scientist12@gmail.com)

**Co-Author**

Asifa Abbas  
M.A English & M.Phil Applied Linguistics  
ELDC, Mehran University Jamshoro.  
[Asifa\\_abass90@yahoo.com](mailto:Asifa_abass90@yahoo.com)