

Condemnation of War and Terror in Pashto Poetry- Post 9/11 Scenario

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Abstract

The episode of September 11 was a turning point not only for the US but also for the people of Pakistan, especially the Pashto speaking people of regions bordering Afghanistan. A review of Pashto poetry reveals that the US-led War on Terror after 9/11 has changed the fabric of Pashto speaking society in Pakistan. Condemnation of the War on Terror is reflected in the poetic and other literary work of the Pashto poets and writers. This trend appears to be the consequence of terrible hardships faced by Pashto speaking people in Pakistan and their diaspora elsewhere on the globe. Scores of Pathans have been killed, maimed and have lost their property and livelihood due to the War on Terror. The American tragedy of 9/11 has had tragic consequences for the Pathans.

Introduction

The tragic incident of September 11, 2001 has completely changed the socio-political scenario of the Indian Subcontinent. 9/11 has also left an indelible mark on the literary scenario and literature of the Subcontinent, which means that the fallout shall be long lasting and deep with respect to national and local languages of Pakistan.

War is a political activity and bears heavily on the literature, history and geography of the affected people – *Pashtuns* are not

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different and their post-9/11 literature reflects this. Both prose and poetry carries these effects, but poetry seems highly affected. The primary reason for this trend appears to be the very expressive nature of the poetry itself, compared to the prose. A large portion of the *Pashto* lyrical poetry depicts the effects of the War on Terror. *Pashto ghazals* are primarily based on technical formalities and that is why such topics cannot be properly dealt with in *ghazals*. This branch of poetry reflects gloom and psychological effects of the war on *Pashtun* society. This paper elucidates the effects of 9/11 on *Pashto* literature and especially *Ghazal* has been examined.

The code of life of the *Pashtuns* shows that they are peace loving people. The ingredients of the *Pashtun* code are called *Pashtunwali* in tribal *Pashtun* setup and unwritten constitution by the orientalist. The basic elements of that particular unwritten constitution are *Pashtunwali* that calls for hospitality, brotherhood, cooperation and sacrifice. *Pashtunwali* played a vital role to create an atmosphere of peace and harmony in *Pashtun* society.

The recent socio-political history of *Pashtuns* shows that a series of wars had been imposed on these peace-loving people since 1980s and particularly in the aftermath of 9/11 incident. A glance on the reaction of the *Pashtuns*, especially in the perspective of *Pashto* poetry, it is easily discernible that the war on terror was imposed on these people and has been condemned due to its indiscriminate nature. This condemnation indicates that the *Pashtuns* want peace in their territory. In this paper, an attempt has been made to explore the thoughts of the *Pashtun* poets for the cause of peaceful change. The paper is divided into five distinct parts. In the first part a short introduction of 9/11 event and the Taliban are given. In second part the socio-political effects of 9/11 on Pakistan is discussed. In part three and four the effects of 9/11 on Pakistani literature and the effects of 9/11 on Pashto literature are explained respectively. Finally, the paper reveals the effects of 9/11 on Pashto Ghazal.

9/11 Event and the Taliban

9/11 propelled the US and its European allies to initially declare war against Osama Bin Laden and Al-Qaida but later it was changed to a vague War on Terror in following terms:

“On September, 11. 2001 with the collapse of the World Trade Centre, US had started the war named as war against terrorism. U.S President George W Bush termed it as an act of terrorism and threatened strong action against the people who had carried out those attacks. It was the Al Qaida and Osama Bin Laden, who were eventually held responsible for those attacks.”¹

Effects on Pakistan

According to American intelligence agencies, Osama Bin Laden was constantly on the run – changing his place, position, and comrades in order to avoid being hunted by the Americans. Intelligence reports mentioned this hunt in following terms:

“Bin Lain is thought to travel this region in small groups of just four or five people and constantly change his plans in case any of his team has betrayed his movement”.²

With reference to Osama Bin Laden’s hideout the report says,

“If Osama Bin Laden has stayed in Afghanistan then he is most probably hiding in the deeply forested, narrow mountain valleys of Kunhar province, close to the borders with Pakistan and China”.³

Besides search operation for Osama Bin Laden, relations of Taliban and Al Qaida with religious parties were also considered by the American. Religious Madrasas and religious political parties in general and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (S) in particular were considered supportive of Taliban and Al Qaida. Meanwhile, with the passage of time America has declared Osama Bin Laden’s

presence and movements in Pakistani territory, which presented bizarre scenario for Pakistan. Religious circles and parties supported Al Qaida and Taliban. Where as the Pakistani government institution, for the sake of American and NATO forces support (both military and financial) declared Taliban's activities as terrorism and supported warfare. Political analysts seem to carry the same opinion about the effects of 9/11 on Pakistan. According to them,

“On political front collaboration between Pakistan and NATO modified internationally whereas local side general public was against involvement of Pakistan in this so called Americans war on terror.”⁴

A study of vast post-9/11 literature shows that Pakistan has been deeply affected by the tragic event. The Pashto speaking people in the border regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan have suffered the most, and their misery engulfed the whole country gradually. Literature produced in other languages of Pakistan and Afghanistan carries the same hue.

The Prevailing Situation

The effects of 9/11 on Pakistan can be traced back to the policies of former US President George W Bush. After George W Bush his successor Barak Obama took the charge of the Oval Office, which made the Pak-Afghan intellectuals think differently. The current situation presents a different picture and it is evident that there is hardly any change in US policies with reference to Pakistan and Afghanistan. Chris Kline, a Western intellectual, explains Obama's policy in the following words:⁵

“Conventional western public opinion regards the war in Afghanistan as a struggle between NATO and extremist Islamic militants. Since assuming office Barak Obama has redefined the conflict by calling it the Af-Pak war. The US president's redefinition is recognition that the Taliban's nerve centre, as well as Al – Qaida's safe heaven, across Afghanistan's border in neighboring Pakistan. In forbidding

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tribal territories, Waziristan especially, another dimension of the same fierce conflict is underway with more Pakistani troops thrown into the fray, than the whole of NATO deploys on its side of the northwest frontier.”⁶

The present scenario also poses several questions. Whether NATO will quit Afghanistan? What is expected date of its evacuation? Whether the law and order of Pakistan would move toward betterment after the evacuation of NATO forces? All these questions have different answers and opinions around the world but generally international political analysts and intellectuals have the opinion that now the war on terror is not the individual problem of US and Afghanistan, it has become a global problem. This way the war is going to engulf a large portion of the world in the days to come and besides Pakistan, India, Iran and China will be directly affected. Indian analysts and intellectuals also have the same opinion, Bahart Vermah, an Indian intellectual opines, “The truth is that American forces in many ways are fighting Indian’s war too. New Delhi’s expectation that they will continue to fight such a war without Indian chipping is being naïve. China and Pakistan have joined hands against India and waiting for the American forces to leave. New Delhi has appealed to Washington not to exit from Afghanistan, but is unprepared and unwilling to assist.”⁷

Over here one can find answers to questions mentioned above. The write up of Bahart Vermah makes it evident that India does not want NATO to quit Afghanistan and as the war on terror is not the war of American and Afghanistan alone, so Indian, Chinese, and Iranian intervention will definitely affect the NATO’s choice of leaving Afghanistan, which demonstrates that neither NATO evacuation is possible in near future nor Pakistan would escape its effects.

Hence, literature produced in these two countries must demonstrate the uncertain and vague environment until the flames of this war come to an end. Literature always presents the social scenario of a society. If 9/11 affected international literature all

over the world with reference to topics and priorities, it also has shown different social and political scenario in the literature created in Pakistan. In this connection, poets and writers generally- regardless of their religious, political, linguistics, and geographical likes and dislikes and discrimination, have criticized war, brutality, terrorism, manslaughter and all inhuman attitudes. If they have criticized presence of NATO forces in Afghanistan and Pakistan on one hand, on the other hand they also have severely criticized those who have undermined humanity and human dignity through suicide bombing and other inhuman activities and have destroyed peace and stability of the region.

9/11 has its effects on the literature produced in English, Urdu and other languages of Pakistan, and extremism and havoc has been strongly condemned in these literatures. In Pakistan few fictions and novels depicts this situation, in which *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, *No Space for Further Burials*, and *A case of Exploding Mangos*, can be especially mentioned. In fiction, Asim Butt has worked with special attention.

Similarly, in Urdu fiction, the topic has not been dealt with any worth mentioning attention. However, Mustanser Hussain Tarar has written a novel and few other pieces and poems have been written in Urdu. In poetry, Kishwar Naheed, a renowned poet, has written on the topic with more concentration and attention. However, the topic needs much more deliberation and thoughtfulness. Other local languages, Sindhi, Saraiki, Punjabi, and Balochi have little samples on the topic, as there is no major work in any local language. However, literature in Pashto language has dealt with topic with more seriousness and attention as compared to other languages. The reason behind this dealing in *Pashto* language is obvious that the events are directly related to and effecting *Pashto* literature and society. A glimpse presented with reference to the Pakistani literature depicting the effects of 9/11 and the abundant Pashto literature is elaborated below.

A research paper titled 'Literature in the Times of Terror' presented at the SAARC Writers Conference in March 2009 in

Agra, India, observes that, “Like other art forms and mediums of social expression, literature is also a dynamic, evolving collation of human and social experiences. The very fact that there are Pakistani poets and writers challenging the rising tide of extremism and violence regardless of who the originator of such crises may be – is a welcome shift and a testament to the rich heritage of Pakistan’s literary history and its alive present.”⁸ From this excerpt it is evident that Pakistani literature is strongly condemning terrorism in all forms regardless of their planners and executors and when Pakistanis are experiencing terrorism on their land and people, the situation is depicted in literature.

Pashto Literature and 9/11

An excerpt from another paper presented during first SAARC Writers Conference, Agra, noted that literature in *Pashtun* geography of Afghanistan and Pakistan explored new horizons due to the war. Sabotage of peace and terrorism has become the focal point of Pashto literature:

“Increasingly regional writings are also making powerful statements of rejection, of the culture of violence for instance, *Pashto* literature has undergone several changes since the advent of violence and fundamentalism to the region especially after the Afghan war and the ensuing crisis of nationhood in Afghanistan. Traditional *Pashto* literature has been nationalist and based on glorification of past by invoking traditions and folklore. This new dimension within *Pashto* literature is reflective of the changing nature of *Pashtun* society especially in the context of the NWFP (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and its surrounding regions”.⁹

In Pashto literature there is change of general culture and collective topics and new horizons has been explained. All these changes reflect terrorism, fright and panic and abuse of human life in *Pashtun* regions. Prose and poetry both clearly expose these inhuman phenomena. In fiction the topic has also been treated properly but Tahir Afridi is the most prominent name among other writers. He made this havoc the focal point of most fiction works.

Farooq Sarwar from Quetta, Balochistan, has worked on the topic with more concentration and attention, which has been the fundamental theme of his several fictions and a novel “*Sagwan*”. Not only the topic has been dealt in fiction and novels but in academic research several dissertations have also been written on the topic. In Afghanistan, Muhammad Kamal has written a massive book on the incident of 9/11 and Taliban strategy under the title of “*Narhay da Topaan pa Ogoo*” meaning “the world on typhoon’s shoulders”.

In poetry, the effects of 9/11 have been depicted in poems and *Ghazals*. However, these effects have become the main topic in *Pashto* poetry. Most of the poets from the *Pashtun* region have written poem in this perspective, *Pashto Ghazals* do not have the same intensity and valor. The reason is that in poem direct and continuous discussion can be made with more clarity and explanation regarding a single topic. On the other hand, *Ghazals* demand pun, rhyme and rhythm, simile, metaphor, verbosity and other literary expressions which affect clarity and explanation of any topic in discussion. Furthermore, *Ghazal* is the aesthetic expression of romance and fantasy that is why, a poem is more suitable and appropriate way of expression for social, political and epical problems. Therefore, effects of 9/11 are more vivid in *Pashto* poems than *Ghazals* but some of them do have such glimpses.

The Effects of 9/11 on *Pashto Ghazal*

It has been already elucidated that the tempo of *Ghazal* is such that it is less likely to be used for propaganda. Therefore, effects of 9/11 cannot be found in *Ghazal* genre with more intensity. Even then, a considerable bulk of *Pashto Ghazal* has the effects of 9/11 in its treasure as it is not possible for any literary genre to escape the effects of any unusual mishap. So, it is not possible to enumerate the works of all poets who have ventured their abilities in this regard. However, few samples will be discussed and analyzed for the effects of the most important mishap of this century. The Afghan poets have discussed 9/11 and its effects

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mostly in their poetry but as the trend or inclination of Afghan poets are more toward poem rather than *Ghazal*. Therefore, they have vividly encompassed the event mostly in their poems. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Pakistan) almost every poet has explored the subject to its core not only in poems but also in their *Ghazals*, with the same intensity of emotions and sentiments. This is the reason behind the fact that *Ghazal* genre also has its depictions and portrayal. The selection and rejection principle will be operative over here as well; otherwise the discussion will need a bulky book to be compiled in.

In *Pashto*, mostly the younger generation of poets is more influenced than the older one but the event has its depiction in the work of senior generation of poets. In this connection, the effects of 9/11 may be divided into two parts: in the first part the poets have directly portrayed the situations and events which came into being due to Osama bin Laden, Taliban, and America. The second part has the work and poetry of those poets who have not mentioned the event directly but have analyzed the violation of human rights, havoc, uncertainty, terrorism and human's inhumanity and cruelty. In this respect *Pashto Ghazal* of both younger and older generations will be presented as a sample for analysis.

Saif-ur-Rehman Saleem is one of the top class poets and his work is mostly based on romance but also has the beautiful didactic and modern tone. His last published collection "*Da Waro Waro Khudayano Day Banda Krum*" (Oh God you made me slave of minuscule gods) which has poetry from his previous collection "*Sandryza Shaquna*" which means "musical horizons", has direct reference to Osama and Taliban and the violation of law and order in the region. He says:

*Kashkay chy seema may sumsur kree da spurlee badona
Stha mulgarthya vy bay ghamee vy her khwa aman, amaan
Saleema chup sha gawanday day nakhabara na day
Sanga nasal sho osama, cha zaygawul Taliban*¹⁰

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(Alas! My country, my homeland could welcome colors, flowers and serene breeze of spring, and we could enjoy friendship and company of each other without any worries and peace and serenity could prevail throughout the country. O! Saleem be quite your neighbours is not ignorant about the arrival of Osama and the coming of the Taliban into being)

Saleem has portrayed this anarchy in the society, inhumanity barbarism, ignorance, and dishevel in a number of couplets in his *Ghazals*. Few are presented for reference:

*Her wagaray che da qam may wazjal ke gee
Matha dasay drd ra rasee luka zh mrum¹¹*

(I feel the death of my every countryman as my own death)

*Da say kali k may khulqa bood ao bash day
Che tharikh ye khun alood ao dilkharash day
Keh ghazi day keh aalem zama da khawray
Pa aalam k ye shanakht da badmash day
Da jahan da istamar laas k lubaygee
Hr bacha zama da mulk bacha da tash day¹²*

(I am living in a region which has blood stained history. Scholars and heroes of my land are known as vagabonds in the world. The king of my country is puppet in the hands of others and he is literary king of cards, nothing more)

Ali Akber Sayal is also an important name in the literary world. He is renowned for his literary contribution with reference to Afghan war and especially to 9/11. His poetry is mostly advocating love for peace and reproaching war on terrorism. Many collections of Sayal have been published and none of the collections is free from such reflections. Before September 2001, he has portrayed the chaos in the region and after 9/11 he enumerated the effects of this incident in his collection.

The names of his collections are very much relevant to the topics, for instance, “Pa Jang Day Aor Olagee” (the war should be

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set ablazed) in October 2000, “Da Perharoona Gundal Ghwaree” (these wounds need to be stitched)- these miseries need medication and cure- in September 2005, “Okhki Okhki Muskitub” (tears torn smile) in 2008 and the last of these collection which is important with reference to 9/11 is “Zamung Pa Kali k Fasad Ma Joravaye” (Do not create war in our country) in 2009. In this collection the writer reinforced that the war and disturbance should not be created in his homeland which is also a part of global village. In all his work he expresses his thoughts in his poetry, but a lot of his *Ghazals* also have these effects. Some selected couplets from Sayal’s *Ghazals* are presented to portray the chaos as a result of war and terror and the intense wish for peace and order in the region. In the last collection Sayal says in a *Ghazal* that:

*Hagha pa Khpul watan k na kave da jang wazoona
Hagha zama kor tha rowaray da zilat tasawar*¹³

*(He does not advocate war in his own country but he brought
this disgraceful [inception] into my country)*

*Cha che da khuday sana kawala
Nun hagha khaluq da saronu karobar kave*¹⁴

*(People who used to praise God on beads are now having
business of human lives (heads).*

*Sar slamat da hr insan ghwarum
Aman da zan aw da jehan khwarum*¹⁵

*(I want life for every person. I want peace for the whole world
and myself)*

*Da jang lambo tha lamun na wahuma
Sayal da kar da peerangee na kawum*¹⁶

*(I do not aerate (air) the fire of war as I do not want to become a
helping hand of foreigners)*

*Zama da kali da watan khaluq ye tol wkhwarul
Sayala keh wraka da bala she nor sana ghwaruma*¹⁷

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(Sayala I will wish for nothing if only this serpent leaves my country as it has bitten (poisoned) the whole population of my village and country)

*Za da tolay dunya aman ao sakun yem
Khudaya za da cha lewanay karay nun parun yem*¹⁸

(I am the peace and serenity of the world; I do not know, oh my Lord, who made me the fanatic now)

I will rely on the preface to the said collection written by Khaliq Zayar, while discussing this kind of poetry of Sayal. He says that the basic subject of this collection is present day chaos and terror. He wants to reveal the priorities of international powers, what and for whom these religious parties and militant/religious organizations are fighting. Sayal also wants to tell what the *Pashtun* should do as a nation in such a situation.¹⁹

Durwaish Durrani, a poet from Quetta, also raises his poetic voice against war and terror and especially intensifies his subject after the incident of 9/11. He is renowned for his poems but he also concentrates on the subject in his *Ghazals*. He implores the ignorance and helplessness of his homeland and nation. In a *Ghazal*, written on October 4, 2001, he says in a symbolic tone:

*Jang Tha Ye Asthawe Zwanan Ter Speen Quran Wobasay
La Dagha Nayka Karat Ha Muqr Khupl Zan Wobasay
Jang Che Gotow No Ma Ao Wroor Tha Sara Wojangaway
Dukhmun Pa Roogha Kukaree Zamung Drmiyan Wobasay
La Hera Khwa Razee Zakhmoona Ao Durwaish Wayee Da
Khudaya La Day Watana Tha Da Sra Marghan Wobasay*²⁰

(When you motivate others, mostly youngsters, you give them oath for their loyalty but you corner and spare you yourself in this good cause. When we are about to win the war you create a clash, a tussle between me and my brother and the rival escapes unharmed. News of miseries and wounds are showered and Durwish is praying to God to evacuate these red birds from my country)

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Muqtader Shah Muqtader, a renowned poet of Pashto from Khyber Agency, has mentioned problems after the incident of 9/11 with valor and concentration. His unpublished collection “*Da Gulono Pandayray*” (stockpile of flowers) has simple and clear references to this incident. He feels pangs of war in Kabul and Peshawar simultaneously. He uses expressions as upper and lower or high and low for Kabul and Peshawar and considers people of both regions as brothers. In his poetry, the miseries of both regions have been expressed in following words:

*Aghyaro Bul Kra Her Taraf Tha Da Husad Aoroona
Pakay Yo Wroor May Kuz Lamba Sho Bel May Bur Lamba Sho*²¹

*(Enemies have set fire of jealousy and malice which burns my
brother of lower and upper regions)*

In “Peace in Kabul for some time” he says:
*Da Barodo Aor Keh So La Amana Sorh Day
Khu La Aos Hum La Kabul Na Lugee Khejee*²²

*(Though Kabul is in peace but the air is stinky with previous fire
and fight)*

Shabab Ranrayzay is a renowned poet from Swat, the most war torn territory of *Pashtun*, as a result of 9/11 incident. He presents this picture in the following way:

*Rang Day Pa Sro Veenno Pakay Bue Hum Da Vreeto Ghwakhho
Rasha Da Maglum Watan Her Khar Pa Lambo Waswazeed*²³

*(Come and behold, the victimized city is ablaze. It is colored with
blood and scented with sauté meat)*

*Dad A Barudo Hawganay La Kum Lora Razee
Che Ye Lambay Zama Da Gul Janan Thar Kora Razee
Yum Pakhtoon Pa Ma Bul Sok Balosay Kawolay Na Shee
Ma La Zama Da Qatal Bue Zama Da Wroora Razee*²⁴

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(Where is this characteristic smell of ammunition coming from; the flames of which are reaching to my beloved home: Pashtun – I am and none can invade me. The smell of my spilled blood is coming from my own brother's hand)

Shabab has also written an elegy on Peshawar- the late. Few couplets from two of his *Ghazals* are mentioned for reference:

*Da Khpul Arman Da Pekhwar Na Ache Palow Akhluma
Laka Da Veenoo Da Manzer Na Ache Palow Akhluma
Pa Dy Gunah Zama Qatel Da Murg Na Teer Dy
Da Khuplay Khowray Dady Shur Na Che Palow Akhluma
Dee Da Zulmono Qaseeday Ye Pa Seeno Leekelay
Da Kum Chinar Da Kum Nakhtar Na Che Palow Akhluma
Sthergo Keh Aokhkay Ghrew Newalee Asvelee Pa Shondo
Da Pakhtun Kwa Da Mazeegar Na Che Palow Akhluma*²⁵

(Unveiling my beloved Peshawar is like unveiling bloody scenes each time.

For the crime of mine, unveiling the brutality of enemy, my killer is strongly resolute for my slaughter. Each and every herb and shrub and tree tells the same story of cruelty of Pakhtunkhwa. Whenever I behold the evening of Peshawar my eyes fill with tears and lips zipped with unuttered sigh and groaning.)

Shabab named Peshawar as “City of Flowers” but when this city of flowers is bombed with fire then he says:

*Da Dy Guloono Pa Khar Cha Skrwatay Aonustay
Pa Her Qadum Dy Zaragany Rala Zra Waranvee
Nor Da Her S Biya Asman Sara Khabray Kavee
Dulta Keh Da Veenay Arzanee Rala Zra Wranavee
Cha Da Nazra Da Dy Khawray Kray Khista Nazaray
Lambay Lambay Dee Vershoganay Rala Zra Wranavee*²⁶

(Who has showered this city of flowers with fire and iron; and the crying people and their screaming rip my heart into pieces. Everything is precious and valuable due to inflation but cheapness of blood is in this city rips my heart into pieces. Who

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has marred the beautiful sceneries of the region? the burning meadows rip my heart into pieces)

Rehmat Ullah Durd, a romantic *Ghazal* poet of Pakhtunkhwa, also cannot escape the effects of 9/11. He has penned these effects in his *Ghazal*. A selection from these *Ghazals* is mentioned here:

*Laray Kosay Dee Keh Godar Logay Dy
Her Sah Na Taoo Laka Sadar Logay Dy
Da Dy Zama Ter Kora Ra Aowrasady
Zah Mutamin Wom Che Baher Logay Dy
Kabul, Kashmir Keh Palestine Dy Durda
Num Da Mushriq Her Yo Manzer Logay Dy*²⁷

(Everything of my country is veiled with the cruelty and brutality of invaders. Every road, street and quay (for drawing water) is filled with clouds of smoke. Behold! My own home also has got ablaze and I was contented that no one will hurt a harmless person like me. O Durd! Whether it is Kabul, Kashmir or Palestine every scene of the East is covered with smoke)

Pashtun poets residing in Karachi like Riaz Tasneem, Qaiser Afridi and Tahir Bunaray have also unveiled this tragedy in their *Ghazals* in a symbolic manner. Riaz Tasneem says in his *Ghazal*:

*Da Khpul Markaz Da Khpul Wajood Na Gorayzan Dee Khaluq
Da Cha Janda Ye Lass Keh, Cha Passay Rawan Dee Khaluq
Da Zandagay Mana Da Khpulo Maro Shmair Pathay Dy
Aos Pa Thalash Da Kum Khahish, Da Kum Arman Dee Khaluq
Da Khudkushay Pa Lazathono Dy Mara Krl Dumra
Che Aos Kanray Dee, Hum Randa Dee, Hum Gungayan Dee Khaluq*²⁸

(The people of this region are fed up and disparate with their own self and centre They do not know that who is their leader and whose banner they are carrying The only meaning of their lives is the counting of their martyrs. Now what ambition and wish they have for their struggle and labour)

Qaiser Afridi narrates the outcomes of 9/11 in his last collection in the following manner:

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*Dasy Kosay Dasy Watan Day Zama
Da Her Dywal Suray Dukhmum Dy Zama
Pa Jung Keh Sok Da Cha Pa Zad Walar Dy
Tupuk Zama Dy Hum Badun Dy Zama
Stha Da Barodo Aor May Zra The Thyr Sho
Da Che Awaz Dumra Taaojun Dy Zama*²⁹

(My country is such that shadow of every wall of its streets is my enemy. Who are fighting against whom? The gun is mine and I am the target. The fire of your arms has reached the core of my heart. That is why my language is ferocious)

Few couplets from the work of Tahir Buniri are presented here which give a glimpse of terrorism torn *Pashtun* nation and land:

*Malgaro Ma Jaray Kabul Pa Jara Na Joraygee
Kabul Aram Tha Warisan Da Payghamber Na Preygdee*³⁰
*Dad Y Olas Da Byhasay Eilaj Nor Sah Kayday She
Kho Pa Dy Khawary Hum Bamonah Gharzol Pathy Dee*³¹
*Zah Che Bayhisa Shem Baghee Shuem Barod Jorawum
Che Sokhanwr Shema Naghma Gr Shem No Ghazal Aolikum*³²

(O my friends do not cry. The wounds and injuries of Kabul cannot be cured and healed by tears; and the followers and successors of the Prophet do not let Kabul calm and cool. What would be the treatment of the nations for its callousness but bombing is the only medication of such nation. When I become callous I turn into rebel and invent ammunition and instrument of destruction but when I become esthetic I turn into a poet and write Ghazals)

In the aforementioned couplets of Tahir Buniri, the inventors and users of bombs have been mentioned as rebels and satirically termed as successors of the Prophet i.e. fake religious fighters. A slight indication has also been made to the religious minded people. He mentions it as the main reason of turmoil in Kabul.

Similarly, the *Ghazals* of young poet Javed Ihsas from Bannu also have the same remorse for the effects of 9/11 in a symbolic manner. A selection from his *Ghazal* is mentioned here:

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*Na Da Malooma Shwa Ihsasa Che Cha Wowjulum
Na Da Malooma Shwa Che Cha May Khunbaha Waghista*³³
*Pa Durdnak Door K Bad Hal Sra Mukh Shway Yuma
Zah D Durduno, Da Zawal Sra Mukh Shway Yuma*³⁴
*Dy La Janat Wistalee Insane Tha Kho Ghyrat Pakar Wa
Pa Dagha Zamka Kho Pa Her Surat Janat Pakar Wa*³⁵

(O Ihsas! Neither it is known that who has not killed me nor it is known that who has taken the price of my death. I am facing the worst situation in the most painful time of my life. Helplessness, hopelessness and degradation are all around me. This paradise lost on Adam (human) must have to show some honor and dignity and this earth must need to have a paradise in any situation)

It means that once we have lost our paradise and got a chance on earth, then we must have attempted for a paradise on earth that this earth must have sown a picture of paradise. It must have peace and harmony.

Dawood Bakht Mandokhel and Rahmat Zalmay from Zob Balochistan, present the bloodstained scene of *Pashtun* region after the 9/11 incidents. They even consider it as the catalyst for their poetical work. Dawood Bakht says:

*Che khwar may luot, boda may mrh see da islam pa nama
Che gul tatubay may barbad see nu ashar wolikum
Che da gulono aw baghono khiasta watan kay
Pa hadera banday aabad see nu ashar wolikum
Che da laspo sr taraliyo napohano po khula
Zamong po khaowra jor jihad see nu ashar wolikum*³⁶

(When poor is robbed and aged is killed of my country, I write poetry! when my beautiful country like lovers and gardens turned to graveyard I write poetry! when jihad (religious war) starts in my country on the declaration of ignorant mullahs (priest) I wrote poetry!)

Rahmat Zalmay Mandokhel is another young poet. His poetry has a religious tow. He considers America and western powers

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responsible for the incident of 9/11 and its aftermaths, the chaos and uncertainty. He unveils the situation after the incident with the same religious temper and says that he writes poetry when the cruelty and torture become unbearable.

*Che pa naray da zulim shpa she no ghazal wolikum
Che d zulmat tiyarah khwara she no ghazal wolikum
Che ferangiyan yey wlmun ta aorlgat wahe
Che da Kabul jama iyra she no ghazal wolikum*³⁷

*(When world is engulfed in the night of cruelty then I write poetry!
when the darkness of cruelty spreads then I write poetry!
when the westerns air the flame's fire and ablaze the beauty of Kabul then I write poetry!)*

Similarly, Bakt Ser Aseer, from Swabi, also forms the incident of 9/11 as the main subject of his poetry. He presents the awful picture of the destruction prevailing in Kabul, Qandahar and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. On one hand he considers America and western powers responsible and on the other hand he considers his own people -who are selfish and conscienceless- to be responsible for this destruction. Examples from Bakht Sher Aseer's poetry:

*Da zra Kabul may da aghyar pa Rakatuno lagi
Tareekhi kar tha may nun aor pa sazigoonu lagi.*³⁸

(My sweet home Kabul is on the target of rockets. Today my historical house is on fire due to conspirators)

*Biya da zra na may jor khar d Qandhar day
Da bamono shpa ao warzay pray bombar day*³⁹

(My heart and Qandahar city resembles each other again pining with bombers day and night)

*Jang praday vee, hagma mong pa sar wakhlo
Zamong tol omer jangono sara jund day*⁴⁰

(We fight wars of other our life and we are perpetually in state of war. Each and every person is for sale whether rulers or

Tigah

ruled. Due to which sensitive and pure hearts are sighing and moaning in this senseless society)

Ameer Sadiq Jalbi Wal, from Swabi, is a folk poet. When he recites poetry, the picture of terror and horror comes forward in front of his eyes.

*Logi logi dee pa her zaiay keh mathumona jor dee
Mulk tabah kigee ghar ghanday dee afatona jor dee.*⁴¹

(Black smoke has veiled the whole country. The whole country is on fire and atmosphere is filled with mourning. Problems and tribulation have destroyed the country)

*Da khar kosu keh khamoshee da sah maza neeshta dey.
Kum khwa tha larh sho pa her zaiay keh srah aroona jor dee.*⁴²

(The streets are hushed. The peace of the city has been violated. Where one might tread as the whole country is ablaze)

*Biya ratha kharee che pa khar keh damaka shaway da
Pa cha khasaygee, cha da para da bamona jor dee.*⁴³

(Perhaps city has suffered another bomb blast. For whom these bombs have been invited and who are on their target)

In one of his verses, he writes:

*Malgaro veekh shay dehshatgaroo Pakistan tabah kro
Zamong pa veeno abad shaway gulistan tabah kro*⁴⁴

(Friends get up! Terrorists have destroyed Pakistan; the garden grew out of our blood)

Sultan Muhammad Sultan is another poet from Peshawar, who holds America responsible for all these cruelties and brutalities and feels that Osama Bin Laden, Mullah Omer and President Saddam Hussein were the victims of all these brutalities. He says:

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*Tur kuma ba kavee d zaliman pa mong zulmona
Warzoo che warta keeno kkeh safa khabray wakro
Halat da mazlumano che khara kro dy dunya tha
Saddam, Mullah Omer da Osama khabray wakro*⁴⁵

*(Till when these merciless and cruel people will victimize us?
Let's talk to them as spade for spade. Let the world visualize the
situation of victimized people and let inform the world about the
situation of Saddam, Mullah Omer and Osama Bin Laden)*

Sultan Muhammad Sultan declares the US as Muslims' enemy
and is highly vocal about it:

*Shwa rapurtha sum da warah America
Muslmana stha la para America
Da iyman jazba pa kpala dr keh nastha
Day keh na da gunahgara America
Itefaq ao itehad zan keh payda krayee
Nora pregda da murdara America
Da naray muslmanano nora pregdyee
Bad masha, bad kerdara America
Che bachay da pukhtano pasay rajug shuwal
Keh Khday kandee she ba khwara America*⁴⁶

*(O Muslims, America suddenly gets up for your destruction.
America is not much responsible for your devastation and
demolition as you have no religious valor and heroism. Create
and build up unity and solidarity among yourself and get rid of
this vicious America. O Muslims of the world! Please get rid of
this wicked America. As the young generation of Muslims world
has risen against America and if Allah Almighty wishes America
will be degraded and humiliated)*

A detailed account of poets and poetry written under the
influence of and in reaction to the 9/11 incident is protracted. So a
short account of such poetry of certain poets, from Afghanistan,
may be mentioned here to shorten the discussion.

Poets from Afghanistan

Peer Muhammad Karwan is prominent among Afghanistan poets with reference to the incident of 9/11. Before 9/11, Karwan illustrated the picture of Afghan war and after 9/11 too, he presented the story of war destruction both in poem and *Ghazals*. Thus, he basically creates poetry on destruction of Afghan people and their land's geography to demonstrate and register his reaction.

Peer Muhammad Karwan is a poet of high standard and quality both in poems and *Ghazals*. Basically, portrayal of the effects of Afghan war is his main concern. In the artistic meter of *ghazal* he mourns the bullets that hit towering mountains, villages and streets while saying:

*Marghan day rashe zamong laso keh di jalay wokree
Ghrah mo nakhtar na laree kalay mo chinar na laree.*⁴⁷

*(Oh beautiful birds come and nest in our hand as the mountains
and villages both have lost beautiful and towering trees)*

The US inflicted the responsibility of the 9/11 incident on Osama bin Laden and many who resembled the latter faced the former's retaliation. Peer Muhammad Karwan reacted to the incident and presented the incident in a *ghazal* as:

*Amerikay byga yo dang saray wazlay
Dy zalimay you malang saray wazaly*⁴⁸

*(Yesterday night America has killed a tall man. This cruel state
has killed a mystic person)*

Peer Muhammad Karwan and a number of Afghan poets have depicted these effects in their poetry with utmost intensity. Especially Ajmal Annd, Noora Jan Baheer, Andikmun Zazay, Roaid Himat, Said Jillani Jilan, Lal Bacha Azmun, Majeed Ulla Qarar, Izat Ullah Shamray, Gul Sahar among males and Perveen Malal among females are most prominent. Description from all

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these poets' work to demonstrate the effects of 9/11 is an extremely laborious task. Therefore, works by only two poets namely Ajmal Annd and Roaid Himat are mentioned for demonstration and explanation. Few couplets from the selected poetry of Ajmal Annd are:

*Da bomb wahalee tankee wror work mrwandona goree
Latawee sthoro tha yo sok laiy yoaiy sanday ghondvee*⁴⁹
*Da veeno pa watan keh laiy salgo sywa sah dee
Devay kho may da aokhko rawra salay to soghat keh*⁵⁰
*Khudaya da day toro tupako gharay zr wochey kre
Che mo da chum pa mazigar wkro da gulono baran*⁵¹

(A person is looking the hills for the lost parts of young brother withered in a bomb blast. What else one can find in this bloody region except sighs. So please my beloved bring a light of glittering tear of your eye to my tomb. O God! Please unload these blackened guns for ever so that we can shower flower on our village)

Roaid Himat also presents the same picture in the following couplets:

*Da chum pa jomatono mo bala tughundee raghlah
Imam pakay shahee sho ao member pa veeno rang sho.*⁵²
*Hadeeray dakay pa zwanano sholay
Dlitha da murg bus tajrobay dee raba*⁵³
*Ta may joor watan kandar kandar kro
Ta kho za pa rogh zra bemar krma*⁵⁴

(A number of rockets have been fired on the mosques of our village. The Imam (priest) of the mosque has been martyred and his preaching seat is stained with blood. The graveyard has been filled with the dead bodies of our youth as if this place is a laboratory for death experiments. You made a wasteland of my beautiful motherland and my healthy heart is aching with this brutality of yours)

Conclusion

The poetic excerpts by different poets depict a horrifying picture of massacre, terrorism, brutality, barbarism, ignorance horror and cruelty in Afghanistan and Pakistani *Pashtun* regions. This wave of horror and terror is now engulfing the region beyond these countries.

What are the reasons behind this scene of fear, brutality and cruelty? What are the objectives of promoters of this horror and terror? What are their aims? And who is behind all these things? It is a political problem and till now no clear cut solution to this burning issue has been propagated. However, the intellectual and literary circles have seriously condemned and rejected this inhuman and barbaric situation.

In this paper, attitude and opinion of different poets during and after the 9/11 incident have been evaluated from the perspective of *Pashto* literature and especially the *Pashto Ghazals*. Examples have been illustrated from the poetry of the poets of the war torn regions. It has been made abundantly clear that the poets from the affected areas have been exposed to the world after the incident of 9/11 to unearth the horrifying results and effects. The selected poetic works exemplify the situation at the macro level.

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