



RESEARCH PAPER

**Trauma of Kashmir in the Confluence of Form and Content: A  
Literary Study of Selected Poems from *The Country Without a Post  
Office***

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PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
<b>Received:</b> October 2, 2021	The research attempts to unearth the enunciation of meaning in the coalescence of form and content, and moreover, it investigates how the chaos has aptly been depicted in the amalgamation of different forms of poetry: villanelle, canzone and sestina. This infusion of form and content entails literary stylistics as its theoretical framework. Literary stylistics primarily deals with, on the one hand, surface level meaning and on the other hand, it deals with the underlying meaning of the literary text. Following the model suggested by Carter (1979), the selected poems are examined on four major levels as i) grammatical ii) Lexico-semantic, iii) form and iv) context. This study finds that the poetic forms, having been inextricably interwoven with the content, display traumatized characters reeling while grappling with the unceasing calamities. This amalgamation of different forms has aptly served the purpose of embodying the message of ominous happenings that have brought about the transformation of a paradise into a living picture of hell.
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**Introduction**

“The research investigates the desolation and anarchy in Kashmir in 1990s in the poetic collection of Agha Shahid Ali *The Country Without a Post Office* (1997). This research peculiarly focuses on the confluence of two building blocks of poetry, i.e. form and content which brings about the enunciation of anarchy and chaos which were ubiquitous in that burning region in the last decade of 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Ali has authored this collection of poems, in the backdrop of political unrest in 1990s in Kashmir. Ali has been a minute observer and eye-witness of the socio-political and economic circumstances that caused restlessness in the dwellers of the Occupied

Kashmir. To articulate the pain and the sense of uprootedness, the writer diligently employs the poetic forms as villanelle, canzone, sestina and Ghazal. These different forms constitute not only the theme but also the subject matter; his political statement, as Sabitha points out, particularly in the context of political unrest, that the themes are not only made clear through the content but also through the poetic forms he opts in his writing (2000, p. 182). In these selected poems form gives more vivid enunciation than the words. In order to reach the reflective meaning of Ali's poetry, an in-depth explication of form is indispensable. Since this form is indispensable, literary stylistics is an apt theoretical paradigm to unearth the meaning hidden in the form. Literary stylistics, according to Ogunsiji (2013), aims at engaging figurative language foregrounded in poetry and dealing with evocative language features in the text for interpretation (p. 18).

This research strives to answer the questions: a) To what extent the unity of poetic form and its content helps articulating the inexplicable feelings brought about by mass killing and kidnapping in the collection? And b) How do the indigenous metaphors, derived and taken from Kashmiri culture and literature in *The Country Without a Post Office* fit into an adopted language?

### **Literature Review**

The last decade of twentieth century saw abysmal changes in political and social spheres; these changes have been very aptly voiced in literary works by Ali in his works, particularly in *The Country Without a Post Office*. Violent resistance movements had yielded no fruit; literary voice was need of the hour in order to be heard around the globe and Ali was the sole voice who demanded the rights of Kashmiri's vociferously. The poems of Ali display a consistent engagement with the questions of political justice, fundamental rights and power... (p. 180). He was disturbed by the unceasing tragedies brought about by both the proxy *Mujahedeen* and Indian Army. The mental agony of the poet is evident in Benvenuto's words that the political troubles in Kashmir made the poet ache for Kashmir (2002, p. 266). Ali's writing, besides engaging the loss of human lives and sufferings in the midst of political skirmishes in Kashmir also sees both the factors together as Zaidi (2007) believes that the poetry of Ali shows a "persistent engagement with the perennial theme of human suffering"; moreover, it also exhibits "an acute awareness of the contemporary political issues and the ground realities on part of the poet" (p.156).

The poetry of Ali is demonstration of sense of unhomely and homelessness. These aforementioned concepts are recurrent themes in postcolonial writing. While living Diaspora life, he senses loss people of Kashmir endure and yearns to revisit the past. Nostalgia has always been an unattended guest for Ali; he always struggles to retrieve the lost history of his forefathers; his aim was not only to "engage with pain"

but also to deal with “questions of memory, history and representation” (Sabitha, 2000, p. 181). Similarly, Ali leads the new wave of immigrants as ambassadors of peace to the first world countries; but “his writing is more characterized by nostalgia for his various homes than by cultural conflict” (King, 1994, p. 2). Ali is leading life in exile yet he yearns to retrieve the past he have had in India and the gone days he have had in America. While living in America he is not unmindful of what pain his native dwelling goes through; sense of loss and nostalgia are recurring themes in his poetry. He reminisces the gone days of both Kashmir and America; he has always been disturbed by what others have lost, “whether the northern Indian culture of his mother or the American Indian past of Arizona where he lived for a short time” (King, 1994, p. 3). Regional metaphors have made their way into English writing throughout the poetry of Ali. These new poetic devices are replete with layers of meanings. While underscoring the worth of these metaphors Zaidi (2007) believes that Ali has registered his faith in the struggle of Kashmir by connecting the blood of Kashmiri with the blood of Imam Hussain while expressing his anger against the inexplicable atrocities brought about by the state machinery (p. 164).

### **Material and Methods**

The framework for the current study is literary stylistics. Linguistic stylistics, unlike literary stylistics, focuses upon the analysis of the various linguistic features and elements within a literary text. Literary stylistics, in the explication of a text, renders more significance to the textual clue and intuition. Norgaard, Montoro, & Busse (2010) argue that in literary stylistics “meaning is created through language as well as in other types of text” (p. 1). In order to bring clarity it requires to distinguish between linguistic stylistics and literary stylistics. As far as the former is concerned it solely deals with metalanguage of a specific text, focusing upon the style and linguistic devices deemed literary, while the latter, along with the language and writing strategies of the author, also foregrounds the hidden and implicit meaning constructed through that particular style. Literary stylistics aims at bridging the widening gap between the literary criticism and stylistics and helps bring science and intuition closer through the intuitive analysis of the literary text. The emergence of literary stylistics can be traced in the footprints of linguistic stylistics. Hence, it becomes pertinent to rationalize the linguistic, instead of literary, stylistics to have an all-encompassing cognizance of the theoretical paradigm for this research. Widdoson (1975) also contends that the “study of a literary discourse from a linguistic orientation” (p. 37) is the basic premise of stylistics.

While studying the literature, the study of language is inevitable in the process of digging the text deeper. Thus, the explication of literary discourse and a linguistically oriented study of a literary text certainly necessitates the confluence of both, the content and the poetic form. Put in a different way, both the elements equally contribute in the construction of the text as a whole. Form of a text can be

described as the way or style of writing of the author; the connotative meanings the author infuses in the words are always distinctive. Moreover, different authors may use same words and symbols but their meanings may vary. This profusion of meaning is brought about in many ways: use of figurative language, colloquial words, parallelism, rhythm and rhyme, grammatical deviation, use of meter, code switching and code mixing.

Form has an equal proportion in constituting and constructing the meaning in the poetry. Thus, literary stylistics appropriately renders the explication of form and content. In order to get the essence and literariness' of poetry, the study of form and its elucidation is inevitable. Niazi and Gautam (2010) underscore the significance of linguistic analysis while studying poetry than prose. In the study of poetry both "aesthetic effect" and "creative manipulation of the linguistic code" (p. 24) are interrelated and interdependent. Therefore, the interpretation of poetry can aptly be accomplished with the paradigm of stylistics. Niazi and Gautam have further suggested a model containing three steps that facilitates in carrying out the explication of literary text; first, the evasive and hidden meaning is to be unearthed, secondly, this discovered meaning is to be described and thirdly, these discovered and described meanings are to be viewed and explained with all potential dimensions.

Though a number of models have been devised by different theorists in order to render an accurate and appropriate analysis of literary text yet this study primarily focuses on an approach that is eclectic in nature which can encompass the dimensions of the poetry. The selection of eclectic approach has not come from the researchers' likes and dislikes; rather the nature of study has induced this approach for the investigation of Ali's poetry. So, Ali's poetry, particularly the selected poems, call for an all-encompassing approach that renders an intensive and extensive investigation with the purpose of uncovering the hidden meaning. To accomplish this purpose the current study exploits Ronald Carter's model of 'poles' and Michael Halliday's 'functional model of language'. Carter (1979) attempts to seek reconciliation between literature and linguistics which he names as "Middle Ground" (29). This middle ground constitutes a vital place establishing appropriate principles for the evaluation and explication of the text. This middle ground, according to Carter, addresses the concerns of both linguistics and literary criticism as he assumes that if this middle ground is a juncture of synthesis where the linguistic and literary aspects synthesize, then this "accommodation must proceed on equally integrated basis" (p. 14). Carter suggests four steps for the analysis of poetry which he dubs 'poles': i) Pole of Grammar, ii) Lexico-Semantic Pole, iii) Pole of Form, and iv) Pole of Context (p. 47).

Halliday (1978) is of the opinion that languages are social semiotics: languages have been part of meaning-making in larger systems of ideologies and beliefs. Hence it leads us to assume that it is a kind of social phenomenon that influences the society unfailingly and, it gets influenced reciprocally. In language, Halliday traces that there are three ways of signification: i) experiential, ii) interpersonal and iii) textual. What concerns us in the context of our study, according to Norgaard (2010), is experiential meaning which, also termed as ideational meaning, aims to trace the ways through which something is constructed and represented. An important characteristic in Hallidian Model is that it believes in the construction power of language. Halliday is of the view that language not only does represent the objects and meanings, but also it constructs or 'construes' meaning in Hallidian term (1999, p. 140).

## Results and Discussion

Keeping in view the limitations of the article, all the poems of the collection cannot be explicated. Therefore, this article limits itself to the poems: 'Farewell', 'I See Kashmir from New Delhi at Midnight', 'A Pastoral' and 'The Country Without a Post Office' which are deeply rooted in the enunciation of the title of this article.

The opening poem, 'Farewell', displays the trauma and chaos in its style, structure and diction. The analysis of this poem is begun with a precise explication of grammatical category. This poem shuffles between different tenses. The shuffle in space and time signifies that the action occurring in the poem is unceasing. "They make a desolation and call it peace" (L. 2) is an unceasing routine like the cyclic movement of a wheel which never seems to subside. This back and forth movement of the poem in time keeps us indecisive while making us travel in past then to present or future. Thus, the shift in time demonstrates the timelessness and universality of the happenings. The analysis of diction gives a significant outcome: large number of the words are either mono-syllabic or duo-syllabic. The construction of poem with mono-syllabic or duo-syllabic words is termed as limpidity or classical simplicity. The poem profusely uses nominal words; after nouns, the verbs, pronouns, adjectives, and adverbs respectively dominate the poem. The dominance of nominal words coupled with a large number of words make the poem a moving casket with transparent imagery.

The pole of form reveals worth-noting aspects of the poem. This poem does not follow, in the traditional sense, a particular type or form of poetry. Thus, the study of the prosody in this regard implies that the structure of the poem, in a certain degree, bears a resemblance to the structure of sestina, particularly in its length. Essentially the poem mourns over the loss of innocent lives and the separation as a result of departure of Pandits from Kashmir for indefinite time. Hence the poem bears the overtones of an elegy as it laments the irreparable loss. So, keeping elegiac

elements and its length in view it can be said that 'Farwell' is amalgamation of elegy and sestina. This apparently chaotic and irregular form of the poem 'Farewell' signifies the social disorder and political chaos in Kashmiri society where the armed forces and security agencies have rendered the life amorphous.

This opening poem of the collection is an inaugural and welcoming poem but this poem bids farewell to the armless Kashmiri Pundits who are forsaking the land with the apprehensions that they would be forcibly evacuated. In the backdrop of 1990's uprising the minority of Hindu Pundits felt a sense of uncertainty and insecurity. Pundits, being minority, had apprehensions that the brutal attitude of the state towards Muslim majority would instigate the enraged radicalized Muslims to resort to violence against the Hindus. Owing to this lingering threat, a huge number of Pundits had to evacuate Kashmir and settle in Jammu region where Muslims were in minority and Pundits were in majority. The speaker is bidding farewell to those neighbors who are departing; he mourns over the parting while counting the carnages of both security agencies and armed forces. While lamenting the painful departure of the Pandits the interlocutor wails, "You needed me, you needed to perfect me. / In your absence you polished me into the Enemy" (L. 20, 21). The absence of Pandits in this region triggered hostility between Muslims and Hindus and disturbed the peaceful coexistence. During the absence of neighbors, misunderstanding and misconceptions grew up which fed 'the Enmity'.

'I See Kashmir from New Delhi at Midnight', is a long poem with four sections; the opening sections i.e. section I and section II of the poem have three stanzas each whereas the penultimate and last sections consist of two stanzas. An imperative mood sets the tone of the poem; the quintet begins with a modal verb 'must'. This opening quintet comes to an end with a dependent clause of modal verb 'can' preceded by present simple tense. The next couple of quintets of the first section and all quintets of the section II follow the same pattern, i.e. present simple. The second section comes to a dramatic end in structure but introduces multiple interlocutors where the first speaker and Rizwan dramatize the narrative by interrogating and answering. Third section of the poem starts with an amalgam of present simple and present perfect, recording Rizwan's response to speaker's enquiry but the rest of the exchange between these interlocutors takes place in the same tense. In the final quintet of section three, there is a major shift in pronouns; the singular interlocutors have changed into plural: "we see men removing...temples/We beg them, 'Who will protect us if you leave?'" (L. 41,42). Now the scene has shifted from Rizwan to the temples: from subjective and individual sufferings to objective and collective grievances. Now the unknown speaker puts a plaintive question asking departing neighbors who would protect them. The final section of the poem follows the same pattern, i.e. present simple and perfect tense, raising some questions

regarding the disappearance of Rizwan. Realizing the fear Rizwan endures, the speaker promises that he will not tell his father that Rizwan has been shot down.

These atrocities befell them in the past yet they have been shown in present. Moreover, the exchange of dialogues and frequent use of present tense dramatize the story of Rizwan giving the sense that it takes place in front of our naked eyes. Moreover, the recurrence of present simple universalizes the atrocities committed against the locals, and renders the happenings a sense of permanency.

In this poem, nouns dominate followed by action verbs, modifiers, pronouns and adverbs respectively. Approximately eighty nominal words have been used and many of the words in this category of nouns are concrete with the exception of few abstract nouns. Another noticeable feature in the lexicon of this poem is the repetition of words: 'shadow', 'ice' and 'snow' that constitute the recurrent motifs. In this poem the words 'ice', 'shadow', 'snow' are used thrice, four times and again four times respectively. The image of 'snow' possesses bleak and negative connotations and the meaning of this recurrent image does not remain same rather changes each time. In 29<sup>th</sup> line the word 'snow' indicates coldness of fatality, in 36<sup>th</sup> line 'snow' stands for the catastrophe and calamity that is to befall masses, while in 59<sup>th</sup> line the capitalized 'Snow' suggests a kind of region going through constant demographic changes. Similarly, the word 'ice' does resist significance as it symbolizes courage and resilience in the very beginning and also towards the end of the poem, while in line number 23 it indicates negativity as it entails a destructive strong flowing wind (bullets) that devoid chinar leaves (bodies) of life. The word 'shadow' in the opening of the poem seems to be a wandering spirit but in the second stanza of the second section it becomes apparent that this spirit is Rizwan. This frequent use of word 'shadow' epitomizes the condition of each individual and whole society of Kashmir where the fate of people passes through bitter experience. In the nominal group the words 'phiren' and 'chinar' are indigenous; this utilization of indigenous words, known as 'nonce formation' in Leach's terms (1969), symbolizes Ali's attempt to revitalize the Kashmiri culture.

Most of the lines of this poem are pentameter and tetrameter. The lesser use of syllables and comparatively shorter length of lines in poetry show poet's aphoristic style; this helps convey multiple ideas, themes, images and symbols in a concise language. This is peculiarity of the poet that he universalizes the issue of Kashmiri and this has been done in free verse.

In the last decade of twentieth century the fearful and catastrophic events had traumatized the people of Kashmir; clashes were rampant; houses were raided and consequently kidnappings were usual. The alleged prisoners were never tried in the courts and tortured to death; the grieving parents had no clue of the dead bodies. Rizwan had long been cold; speaker strives to deduce signification from the whispers

of the wallowing spirit. At the moment, the spirit has become a whole representing the each sufferer of Kashmir. Put in another way, Rizwan is no more 'himself' rather he is transformed into an 'other' or 'whole'. The interlocutor is ushered through gushing blood where he watches in horror "hundreds of pairs of shoes the mourners had / left behind, as they ran from the funeral, victims of firing" (L. 33-35).

'A Pastoral' is another poem which chronicles the bleak incidents of brutality and barbarity. The poem, set in future, articulates a multiplicity of perspectives as certainty, longing, hope, and prospects. This future tense is used in the first two stanzas but there is a sudden shift in the point of view accompanied with a slight change in the indicative mood in the second last line as it imaginatively weighs the human's capacity to endure the worst times. The third stanza marks a sudden change in narration as the action keeps switching between present and past. It is worthwhile to observe regarding the structure of the poem that the poet introduces three different perspectives in the first three stanzas: first being the speaker himself; second point of view comes from the bird and third, the voice of the gardener voice. When situated in Kashmir's context, the last two points of view have a greater symbolic signification. The speaker's imaginative voyage into past and then into future is not merely a visualization and imaginative re-creation of past events and possibilities in future; rather, the speaker attempts to juxtapose the bleak and real events of gone days with a promising future devoid of the shackles of the past.

Concrete words dominate this poem but abstraction of these concrete words has portrayed the complex and grim picture of devastated Kashmir metaphorically. A minute and comprehensive analysis reveals the aspect of concreteness into abstraction. The concrete words in the first stanza: "by the gates of Villa of peace" (L. 2) metaphorically signify an inevitable calm and tranquil time in future simple. Likewise the word 'keys' (L. 4) is a concrete noun yet it signifies the promised ownership on Kashmir, shifting from Indian usurpers to the real owners. Moreover, the words: 'the bird', 'open thorns', 'gardener', 'ivy', 'horned lark', 'falcon', 'blood', 'talons', 'mirror', 'door' etc. are concrete nouns but all have abstract signification; these words recapture abominations of past and hint at the splendor that future may beget. Most of the words in the poem are replete with imagery, making the picture moving.

Besides this, the poem contains two distinctive features that show the traumatic effects of socio-political unrest. The first of these distinctive features is dramatic monologue-like style of the poem; and secondly, without using any classical pattern of meter the use of free verse meter depicts the widespread chaos. Dramatic monologues, particularly in philosophical poetry, aims at exploring the psychological problems of the interlocutor and portraying the contemplation process while thinking of an idea or some specific happening. The interlocutor juxtaposes

twofold thinking process of people; the individual concern and the collective thinking. The speaker unequivocally constitutes a collective consciousness while, at the same time, the bird and gardener's voice represent deep and profound psychology and thinking of individuals from the oppressed society. In the mist of this collective consciousness either the bird or the gardener's voice interrupts thinking usually uncommon in dramatic monologues. Another worth noting feature is that the poem deviates all the structural rules usually a classical dramatic monologue governs yet its movement, during the development of story commencing from the interlocutor to the gardener's voice and then to the speaking bird makes it a kind of pseudo-dramatic monologue. Robert Browning's dramatic monologues aim at exploring a person's sole mind while understating the representation of the whole. But in 'Pastoral' the voices of bird and gardener are foregrounded in order to embody the psychological processes and mental activities of the whole society.

Since the complete decolonization of Subcontinent, the status of Indian Occupied Kashmir has been undecided and disputed. Kashmir is a Muslim-majority state but its fate was enforced against the consent of its inhabitants and was acceded to India by Maharaja Hari Singh in 1947. Since then, Kashmir has been in turmoil and an apple of discord between India and Pakistan. In the aftermath of partition all the stakeholders got their part of slice but Kashmir's fate was left to swing between many poles: India, Pakistan and United Nations Organization (UNO). Under the pressure of world community and UNO the then Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru promised to conduct plebiscite in the region in order to decide the fate of Kashmiri but it was never carried out. The then Chief Minister of Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah, had emphasized to hold the promised referendum but, unfortunately, he was dismissed from the position and was exiled for propagating the issue to the international leadership. Consequently, the Indian Government allegedly charged him with conspiracy against the state and put him to judicial trial. This was the first of many instances when the Kashmiri people felt betrayed and their trust was shattered. Even today the Kashmiri natives await a referendum on the fate of the disputed region. This optimism and hope of the Kashmiris to get rid of the Indian oppression has aptly been contextualized in 'A Pastoral'.

The poem 'Country Without a Post Office' is the most accomplished poem of the collection. It has an intricate grammatical structure which signifies the complexity of the prevailing situation. The use of present, past and future with different moods as indicative, interrogative and subjunctive implies the ceaselessness of horrific events. Besides this, the technique of 'a narrator within narrator' explores the psychological effects and the severity of nostalgia caused by the disconnectedness during political turmoil.

The analysis on lexical and semantic levels unearths significant and deeper meaning. This is one of the lengthiest and imaginatively richest poems hence providing us good deal of opportunity to investigate the wide lexical elements. The constant repetition of the nouns: 'rain', 'dark', 'stamps' 'fire' etc. connote bleak and murky happenings ahead. The word 'dark' with different collocations has been used seven times: thrice as adjective and four times as a noun. Similarly, most of these aforementioned words have appeared twice or thrice. The repetition and concretization of symbolic words constructs a world with moving images of oppression and brutality coupled with a sense of insecurity and instability. Moreover, the noun 'ash' is recurring image throughout the collection but particularly in this very poem. 'Ash' being a paradoxical word on the one hand connotes annihilation and destruction, while on the other, it highlights resilience and rebirth. Rooted in this context of oppression of Kashmir both significations are vital: devastation has become the norm and this fate has to befall them but, despite this, the severity of uprising never seems to subside which implies an unrelenting rebirth and resilience. There are some recurrent verbs: 'bury', 'died', 'socked', 'burn' etc. which demonstrate the occurrence of catastrophic events and their reappearance in the next lines implies the ceaseless replay of traumatic events.

This poem is an elegiac canzone and this is one of the well-formed and well-structured poems in the collection. Twelve stanzas with eight lines in each constitute this masterpiece poem. As far as its prosody is concerned, the pattern of rhyming scheme keeps the flow with a few exceptions, hence it is: a, b, c, d, d, c, b, a. First line of the stanza rhymes with the last line while the second line rhymes with second last line; the third line of the stanza rhymes with third last line; fourth line rhymes with the fifth line. There is a slight deviation in the fourth stanza as the opening line of the stanza ends with 'dark' whereas in the last line 'heart' demarcates the stanza. Hence the words 'Dark' and 'heart' make a half rhyming with the assonance of 'a' sound and 'r' sound. The reversal of the same words is observed in stanza eight in which 'heart' appears in the opening line whereas 'dark' comes in the last line.

An illustrious proverb reads 'History repeats itself' yet Kashmir's history not only does repeat itself but it also replays, recurs and happens incessantly. The Kashmir issue has been a conundrum and dilemma that has ripped away the symphony the synchronized culture of Kashmir. The last decade of twentieth century saw a spike in tension between oppressors and oppressed. Curfews and shutter-down strikes were rampant in the region. The writ of the Indian Government was in question; rules were violated and challenged which resulted in the shutting down of many public institutions. The Indian Government eschewed its responsibility of restoring the closed institutions. Post offices were among the other institutions which remained closed in order to disconnect the rebellious actors from each other. The closure of such institutions did not affect the anti-state activities but such closures

affected the common people and hampered them from remaining in contact with their nearer and dearer ones. The law-enforcement agencies blamed *Mujahedeen* for debilitating situation and the Indian Government holds non-Kashmiris for infiltrating the LoC (Line of Control) in order to disrupt the peace and stability of Kashmir. In reality the Kashmiri struggle for freedom was an indigenous movement where in the absence of any print and electronic media to raise their voice, the Kashmiris had no other option but to use violence so that they may be heard. As Gangahar (2013) recounts the struggle of the Kashmiri people as, "an indigenous movement, a Kashmiri movement and as the phrase goes....of the people, by the people and for the people, the people of Kashmir. And against India, the state" (p. 36). Agha Shahid Ali's poetry, as discussed in this paper, represents the chaos, death, struggle and the impact that this catastrophic situation has brought to Kashmir.

### **Conclusion**

Ali dreamt a tranquil, serene and peaceful Kashmir with post offices serving people in having a strong and uninterrupted source of communication but this dream could not be materialized in his life. He left this world with a desperate wish to alleviate all kind of injustice, bias and exploitation but the world's biggest democracy has pawed at the sources of land with its lustful claws. In this global world human beings have no importance. It is territory and space which have got value. India wants the land of Kashmir; she has nothing to do with the dwellers. Kashmir has got prominence owing to its rich forests, flowing rivers, geo-political importance and precious minerals. India does not want it go away into the hands of indigenous people who are the real owner of these resources. Ali's poetry exposes this materialistic approach of a neo-imperialist and brutal state; it has brought about positive changes in the image of locals across the pacific where the indigenous people were portrayed as terrorists. It would not be hyperbolic that Ali has served well in transforming the nature of war from weapons to pen.

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