

Tracing “Local” Cultural and Ideological Dimensions in Schimmel’s *Pain and Grace*: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

The study is an enquiry into construction of local culture and ideological perspectives within Schimmel’s interpretive discourse. Discursive construction acquires significance due to local culture and ideological clues embedded within Schimmel’s interpretation of Sufi poetry. The investigation of a Western scholar’s profound understanding and evident inclination towards Sufi themes are the significant aspects that need to be looked into. Employment of research-based methods of enquiry for Sufi interpretive discourse, portrayal of various cultural aspects embedded within local cultural traditions, revival of various folk elements incorporated within Sufi interpretive discourse and formation of a positive image of Islamic concept of Sufism through promotion of cultural values are some of the prominent aspects signifying this study. Seeking insights from CDA, Fairclough’s three-dimensional model with textual, discursive and social dimensions was applied on a selected text from Schimmel’s *Pain and Grace*. The study reveals the evident instances of discursively constructed local culture through various indicators reflected through folk traditions, traditional love element, music, superstitions, Sufi beliefs and practices etc. The traces of Schimmel’s ideologies are evident through frequent ‘value assumptions’ through which she relates her beliefs with various Sufi, folk and cultural themes. Prominence of authorial voice reflected through maneuvering of intertextual references, frequency of Schimmel’s subjective stance and grasp over the minutest cultural details are indicative of a considerably adequate reconstruction of local culture within her interpretive discourse.

Keywords: Local culture, ideology, critical discourse analysis, Schimmel, *Pain and Grace*

1. Introduction

The long tradition of Sufism and the variety of practices adopted by its followers have been documented in the form of *malfoozat* of the Sufis, their poetry, biographies, correspondence etc by many of the followers of it. Some academic studies have also been carried out in this tradition of the East. Its widening and convincing scope has also interested and attracted various Western researchers and authors who produced a good bulk of work. However, these works whether by the authors from the East or the West have not been critically examined at an extensive level. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) being a comprehensive language based analytical approach could be applied to study these texts on Sufi

traditions, practical as well as poetic to investigate multitude of cultural and ideological underpinnings.

Sufism is viewed as the mystic explication of Islamic life within the ties of religious conventional beliefs which was first initiated by God-fearing people of Perso-Arab world. One of their basic beliefs was the total rejection and renunciation of the world and they kept themselves thoroughly engrossed to His service. Directing all their endeavours towards Tawhid (Oneness of God), they played a key role in propagation of Islam through their mystic movement. To them intellectualization of Sunnah (The orthodox customs of Islamic world) was one of its fundamental code to follow (Encyclopaedia of Islam as cited in Upadhyay, 2004). The devotees kept on ascribing them with metaphysical features under the guiding principles of Quran and Sunnah. Sufis were considered as an icon of power. Their disciples followed their footsteps which led towards peace or even got themselves inclined towards *jihad* for *Shariatization* of the entire world as a special assignment of the sacred task. "Seekers of Tawhid should strive to dedicate themselves to Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), so much so that their entire selves, including their hearts and their spirits, were free of thoughts other than of God" (Rizvi, 2004, p. 172).

The tradition of studying Sufism and documenting its practices and orders is as old as Sufism itself. It began in Basra in modern Iraq and Al-Farabi, Al-Ghazali, Jalal-ud-Din Rumi were the key figures of it (Schimmel, 2003). Over the years, it evolved while travelling all around the world and penetrating into various cultures. India, Iran, Central Asia and Turkey were its major centers (Rizvi, 2004, p.36). With the passage of time, various orders of Sufi thought emerged at various places of the world, namely Chishtia order that came into existence at Chisht, Afghanistan, Qadria Order emerging in Iran, Suhrwardiya Order that was established in Baghdad, Iraq etc.

The history of Sufism in Indian Subcontinent is also quite diverse (Rizvi, 2004). The Sufi tradition, practices and poetry, have been studied by various scholars (e.g. Rizvi, 2004; Schimmel, 2003a, 2003b; Singh, 2002; Quddusi, 1962 etc). Some of the authors have focused on various roles of Sufism including how it helped develop cultures through poetry, music, sittings etc (Krishna, 1938).

Sufi poetry, emerging directly from the indigenous settings, carries a lot of cultural underpinnings in it. Apart from being vital in religious teachings, political developments, social reformations etc, the Sufi poetry has its central role in shaping and propagating a culture that is usually a blend of the local norms and those brought here with mystic traditions coming all the way from Arabia and Persia. This amalgam that the Sufi poetry is shaped with has attracted the attention of various critics and scholars (e.g. Christopher Shakel, SajidaAlvi) of

the world. Annemarie Schimmel is one of the most prominent figures of the last century who have conducted profound studies in local Sufi poetry. These studies are appealing as they bring out an in-depth interpretation of the Sufi poetry. However, a careful study would reveal that these interpretations sometimes go beyond mere studies and tend to construct some realities, culture being one of them. Thus, it sounds relevant to explore these studies.

The message of Sufi poems started spreading its fragrance in such an age where people had got themselves so much engrossed in their so-called ethnic and religious identities, discriminations and prejudices. The perils of globalization had placed the people in an extreme state of anxiety and turmoil. On the contrary, the essence of Sufi message lies in the religious tolerance, love of nature and mutual respect. The so-called age of enlightenment resulted in rising conflicts as it aimed at getting a complete control over nature whereas the Sufi message conveyed through Sufi poems emphasized on living in complete harmony with nature (Gardezi, n. d.).

Schimmel published more than 50 books in the fields of Islamic literature, Sufism and culture. She extensively worked on Persian, Urdu, Arabic, Sindhi and Turkish poetry and translated them in English and German. Her works are rich in Sufi, cultural and ideological underpinnings.

In order to conduct the study in a systematic way, the theories and models offered by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) were used. In discourse studies 'discursive practices' refer to those practices through which texts are produced (created) and consumed (received and interpreted). These discursive practices contribute to the constitution of the social world including social identities and social relations (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002). Fairclough (2003) is of the view that discourse is both constitutive and constituted. Discourse can also be viewed as a form of social practice which both constitutes (constructs) the social world and is constituted (constructed) by other social practices (Fairclough, 2003).

Thus building on relevant works, in this study, Schimmel's interpretive discourse was explored to further investigate how local culture and ideology are constructed through her interpretive discourse (text as discourse).

The data (excerpt) for this study was extracted from Schimmel's work *Pain and Grace*. This qualitative data was analyzed by applying Fairclough's three dimensional model. (Fairclough, 2003).

It is remarkable here as Titscher et al. (2000) and Wodak (1996) state that Critical Discourse Analysis views language as a type of social practice. Just as no social

practice is independent of others, language is also never a complete entity as it draws upon other social practices prevailing in the society. Meyer (2001) is in favour of the supposition of mediation regarding association between language and society. On the basis of these statements it can be said that language, as a matter of fact, determines society but at the same time is also determined by the social reality. Fairclough (2003) further holds that a dialectical association exists between a specific discourse and the social structure. However, Titscher et al. (2000) suggest that language is analyzed through texts examining their elucidation, reception and social influences. Within Schimmel's selected text of *Pain and Grace*, social representations of various cultural themes gain prominence and are the prominent aspects worth inquiry.

Ideology takes a prominent position in critical discourse studies. Thompson (1990, p. 47) is of the opinion that the interest of CDA in ideology highlights the ways in which meaning is constructed and conveyed in a social context. Van Dijk (2006) defines ideology within a multidisciplinary perspective combining social, cognitive and discursive components. He views ideology as systems of ideas, in sociocognitive perspective and states that ideology is shared representations of social groups, and in particular, as the axiomatic principles of such representations. He further remarks that ideologies systematize its identity, actions, aims, norms and values, and resources as well as its link with other social groups maintaining a social group's self-image. Van Dijk (2006) further adds that ideologies are communicated and generally reproduced in the social practices of their members, and specifically acquired, confirmed, changed and perpetuated through discourse. Structures and functions of underlying ideologies can be investigated through applying methods of discourse analysis.

For this study, ideologies gain significance as many of the ideological traces are embedded in Schimmel's interpretive Sufi discourse and further while investigating the local cultural features, analysis of various ideologies gives more insights into their functioning. Analysis of the selected text probes into this prominent aspect of critical discourse studies.

Kristeva is known to have coined the term intertextuality while keeping into consideration Bakhtin's work. Kristeva (1986); Bakhtin (1986) are of the view that every text (or utterance) is dialogical, in a way that it acquires its meaning keeping into perspective other texts. Thibault (1991) explicates the perspective of intertextuality by stating that all texts, spoken and written, are constructed and contain the meanings which text-users assign to them in and through their association with other texts in some social structure. He further states that the concept of intertextuality offers a standpoint of both reading and writing texts as a method of viewing interactions of a text with preceding texts, writers, readers, and conventions. Kristeva (1980, p.69) relates to texts keeping into consideration

two axes: a horizontal axis which links the author and reader of a text, and a vertical axis, which joins the text to other texts. Thibault (1991) remarks that Kristeva, and Bakhtin view all texts as being constructed out of, and perceived in relation to, other texts in the same social structure.

Intertextual analysis, thus, facilitates in viewing a text with the perspective of what its meanings are and how they relate to other meanings established in the society as structuring a specific text. Within this study, the phenomenon of intertextuality acquires prominence as investigation of Schimmel's incorporation of other texts within her analysis directly or indirectly is worth enquiry. Despite the increased frequency of direct intertextual references, how Schimmel's voice still remains distinct is a matter worth investigation.

One of the key words of the research topic is 'local culture'. Therefore, an operational definition of 'local culture' was devised. This operational definition was made at specific and broader levels. At specific level, Linguistic Relativity Hypothesis (Whorf, 1956), was followed that denies existence of any universal culture. A culture can only be understood on its own terms. This means that the concepts of universal and local culture are no more rigid. Every culture is unique and independent. However, within a culture, difference is made between 'high Culture' (with capital 'C' that stands for literature and arts), and small culture (with small 'c' that refers to attitudes, values, beliefs, and everyday lifestyles). Combination of culture in this sense and language as embodiment of this sense is called Discourses.

Adopting the Relativity concept of culture, all the features embedded within Sufi interpretive discourse of Schimmel i.e. the selected text, were seen as indicators of the culture with small and capital 'c' in this study. The selected text was analyzed to identify these constructive indicators of the local culture.

According to Lyons (1981), the word 'Culture' has two meanings. In one sense, it is opposite of barbarism. The other sense that is anthropological, defines culture as collective thought or distinctive national spirit of a community. The national culture is further sum total of various sub-cultures. This second sense provided indicators of 'local culture' (with small 'c' and capital 'C') within this study which includes family systems, faith systems, folklores, music, superstitions and various Sufi practices and literary aspects.

At a broader level, it means the indigenous culture (with small and capital 'c') pertaining to the context of the selected text presented within the Sufi interpretive discourse of Schimmel. At this level, it refers to the culture of the East in general and the culture of the subcontinent (Sind, Panjab), Persian culture and Arabian culture, in particular.

The major research pursuits which the study intends to explore are as under:

1. *What construction of local culture emerges out of Schimmel's interpretative discourse?*
2. *What ideological perspectives do Schimmel employ while interpreting Sufi Poetry?*

The research study is significant in many ways. To begin with a simple rationale, it is imperative to bring into limelight the great but so far unexplored bulk of Schimmel's work, particularly in linguistic and cultural terms. Applying the framework developed by the critical discourse analysts, these significant areas of Schimmel's works were highlighted.

Secondly, the research explores the contribution of Schimmel's work in constructing and representing local culture as derived from Sufi poetry. Her writings are the representation of this culture. The present study looks into how culture is constructed through Schimmel's academic analysis of Sufi poetry.

Moreover, the study provides an interpretation of Schimmel's work that would ultimately enhance its comprehension for ordinary readers.

2. Methodology

Fairclough's three-dimensional model was employed (Fairclough, 2003) for this particular research study which is indeed a suitable method for this specific enquiry.

The analysis focuses on:

- a) The linguistic features of the selected Sufi text
- b) Processes relating to the production and consumption of the selected text (discursive practice/genres of Sufi poetry)
- c) The wider social practice which the selected text represents (social practice/aspects of local culture/ideologies).

This research study exclusively aims at investigating how local culture as a social practice and embedded ideologies construct discourse i.e., Schimmel's interpretive discourse and at the same time how discourse constitutes social practices, the local culture and ideological dimensions. This dimension would help in investigating the research pursuit to a great extent.

The three-dimensional model was distributed in 'aspects of three dimensional model'. The analysis tries to meet certain aspects sketched by Fairclough (2003).

They may be termed as subcategories of the three-dimensional model given above. The subcategories employed for this particular study include: social events; genre; intertextuality; assumptions; discourses; representation of social events; specific vocabulary and metaphor.

Schimmel has more than 50 books to her credit and most of them are on Sufi thought. Out of various books of Schimmel on Sufism, the following text was selected (see appendix) from *Pain and Grace*. The text was selected keeping the local cultural and ideological perspectives into consideration. The selected text specified for critical discourse analysis is as under:

“*Sur Asa* belongs to the sweetest chapters.....most difficult one to appreciate for a non-Sindhi reader.”

Pain and Grace (Schimmel, 2003, P.159-161, see appendix)

3. Results

3.1 Social Events

The text under analysis was extracted from Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai's 'Grace' Section of *Pain and Grace*. The text may well be considered as 'Sufi Discourse' rich in cultural underpinnings which require to be revealed. Schimmel has brought into limelight various cultural traces and analyzed them one by one. Those cultural traces were investigated and highlighted through various aspects of Fairclough's three-dimensional model. The text under analysis is a part of 'chain of social events' already deliberated within the book where the chapters of Shah Latif's book *Risalo* were elaborated by Schimmel. However, the selected text is 'descriptive' in nature with 'analytical tone' and does not belong to the 'chain or network of texts' as it just goes in continuation of the thought process set prior to the text and apparently does not have its links with the texts other than this book. It does not imply that no intertextual references were merged rather the point is to assert that as regards the term 'chain or networks of texts', no clues were found establishing the link of the text with other texts forming it the part of the chain or network of social events.

3.2 Genre

The text under study belongs to 'Sufi Discourse' with its own peculiar and descriptive analytical tone. It is an analytical work of Schimmel whose aim was to unleash the Sufi and cultural underpinnings through her analytical faculties. The text is descriptive with no traces of evident 'genre mixing'. The same type of genre of Sufi discourse in descriptive text was witnessed and no other genre was seen merged within it. The descriptive text does not form its association with any other genre of discourse. The text is an interpretive work of Schimmel who shares insights from Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai's poetic discourse by analyzing various aspects employing her critical faculties.

3.3 Intertextuality

Intertextual traces seem to be evident within the text. However, most of the references are indirectly quoted and seem to be merged in text in a good proportion. Direct quotations were also witnessed but their frequency was observed lesser as compared to the indirect references.

The references of 'theme of Sassui' was witnessed-a folktale character with deep rooted impacts on Sindhi local culture. The influx of this theme over the entire Sindhi local culture was also observed. The way this very theme was constructed within the text is representative of Schimmel's grasp over the cultural norms of Sind. The ideological perspectives are also significant in this construction of Sindhi local culture as this very theme has deep imprints on the soil of Sind. Therefore, 'theme of Sassui' has been the center of focus in the cultural studies. A very powerful intertextual reference that is 'Quranic Imagery of God' sets the tone and dimension of the text and makes it more valid and reliable. Again, the religious perspective which is deeply embedded in the culture of Sind was touched upon by Schimmel. Religion and culture both have strong connections within the cultural norms especially this connection gets stronger when it comes to Sindhi local culture. Schimmel has merged this reference within the text being mindful of the prominence of religious themes within local culture. The reference of 'pigeon in high Persian poetry' is another example which takes one back to the times when the source of conveying messages and letters was pigeon/*kang* (crow), an attribute of the rich local culture. This very theme has gained greater acclaim within common folk; therefore, the writers belonging to the soil gave this very theme significant space in their works especially the poets frequently referred to this theme. 'Sindhi folk songs' and mystical poetry have also been highlighted. It was witnessed that the text is rich in cultural traces as many of the themes employed within the text are very close to the masses and therefore, become integral part of local culture. Powerful intertextual references of 'Prophet's (PBUH) kindness', 'Muhammad's (PBUH) grace' and 'powerful rulers of Sindh' have been incorporated within the text. Reverence with the Prophet (PBUH) though is an integral part of the faith of every Muslim and this theme is a universal one but the level of esteem can be witnessed in Sindhi local culture to a great extent. Therefore, insights into Bhitai's poetry and Schimmel's analytical work reflect such references. The reference to the grace of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), though is a religious perspective but it is significant here that the love of the Prophet (PBUH) becomes inseparable from the local cultural values and reference to this very theme can be traced in all the Sufi works. Sufi works were very close within the masses, thus becoming inseparable from local culture. Schimmel while employing these powerful intertextual references which have a great impact on the ideologies and beliefs of the people tries to give more validity to her work.

As regards the construction of these themes, ideological and cultural aspects are more prominent but power relations also become significant in a sense that the Sufi beliefs and themes constructed through Sufi poetry also directly affect the beliefs of the folk through powerful appeal of a very strong poetic discourse. Further, Schimmel's employment of intertextual references within her analytical discourse which she did of Sufi poetry, also exploits the power relations. This strategy was employed to make her discourse more convincing.

The issue of attribution of these intertextual references within the text becomes significant as they are not attributed to a specific person rather unspecifically attributed. However, authorial voice seems to be more powerful as she integrates the entire intertextual references reporting them indirectly. It is also pertinent here to mention that being a Western scholar; she develops a keen sense of the religious and cultural themes which are deeply embedded within the culture. The author seems to have acquired reasonable skills in merging and texturing the references with her own influx over them. The element of subjectivity, though is quite dominant here but with the inclusion of the powerful intertextual references, she is able to form somewhat objective impression as well, clearly conveying that not only she is convinced of the prominence of the themes rather many other writers have also given a considerable space to these significant issues in their works.

3.4 Assumptions

As many as three examples of 'value assumptions' pointing towards what is desirable were witnessed in the text. 'Evaluation' is another term for them in CDA. Value assumptions found within the text are:

- i) "Sur Ripa, a short song, describes in impressive images the longings of the lonely wife for her husband."
- ii) "Inserted between the two songs in praise of the Yogis as 'perfect men' in *Sur Barvo Sindhi*."
- iii) ". . . . which expresses the deep veneration of the poet for his beautiful and mysterious, powerful and mild, divine Lord."

In the first example, the authorial voice with her beliefs and ideologies was investigated. 'Impressive images' is indicative of the value judgment on the part of the author which she expresses after having examined *Sur Ripa* extensively. At the same time, the subjectivity of the author may well be seen through this value assumption. Again, in the second example, another's value assumption clearly showing the ideologies of the author attached with the theme of Yogis by declaring them as 'perfect men' was observed. Obvious clues of the belief system of the author attached with the divine Lord were witnessed in the third example which is a value judgment on the part of the author.

3.5 Specific Vocabulary

The selected text is marked with the significant use of specific vocabulary. The authorial voice can well be investigated through the employment of the specific vocabulary. Inclusion of 'mystical wisdom' and 'poetical imagery' are indicative of the fact that the Sufi themes are worth studying and carry deeper meanings full of wisdom which need to be explored. Similarly, Sufi poetic themes are inclusive of poetic imageries which develop their close association with the common folk. The poetical imageries are also embedded in local cultural settings as many of the folk even learn the poetic discourse by heart and keep on reciting them. Another use of vocabulary 'folk tradition' gives a unique dimension to the text as its peculiar structure characterizes author's style. 'Impressive images' shows the affinity of the author with the subject. 'The longing of the lonely wife' is a culturally embedded aspect representing the traditional house-wife who desperately longs for her husband away from her. These longings of the lonely wife can be reflected in mystical and folk literature especially in poetry. 'Long winded chapters' is another beautiful employment of vocabulary which could have been described in a different way but the peculiar style of Schimmel and her subjectivity may well be traced through this special use of vocabulary. The idea of 'wandering minstrel' has further been presented which carries plenty of cultural aspects. Minstrels were the poets and musician who used to carry a stringed instrument along with them and narrated Sufi themes wandering place to place. 'Ever shifting Indus' is another peculiar way of presenting a certain vocabulary. The author may well be reflected through the employment of specific vocabulary. 'Muhammad's (PBUH) grace and munificence' carries plenty of culturally enriched references as the reverence with the Holy Prophet (PBUH) though is thoroughly a religious perspective, yet it has sufficient cultural relevance. This theme is embedded within the local cultural settings.

3.6 Metaphor

Kang - the messenger bird is the most significant metaphor employed within the text. This very metaphor comprises cultural relevance associated with it. 'Spinning woman' has been presented as a metaphor for 'the soul busy with the constant recollections of God'. The theme of 'spinning woman' is very close to the common folk and forms an integral part of local cultural settings. The connection between the 'Yogis' and the 'perfect men' may also be attributed as an example of metaphor where 'Yogis' have been presented as 'perfect men'. Again Yogis establish their unique significance within local culture as people develop special association with them. Association between the 'wandering minstrel' and the 'man's soul' is another example of metaphor.

3.7 Discourses

The discourses of cultural diversity and richness of Sind and mystical beliefs were drawn upon within the text. A reasonable 'mixing of discourses' of

'Yogidom', 'veneration of the poet for the Lord', 'the symbolic theme of spinning of cotton and its various associations', 'the concept of the messenger bird *kang*' and 'the traditional Sassui imagery' was investigated. All these themes are textured and merged within the text with a reasonable proportion. The link from one theme to another is quite natural.

4. Representation of Social Events

Brief descriptions of various *Surs* (chapters) of Risalo were traced, in which representation of various social events was witnessed. In terms of social representation, in *Sur Ripa*'s description, 'the longings of the lonely wife for her husband' were found to be remarkable. The social representation of the husband-wife relation is quite significant in local cultural settings. The ups and downs in the matrimonial relation have been touched upon in the folk traditions. It is pertinent here that the event is abstractly represented. Another social representation is that of 'Yogis' in *Sur Khahori* who walk from place to place and 'suffer every possible discomfort'. In the local cultural settings, *Yogis* have a significant role to play. These ascetic practitioners of meditation are revered figures in the cultural settings. Again the social representation is abstract within this very example. Another social representation is that of the traditional theme of 'spinning of cotton' expressed in *Sur Kapaiti* with various connotations attached to it. This very theme has been discussed by many of the Sufi poets of Sind and Panjab and is an important aspect of the rural settings which contains social and cultural underpinnings. Here the event involving a concrete entity has been abstractly represented. The next social representation is that of the concept of *kang*, the messenger bird (discussed in *Sur Purab*) who was considered as a major source of conveying messages in the past. The mention of this very theme may well be traced within Sindhi and Panjabi folk songs and mystical poetry developing a very close association with the common folk as the Sufi poetry and the folk songs are deeply embedded within local cultural settings. Again the entire event was abstractly represented. In *Sur Pirbhathi* (Early Morning), the social representation of man's soul seen as 'wandering minstrel' was traced. This very term has historical and cultural significance attached to it. The minstrels (usually poets and musicians) used to visit place to place carrying a stringed instrument and narrated mystic themes while the common folk used to flock around. Abstract representation of the event again was witnessed. The historical allusions of 'powerful rulers of Sind' appearing to be symbols of 'Muhammad's (PBUH) grace and munificence' mentioned in *Sur Bilawal* were also significant. In the local cultural settings especially that of Sind, level of reverence and esteem with the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) can be witnessed. Special *Mahafil* (meetings) are organized in which Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) special attributes are narrated in *Na'at* (admiration of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) special attributes). These *Mahafil* have a great significance in local

cultural settings especially that of Sind and Panjab. In this instance also, the event is abstractly presented.

The aspects given more prominence become more significant. It is important that wherever the cultural instances are found, the theme is presented giving it more prominence while for other trivial aspects just a passing reference was noticed. For instance the reference to the 'song of the swan' was not given more prominence within the text.

Most of the 'processes' involved within the text are verbal and existential. They are indicative of the attached cultural and ideological references within the context. The frequency of activated and passivated processes is almost equally balanced.

Various 'participants' were also traced : poet, Yogis, loving woman, crow, beloved, *kang*, the messenger bird, Pigeon in the high Persian poetry, Shah, wandering minstrel, powerful rulers of Sind, etc. They served as subjects and objects in the social representation performing various 'forms of activity'. As they were taken from the Sufi discourse, therefore, refer to various cultural and ideological dimensions associated with them within their particular context.

Some of the 'circumstances' mentioned within the text include: a fine description of the dried-up tree, rose water-like company of the master, etc. Their function is to add more meanings to the 'process' involved within the text under study and are therefore indicative of various local cultural, Sufi and ideological dimensions linked with them.

5. Discussion

The text under study, based on Schimmel's interpretation of Sufi poetry, is rich in local cultural underpinnings. Following conclusions were drawn keeping in view the first research inquiry:

Various indicators of local culture have been merged within the text. For instance, within *Sur Ripa's* description in *Shah Jo Risalo*, 'the longings of the lonely wife for her husband' is an instance of the husband-wife relation which becomes quite significant in local cultural settings especially in folk tradition. 'Yogis' in *Sur 'Khahori'* who walk from place to place and 'suffer every possible discomfort' signify these ascetic practitioners of meditation within local cultural settings. The traditional theme of 'spinning of cotton' expressed in *Sur Kapaiti* becomes significant for Sufi poets of Sind and Panjab which is a significant indicator in rural settings. The concept of *kang*, the messenger bird (discussed in *Sur Purab*) considered as being a major source of conveying messages in the past becomes a fascination for Sindhi and Panjabi folk songs and mystical poetry developing

close association with the common folk. In *Sur pirbhati* (Early Morning), man's soul seen as 'wandering minstrel' with historical and cultural significance attached to it portrays the figure of the minstrels (usually poets and musicians) who used to visit place to place carrying a stringed instrument and narrated mystic themes. 'Powerful rulers of Sind' appearing to be symbols of 'Muhammad's (PBUH) grace and munificence' mentioned in *Sur Bilawal* are an indicator of reverence and esteem with the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) which though is an integral part of the ideologies of the Muslims, yet greater level of reverence may well be witnessed in local culture of Sind. 'Special Mahafil' exclusively conducted to narrate Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) special attributes in the form of *Na'at* (admiration of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) special attributes) are significant aspects of local cultural settings especially in Sind and Panjab.

While tracing ideological perspectives, assumptions were considered to be the appropriate linguistic tools through which relevant clues could be found. In 'assumptions', 'value assumptions' were found suitable to answer the question pertaining to ideological traces.

The authorial voice seems to be more judgmental giving expression to her beliefs and ideologies. After having examined *Sur Ripa* extensively, the value assumption of 'impressive images' attaches her subjectivity to the theme. Further, the ideologies of the author attached with the theme of Yogis by declaring them as 'perfect men' is also indicative of the ideological perspectives employed by Schimmel. 'Beautiful and mysterious, powerful and mild' is another value assumption which contains great strength. Evident clues to the belief system of the author associated with the divine Lord can be witnessed within this instance.

6. Conclusion

Examination of the selected text through critical discourse perspective revealed that the construction of local culture within Schimmel's interpretive discourse was evident through various indicators merged in her interpretive discourse. These local cultural indicators include various Sufi beliefs, practices, esteemed figures, themes and characters of folktales, rural cultural norms, superstitions, music and traditional element of *husn-u-ishq* etc. It is important that Schimmel's interpretive discourse constructed local culture and at the same time her discourse was constituted by these local cultural indicators which established direct impact on her analysis of Sufi poetry. This is a significant aspect of CDA.

The answer to the second research pursuit pertaining to ideological perspectives revealed that various 'value assumptions' mentioned above were indicative of Schimmel's beliefs and ideologies associated with various indicators of local

culture embedded within her analysis of Sufi poetry. Schimmel's ideologies linked with themes and characters of different folktales, Sufi beliefs, Sufi saints, Sufi practices, cultural values, womenfolk and regional languages were also brought into limelight.

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APPENDIX *Pain and Grace* (Schimmel, 2003. P.159-161)

Sur Asa belongs to the sweetest chapters of the *Risalo*; it is filled with mystical and poetical imagery, but does not rely as much on folk tradition as some other *Surs*, whereas *Sur Ripa*, a short song, describes in impressive images the longing of the lonely wife for her husband.

Sur Khahori is written in praise of Yogis who walk from the village of *GanjiTakar* near present-day Hyderabad to the sacred mountain *Hinglaj* (an ancient Shiva sanctuary in Balochistan) and suffer every possible discomfort. They are further described in detail in the long-winded chapters of *Sur Ramakali*, which constitutes for the historian of religion one of the most interesting parts of the *Risalo* (see pp.219ff). Inserted between the two songs in the praise of Yogis as 'perfect men' is *Sur Barvo Sindhi*, written to a lovely evening tune, which expresses the deep veneration of the poet for his beautiful and mysterious, powerful and mild, divine lord, utilizing, toward the end, again the theme of *Sassui*.

A topic which is not uncommonly found in the poetry of Sind and the Panjab is the spinning of cotton, one of the most important occupations of the women. This is the theme of *Kapa'iti*, which name points to traditional folk melodies sung by the women folk while spinning. Here, the connection between the spinning woman and the soul which is busy with the constant recollection of God is obvious; and the Quranic imagery of God as the merchant who buys man's soul is extended to the idea that the cotton thread, e.g., the heart, has to be refined and prepared with utmost care so that the spinning soul will not be rejected by the merchant.

In *Sur Purab*, 'East', the poet describes the feelings of the loving woman who sends out the crow to find out how her beloved is; the crow, *kang*, is the typical messenger bird in Sind, as was the pigeon in high Persian poetry, and its importance has often been underlined in Sindhi folk songs and mystical poetry. But out of this first touching verse Shah turns once more to the Yogis and warns them not to make false pretenses in yogidom. The theme of the soul-bird—of which the crow is a variation—is taken up in extenso in *Sur Kara'il*, the song of the swan who is admonished not to fly and dive with the other, unclean birds, but continue to feed on pearls.

In the following *Sur, Pirbhati*, 'Early Morning', man's soul is seen as a wandering minstrel who is kindly treated by the rulers of Las Bela, the representative of Almighty Lord. *Sur Dahar* gives in its first chapter a fine description of the dried-up tree, a common sight in the valley of the ever shifting Indus and its tributaries, but also a sight which leads the poet to a praise of the Prophet's kindness in the second part while the *Sassui* imagery is utilized toward the end.

Sur Bilawal (I, II) contains a number of historical allusions to the powerful rulers of Sind who in the end appear to be symbols of Muhammad's grace and munificence. A little joke about Shah Latif's friend and servant forms the last chapter of this Sur; he, though 'stinking', 'a glutton', 'ugly,' – to mention only a few of his epithets – becomes purified in the rose-water-like company of the master. *Sur Bilawal* is probably the most difficult one to appreciate for a non-Sindhi reader.