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An Apology for Persian Ghazal as a Verse Form: A Study of Selected Ghazals of Agha Shahid Ali's "Call Me Ismael Tonight"

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Abstract

This paper examines the basic elements that make up Agha Shahid Ali's "authentic" ghazal form. It examines three ghazals from Ali's collection, Call Me Ishmael Tonight: A Book of Ghazals (2003), showing how he had found a way to make a unique contribution to contemporary American poetry. His literary achievement as a poet firmly rests on introducing the Persian ghazal form to the English speaking world. Ali's handling of "the Persian model" as "the real thing" or the "authentic" ghazal has earned him a reputation as one of the most ambitious contemporary poets who sought to make an uncommon traditional verse form accessible to a wide audience. Formally as well as thematically, Ali has been able to find himself a firm stance in English poetry.

Introduction

Agha Shahid Ali (1949-2001) is an Indian-Kashmiri Muslim poet writing in English. Spending most of his adult life in America, Ali has become "one of new American multicultural poets"(King 2), one who has grown up in three different cultures–Hindu, Muslim, and Western. In an interview with Benvenuto, Ali admits that "there were three languages, Urdu, Kashmiri and English, spoken at home all the time" (262). According to Neerja Mattoo, Ali was able to capture "the multi-cultural richness we knew as 'Kashmiriyat'" (176). This richness and variety shine through all of his poetic works, particularly those published in the United States. His first book of poetry, The Half-Inch Himalayas, was published in 1987. Over the next few years, Ali published five more volumes of poetry: A Walk Through the Yellow Pages (1987), A Nostalgist's Map of America (1991), The Country Without a Post Office (1997), Rooms Are Never Finished (2001), and Call Me Ishmael Tonight: A Book of Ghazals (2003). With these collections, Ali earned a reputation as a poet who got used to exploring unfamiliar regions.

Ali has been widely appreciated in literary circles for renewing interest in the Persian ghazal form and presenting it to those who are unfamiliar with it. His eagerness to explore and explain the Persian ghazal form stems from a deep conviction that contemporary American poets—such as James Harrison and Adrienne Rich—who have tried their hands at what they call "free verse ghazals" have thoroughly misunderstood the ghazal tradition. In an interview with Benvenuto, Ali argues that what those American poets wrote "are not ghazals, they simply aren't" because "the ghazal has a very strict formal unity, with a certain cultural location" (264). Finally, Ali describes American unfamiliarity with the ghazal tradition as both frustrating and insulting "to a very significant element of my culture" (Ali, Rebel's Silhouette, xiii).

What Ali calls "the real thing" or the "authentic" ghazal (Ravishing Disunities 2) is his most valuable literary contribution to modern American poetry, a contribution that places Persian ghazal form at the center of a vibrant and far-reaching literary movement. Thanks to Ali, the ghazal "has recently become a popular verse form in English" (Mikics 134). He "gave the English-speaking world an enormous gift—he popularized the ancient ghazal form in our language" (Mitchell 181). Considered the best of those committed to addressing the classical conventions of the ghazal, Ali received several awards for his work. In 1982 and 1983, he received Breadloaf Writers' Conference scholarship. Subsequently he received Academy of American Poets' prize, and he was named a fellow of New York Foundation for the Arts in 1993. In 2001 he received a Pushcart Prize. Moreover, his collection of poetry, Rooms Are Never Finished, was National Book Award finalist in 2001. Overall, "these awards are testament

to Ali's tremendous contribution to poetry through his successful blending of both Western and Eastern influences in his life and in his writing" (Forssander-Song 129).

The present paper examines the basic elements that make up Ali's "authentic" ghazal form. It studies three ghazals from Ali's collection, Call Me Ishmael Tonight: A Book of Ghazals (2003), with a view to demonstrating how Ali turns to "the Persian model," which a true ghazal poet should follow for inspiration. Ali's exposure to the Persian and Urdu cultures, especially in his formative years, seems to have led him to admire then favor the Persian model of the ghazal, a model espoused by the fourteenth-century Persian poet Hafiz (1318-1390), the great nineteenth-century Urdu poet Mirza Ghalib (1797-1869), and the Urdu poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz (1911-1984).

Ghazal: Definition and Historical Background

In a number of informative essays, Ali discusses the distinguishing characteristics and requirements of the Persian ghazal, making this ghazal clear to a worldwide readership. The ghazal is a poetic form that derives its name from the Arabic word "ghazal," whose meaning, according to Ali, is "whispering words of love" (Rebel's Silhouette ix). In the introduction to Ravishing Disunities, Ali assumes that the denotation of the word "ghazal" is originally "the cry of the gazelle when it is cornered in a hunt and knows it will die" (3). Hence, the ghazal is a cry of pain at a terrible slaughter. Ali makes it clear that "the ghazal is not an occasion for angst; it is an occasion for genuine grief" (Ravishing 13). Hence, the most sustained mood of the ghazal is melancholy and inchoate longing, leading to sadness over deprivation or separation from the beloved. As Cuddon states, "the love described is hopeless, hence some of the stock characters in the ghazal were the wretched lover (ashiq), the merciless beloved (mashuq), the lover's lustful rival (raqib), and the cup-bearer at the wine party (saqi)" (301).

On the formal level, the Persian ghazal is made up of a series of "autonomous" couplets, each of which expressing a complete thought; "one couplet may be comic, another tragic, another romantic, another religious, another political." In other words, each couplet could be a self-contained unit in its own right "without…violating a context" (Ali, Ravishing 2). Indeed, Ali likens the "autonomous" couplet to a string that holds the beads of a necklace together; the couplet stands alone like a precious stone, lustrous in its own right. Thus, "one should at any time be able to pluck a couplet like a stone from a necklace, and it should continue to shine in its vivid isolation, though it would have a different lustre among and with the other stones" (Ravishing 2-3).

Within the confines of the formal structure of the Persian ghazal, "no two couplets have to be related to each other in any way whatever except formally….The only link is in terms of prosodic structure and rhymes" (Ahmad xvi). Therefore, the rhyme scheme and the meter are the common

formal devices that create a sense of unity in the ghazal and make it a distinct form. As el-Shabrawy observes, "meter, which is generally consistent throughout the entire poem, and the rhyme scheme serve as structural unifiers of seemingly disparate images or thought patterns" (59). In the Introduction to The Veiled Suite, Ali outlines the ghazal conventions as follows:

> …it is composed of autonomous or semi-autonomous couplets that are united by a strict scheme of rhyme, refrain, and line length. The opening couplet sets up the scheme by having it in both lines, and then the scheme occurs only in the second line of every succeeding couplet—i.e., the first line (same length) of every succeeding couplet sets up a suspense, and the second line (same length but with the rhyme and refrain—the rhyme immediately preceding the refrain) delivers on that suspense by amplifying, dramatizing, imploding, exploding. (325)

Thus, one structural principle of the ghazal is that its rhyme (qafia) and refrain (radif) are established in the first couplet (matla) and subsequently repeated in the second line of each following couplet: a refrain or radif. Notably, the refrain (radif) is immediately preceded by the rhyme or qafia. It actually does seem that the use of a refrain-like rhyme or radif is one of the formal elements in Persian ghazal.

Indeed, it was through formal features (especially couplet form, rhyme scheme and meter) that the Persian ghazal finds its most effective expression. Another distinctive feature of the Persian ghazal is the use of the Sufi symbolism, which becomes a vehicle for exploring divine reality and love, be it human or divine. The Sufi symbols most commonly used are:

> zulf (tress), referring to the revealed omnipotent attributes of God; sharab (wine), representing ecstatic experience at the revelation of the beloved, destroying the foundations of reason; and saqi (wine- or cup-bearer), which stands for Reality as manifesting itself through all its revealed forms. (Cuddon 301)

A final distinguishing feature of the Persian ghazal is that it directs attention to the poet's pen name or 'takhallus' in the last couplet.

Call Me Ishmael Tonight:

Composed entirely of ghazals, Call Me Ishmael Tonight: A Book of Ghazals (2004) is Ali's favorite volume of poetry. It is also his most important work because it both spells out Ali's conception of ghazal and resumes his project of rejuvenating the ghazal form by writing his "authentic" ghazals in English. Indeed, Call Me Ishmael Tonight marks the poet's most fruitful experiment with the ghazal form. Moreover, Ali's book

emphasizes the gap, or even chasm, separating the improper, second-rate ghazal-like free-verse created by American poets from his own "real", first-rate ghazal. The form of the free-verse ghazal is indeed disconcertingly loose, bearing almost no relationship to the true ghazal form. Singh bitterly attacks American poets for introducing deeply flawed ghazals to Western readers; these poets "have used a string of couplets in vers libre…unrelated in content, as their criteria for a ghazal. To me, this is like calling a fourteen line poem a sonnet" (qtd. in Sewell 109).

As is often the case with Ali's ghazal, Call Me Ishmael Tonight contains several allusions to individuals who are separated from each other. In this collection, Ali engineers every ghazal according to the ghazal's basic rules, observing the Persian ghazal model. He creates ghazals that are probably "the finest examples of how the rhyme-scheme and refrain can provide a fluid container for divergent ideas, emotions and themes that point toward an unarticulated central idea" (Sewell 109). One popular ghazal in which the poet goes his own way is the almost flawless "By Exiles," a ghazal that first appears in Rooms Are Never Finished as "Ghazal." Entitled "By Exiles" in Call Me Ishmael, this ghazal is admittedly dedicated to Palestinian theorist Edward Said and is appropriately prefixed by an epigraph from the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish. The epigraph reads:

> Where should we go after the last frontiers,
> where should the birds fly after the last sky?

The Content of "By Exiles":

A traditional Persian ghazal uses love as its main theme. As Aijaz Ahmad explains:

> This is a poetry…of love—not about love but of love. Love is the great, over-arching metaphor because love is conceived as the basic human relation and all life is lived in terms of this relation. (xxiii-xxiv)

"By Exiles," though, gives nothing of the sort. It focuses instead on exile, estrangement and the sense of loss, common contemporary themes with which English readers can more readily identify. So, this ghazal is the only response fitting for the contemporary human condition. Wherever he goes, the persona of "By Exiles" finds himself completely exiled. His exile spreads throughout the "Earth" to "unborn galaxies" (The Veiled Suite 297). The further he moves beyond his native town Kashmir, the more he realizes that human beings are all exiles or hostages held at various places, whether these places are "Jerusalem," "the Hudson," "Egypt," or "Kashmir."

> In Jerusalem a dead phone's dialed by exiles.
> You learn your strange fate: you were exiled by exiles.
> (The Veiled Suite 297)

Ironically enough, the Palestinians were forced into exile by the Israelis, who themselves used to live in exile. Thus, Palestine is a testament to the universality of exile.

Practically, the persona identifies with the kinds of people who experience that feeling of dislocation, exile, and loss—people such as Mansoor, Bach, Oscar Wilde, Majnoon, and Saqi. Ali is, as a matter of fact, a poet well aware of the trauma of separation and loss. The details and the logic of the world that he represents in this ghazal are significant because they demonstrate the culture of his people and that of their surroundings. From a historical perspective, Ali alludes to the victims of and sufferers from exile. Such a perspective tends to remove "By Exiles" from the realm of a narrow, private reference toward a public human experience. In this way, the story of Mansoor al-Hallaj—"the great Muslim mystic martyr who was crucified in Bagdad for saying 'I am the Truth'" (The Veiled Suite 297)—and that of Majnoon Laila are just strands consciously interwoven to create a true picture of the essence of exile, a picture that is characteristic of contemporary human life.

Although there is no hope for a better place beyond exile, the poet gives us a glimpse of hope for a better future. Within the community of exiles that Ali speaks of, there is a tendency toward forgiveness and tolerance.

> If my enemy's alone and his arms are empty,
> give him my heart silk-wrapped like a child by exiles.
> Will you, Belovèd Stranger, ever witness Shahid—
> two destinies at last reconciled by exiles?

In conformity to the ghazal conventions, the poet incorporates his name "Shahid" into the final couplet (maqta), presenting himself as a witness to "two destinies at last reconciled." This literally suggests that the inevitable clash of cultures might finally be reconciled. A figurative reading, however, may suggest a juxtaposition or reconciliation of the literary forms of English poetry and the Persian ghazal form.

The Form of "By Exiles":

The structure of "By Exiles" shows the controlling hand of a talented poet who creates a true ghazal that is historical in form and modern in subject matter. Written to resemble the Persian, highly-structured form of the ghazal, "By Exiles" is constructed of twelve rhyming autonomous couplets. In the first couplet (matla), the end words "by exiles" of the first line are repeated in the second line. Throughout this entire ghazal, Ali repeats the words "by exiles" in the second line of each couplet to create a type of refrain (radif). Furthermore, all the words preceding "by exiles" (namely, the monosyllables "filed," "wild," "child," "mild," "Wilde" and "styled," and the ultimate syllable in "exiled" "compiled," "beguiled," "defiled" and "reconciled") in the subsequent couplets rhyme with each other, thus forming the rhyme scheme or the qafia of the ghazal, which goes aa ba ca da ea fa, and so on. Furthermore, the qafia is rhymed with the radif "by exiles," a poetic device that gives Ali's ghazal its special musicality.

Although the poet establishes the ghazal's rhyme (qafia) and refrain (radif) in the first couplet, he repeats them—following the Persian pattern—in the second line of each subsequent couplet. The second and third couplets illustrate this feature:

One opens the heart to list unborn galaxies.
Don't shut that folder when Earth is filed by exiles.
Before Night passes over the wheat of Egypt,
Let stones be leavened, the bread torn wild by exiles.

In fact, the structured repetition of refrains in this ghazal echoes the repetitive nature of continuous or permanent exile. The repetition of "by exiles," according to Sewell, "returns each verse to the same bleak phrase, pointing toward the difficulty of altering the outsider status and loss associated with exile" (110).

The meter of "By Exiles" complements the image created by the rhyme and the refrain. In "By Exiles," Ali proves to be one of the finest ghazal poets who use traditional meter. This twenty-four-line ghazal consists of normative iambic pentameter lines. We can generally assume that just as Ali has renewed interest in the ghazal form, which has actually grown obsolete, so has he amazingly revived the traditional iambic pentameter, a form that "had shaped British poetry for centuries" (Herd 39), though it is seen today by many poets as "dead" or "reactionary" (Easthope 76). This does not mean, however, that Ali is the only contemporary poet to renew appreciation for the iambic meter; many twentieth-century poets like T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats, Robert Frost, Robert Lowell and Wallace Stevens sought to utilize the iambic meter, constituting "an impressive and relatively unnoticed achievement in an age of free verse" (Wright 18).

In addition to the straightforward rhyme scheme that strongly links the couplets, the metrical pattern makes the ghazal rhythmically regular and highly musical. Obviously, the iambic pentameter lines of "By Exiles" incorporate instances of standard variations to the norm, variations that help the ear avoid the sense of sameness or monotony. In the first place, this 24-line, twelve-couplet ghazal produces 120 feet, 89 (74%) out of which are iambic ones. For metrical requirement, 12 of these feet incorporate demotion from stress to slack (lines 1, 3, 6, 9, 11, 13, 16, 17, 20 and 22), 4 involve promotion from slack to stress (lines 1, 9, 15 and 21), and 5 contain compression of two into one syllable (lines 6, 9,11 and 15). These cases of demotion, promotion and compression are treated in English poetry as standard variations in the iambic line. In the second place, these lines include only 17 (14%) trochaic feet, the main standard variation in the iambic environment. For metrical requirement again, 3 of these feet incorporate compression of two into one syllable (lines 2, 12 and 24) and one incorporates promotion from slack to stress (line 8). These trochaic feet do not disturb the duple rhythm of the poem; they only break the rising norm by producing a contrapuntal effect that defeats the expectancy of the

reader, thus preventing the monotony of a regular meter.

In the third place, there are 6 ionic feet—consisting of a spondee plus a pyrrhic—(10%) that are treated in English as double feet, producing what is equal to 12 iambic feet, with 4 of which rising and only two falling. These ionic feet do not disturb the established duple rhythm of the poem in any way; they only group two stresses together and two slacks together, thus producing a deceptive effect of a triple rhythm. This, in effect, prevents the monotony and artificiality of a regular meter. In the fourth place, there are only two anapestic feet (2%) that disturb the duple rhythm of the poem. But there is no real departure from the iambic normative line.

"By Exile" also follows the normal practice of incorporating various standard variations and exceptions to the iambic pentameter norm. These are certain effects initially, medially before or after the caesura, and finally. They include (i) anacrusis that results from an extra syllable initially, as in line 1, (ii) epic caesura that results from an extra pre-caesural syllable medially, as in line 3, (iii) anacrusis caesura that results from an extra post-caesural syllable medially, as in line 5, and (iv) lyric caesura that results from a punctuational break in the middle of the iambic foot, as in line 8, and (v) feminine ending that results from an extra weak syllable finally, as in line 2.

These metrical details establish the poet as an authentic practitioner and experimentalist in the art of versification, a form of composition that has been embraced by most traditional poets from Chaucer to modern and even contemporary poets. Following is a description of the metrical pattern used by Ali in the first five lines of "By Exiles". (For the complete scansion of the poem, see Appendix 1.)

Line 1

In Jerusalem a dead phone's dialed by exiles.						
(In) x	Jeru x -	Salem x -	a dead x -	phone's dialed x -	by ex x -	iles x
anacrusis	Iambic	promo tion	iambic	iambic+ demotion	iambic	Fem. end.

Interestingly, the poet adds an extra syllable at the beginning (anacrusis) and another extra syllable at the end (feminine ending). This descending rhythm therefore emphasizes the negative consequences of exile.

Line2:

You learn your strange fate:# you were exiled by exiles.					
You learn x -	your strange x -	fate: you were - x	Exiled - x	by ex x -	iles x
iambic	iambic	trochaic + compression	trochaic	iambic	Fem. end.

In the third foot of this line, the poet uses the device of syllabic compression; /jʊə/ may be regarded as monosyllabic /ʊə/ or disyllabic /ju ə/. In obedience to the compression technique, "contiguous vowels may be elided, either within a word or at word-margins." In other words, "words that we may think of as disyllabic are often treated as monosyllabic" (Wright 151-2). The loss of the unstressed syllable transforms the foot into a trochee. This use of a falling meter within an iambic rising context creates a tension that gives the ghazal emotional depth—a tension that reflects the conflict between the speaker's vision of life and the conditions that keep him from achieving that vision.

Line 3:

One opens the heart to list unborn galaxies					
One o	pens the	heart to	list un	born ga	laxies
- - spondaic	x x pyrrhic	- x trochaic	x - iambic+ demotion	x - iambic+ demotion	x x Fem. end.

A significant metrical variation occurs in this line. This includes the use of a spondaic foot (two successive stressed syllables) and a pyrrhic foot (two successive unstressed syllables). Ali uses this falling meter of the spondaic-pyrrhic combination as well as the feminine ending to introduce a tone of mockery. He seems to be mocking the curse of forced exile that spreads throughout the "Earth" to "unborn galaxies" (The Veiled Suite 297).

Line 4

Don't shut that folder # when Earth is filed by exiles.					
Don't shut x -	that fol (der) x - x	when Earth x -	is filed x -	by ex x -	iles x
iambic	iambic + epic caesura	iambic	iambic	iambic	Fem. end.

An important poetic device that Ali uses very effectively in this line is epic caesura. Wright defines epic caesura as follows:

> The epic caesura, as its name suggests, harks back to a time when the iambic pentameter line was more consciously stitched together out of two half-lines. The extra syllable is almost always followed by punctuation, and the resumption after the implied pause seems like a new beginning, often restrained, hesitant, or deliberate. (165)

Obviously, Ali uses the epic caesura to underscore the unexpected flow of thought as the speaker's expectations are not fulfilled. Although the first half of the line—"Don't shut that folder"—conveys the speaker's expectations for a better future, the sudden caesura throws off his expectations.

Line 5:

Before Night passes # over the wheat of Egypt,					
Before x x	Night pas (ses) - - x	Over - x	the wheat x -	of E x -	gypt x
Pyrrhic + spondee = rising ionic + (ses) epic caesura		trochaic	iambic	iambic	Fem. end.

An expressive metrical variation occurs in this line. This includes the use of a pyrrhic (two successive unstressed syllables) and a spondee (two successive stressed syllables) followed by an epic caesura. The pyrrhic-spondee combination, which constitutes a rising ionic foot, emphasizes the intensity of the dire situation in which the speaker expresses strong feelings of nostalgia for the once prosperous Egypt that delivered the world from certain starvation. The speaker's predominant feelings of exile intensified as the "night passes over the wheat of Egypt" leaving the speaker with the realization that Egypt—the old source of life-giving and comfort— is drastically reduced to an unhappy exile. Moreover, the use of the trochee's falling rhythm in "over" intensifies the tension between these two conflicting roles of Egypt. Wright argues that poets use the pyrrhic, spondaic and trochaic variations "with increasing skill to make their lines more graceful, varied, and expressive" (43).

The Content of "In Arabic":

Ali's "In Arabic" is one of his most eloquent and thematically rich ghazals. Once again, the theme of love is notably absent. Ali explores the boundaries between the self and the outside world. For inconsequential reasons, some Westerners' attitude toward Arabic is almost always negative; it is often ridiculed as a language of love and loss. This calls into question one of the most controversial historical associations that Arabic has with love and loss. Ali's "In Arabic" opens with the speaker asking whether or not Arabic is a language of loss. One answer, based on a nagging complaint from one of Ali's American friends, is that Arabic is a "pitiless" language that offers no comfort to the broken-hearted lovers. Indeed, the speaker becomes more critical of Arabic, a language that is associated in his view with love and loss. This assessment proves true when one takes into account the illogical stories of helpless crazy lovers that pervade Arabic poetry. As is typical of Arab maddened lovers, "Majnoon, by stopped caravans, rips his collars, cries "Laila!"/ Pain translated is O! much more–not less–in Arabic" (The Veiled Suite 372).

A closer, unbiased look at the history of Arabic, however, reveals that it occupies a unique place in the human cultural legacy. According to the second couplet, the influence of Arabic can be traced in Kashmiri arts. In couplet 4, Arabic is intimately linked to Hebrew offering possibilities for exchange and coexistence. It is the language in which the Jewish Maimonides expressed his own views about the world: "A 'Guide for the

Perplexed' was written–believe me–/ by Cordoba's Jew–Maimonides–in Arabic" (The Veiled Suite 372). If this is a historical example, the sixth and the eleventh couplets include two contemporary references that link Arabic to Hebrew: the Palestinian poet Anton Shammas (1950) and the Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai (1924–2000):

> Writes Shammas: Memory, no longer confused, now is a homeland–
> his two languages a Hebrew caress in Arabic.
> ……
> I too, O Amichai, saw everything, just like you did–
> In Death. In Hebrew. And (please let me stress) in Arabic.
> (The Veiled Suite 372)

In addition to Hebrew, Arabic heavily influences Lorca's Spanish poetry: "When Lorca died, they left the balconies open and saw: / On the seat his qasidas stitched seamless in Arabic" (The Veiled Suite 372). Finally, Arabic is significantly linked to Persian in couplet 12. By linking Arabic to Persian, the poet seems to hint at a possible reconciliation between the former, one that turns out to be the language of law as can be seen in the word "Shahid" (witness), and the latter, one that appears to stand in for the language of mystical love as can be seen in the word "Shahid" (the Beloved). Based on full compliance with the Persian ghazal conventions, this ghazal typically contains the poet's name "Shahid" in the concluding couplet, precisely positing Arabic as integral to the completion of human experience:

> They ask me to tell them what Shahid means: Listen, listen:
> It means "The Beloved" in Persian, "witness" in Arabic.

If a practical conclusion may be drawn from this ghazal, perhaps it is that Arabic language is a vibrant, expressive language that is far from being a language of loss.

The Form of "In Arabic":

Here is a typical ghazal whose organic unity is achieved mainly by form. Crucial to that unity is the use of twelve rhyming autonomous couplets. The rhyme scheme is aa ba ca da ea fa ga, etc. The aa rhyme of the first couplet—matla— initiates a pattern that succeeding couplets do follow in the second line of subsequent couplets, thus creating the ghazal's musical pattern. The first three couplets illustrate this feature:

> A language of loss? I have some <u>business</u> in Arabic.
> Love letters: calligraphy <u>pitiless</u> in Arabic.
> At an exhibit of miniatures, what Kashmiri hairs!
> Each paisley inked into a golden <u>tress</u> in Arabic.
> This much fuss about a language I don't know? So one day
> perfume from a dress may let you <u>digress</u> in Arabic

The repetition of rhyme ("pitiless," "tress," "digress," "Maimonides," "less," "caress," "seamless," "Borges," "Yes," "S," "stress,"

and "witness") and the type of refrain ("in Arabic") emphasizes the musicality characteristic of the ghazal. Unlike the ghazal "By exiles" in which the radif "by exiles" rhymes perfectly with the qafia introducing an internal rhyme, the radif of "By Arabic" does not rhyme with the qafia. This variation to the intentional rhyme of the ghazal is not an innovative improvisation. Rather, it could be a device meant to parody the naïve ways in which Westerners look at Arabic. Just as Westerners are not attuned to the true nature of Arabic, so are the qafias, not harmonious with the radifs.

Just as "In Arabic" uses the traditional Persian structure of twelve rhymed couplets, so does it employ the traditional model of Anglo-Saxon accentual meter, which consists of a line containing four stresses or beats. Northrop Frye claims that the 4-stress line is the most common rhythm of Old English poetry (251). In the Middle English period, however, it was still used (by such poets as William Langland in Piers Plowman and the Gawain poet in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, and Patience) side by side with the foot-verse form borrowed from Latin through Norman French (which was primarily introduced by Geoffrey Chaucer). However, it was experimented on in the 20th century at the hands of such great poets as T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound and many others.

According to this metrical pattern "each line was determined by the number of strong stresses in the line" (Lerer 19-20). Notably, the components of the line are the 4 stresses and a medial caesura. The caesura is as part of the meter as the four stresses. The number/distribution of weak syllables does not matter much. This native meter contains, monosyllabic, disyllabic, trisyllabic and quadri-syllabic feet. It can also tolerate longer feet. But there are two general rules here. The first is that the longer the foot, the more colloquial or casual the register becomes. The second is that these long feet require more cases of demotion than short ones.

In "In Arabic," Ali proves that he is as knowledgeable of stress meter as he is of traditional meter. Thus, the poet consciously employs the 4-stress accentual verse as a poetic experimentation and as a means to match rhythm to theme. Matching rhythm to theme, this ghazal expresses the tension between the reality of Arabic and the falsification of that reality. This perfection in versifying his poetry according to the prosodic rules of traditional and the native school of poetry equally successfully only proves that the poet is steadfastly rooted in the tradition and gives him a good stance among the poets writing in English. (For the complete scansion of the poem, see Appendix 2.)

The Content of "Beyond English":

"Beyond English" also contains a theme seldom touched upon in ghazal works; that is, the need to think beyond English as the world's dominant language, a language that cannot see beyond its own prejudice. Among this ghazal's remarkable aspects is the way it takes a contemporary

theme as its subject. As an expatriate, Ali acquires a unique vantage point, allowing him to view the English language from a distance, from beyond conventional thought and misconceptions that have been embraced as reality. Thus, the speaker's strong opening statement "No language is old—or young—beyond English" makes the reader open to the idea of looking beyond the boundaries of English. The first couplet closes with a rhetorical question that leaves the door open for the possibility of following a common language other than English: "So what of a common tongue beyond English?" From a superior vantage point, the speaker reveals his familiarity with "some words for war, all of them sharp, / but the sharpest one is jung—beyond English!" The speaker's use of the Urdu word "jung" which literally means war suggests the precision and vivacity of his own native tongue, as well as the utter absence of an accurate word in English.

According to Woodland, Ali incorporates words of foreign origin such as "jung" and "bhung" in this ghazal "to make points about linguistic and cultural incommensurability, to resituate English's own verbal and conceptual field in relationship to a wider interlinguistic and intercultural territory, thereby revealing the lacks and absences within English" (266). Interestingly enough, the use of the word "jung" calls to mind the tacit long war between English and other languages, a clash that ends with English imposing its culture upon other languages. In a biased world in which nothing has any value until it walks side by side with Western culture, the strong prey upon the weak. Hence, the fourth couplet reveals a rapid shift: "Baghdad is sacked and its citizens must watch/ prisoners (now in miniatures) hung beyond English" (The Veiled Suite 361). This couplet gives readers some insight into the tragic events that occurred in the aftermath of the American invasion of Iraq in 2003.

The sixth couplet makes an explicit reference to Ernest Hemingway's For Whom the Bell Tolls (1940), a novel that explores the atrocities of the Spanish Civil War that broke out in 1936: "So never send to know for whom the bell tolled, / for across the earth it has rung beyond English" (The Veiled Suite 361). This overt reference to war expresses the collective experiences of human beings in the context of the world's troubled history. Such dehumanizing experiences would be deeply enigmatic to those who cannot go beyond English. Finally, a typical Persian ghazal requires the inclusion of the poet's name into the final couplet. To retain the Persian ghazal style, Ali does refer to his own name "Shahid" in the first line of the final couplet, a reference that carries the implication of his stance as a witness to waging a war beyond English: "If someone asks where Shahid has disappeared, / he's waging a war (no, jung) beyond English" (The Veiled Suite 361).

The Form of "Beyond English":

Strict adherence to the traditional Persian ghazal form is also evident in "Beyond English." This ghazal consists of eleven autonomous couplets,

regularly rhyming aa ba ca da ea fa ga, and so forth. In such a rhyme scheme, the words of the qafia that precede the refrain in the first couplet—"young" and "tongue"—rhyme together. According to the ghazal form, this qafia forms a pattern that is repeated throughout the second line of each couplet, linking all the couplets together and giving the ghazal its music. The first four couplets illustrate this:

No language is old—or young—beyond English.
So what of a common tongue beyond English?
I know some words for war, all of them sharp,
but the sharpest one is jung—beyond English!
If you wish to know of a king who loved his slave,
you must learn legends, often-sung, beyond English.
Baghdad is sacked and its citizens must watch
prisoners (now in miniatures) hung beyond English.

Like "By exiles," this ghazal relies on internal rhymes, where the qafia ("young," "tongue," "jung," "sung," "hung," etc.) that precedes the radif rhymes with the first part of the radif (beyond), creating a strong unity or connectedness among the couplets of the ghazal. According to Mufti, "the mere repetition of the radif in each couplet produces an insistence, [from the poet] to be open to other worlds, to look 'beyond English'" (The Dawn).

Furthermore, "Beyond English" is another good example of the traditional Persian ghazal written in English, a ghazal in which there is a prescribed pattern of meter. In this way, "Beyond English" is written in rhymed iambic pentameters, creating a conspicuous form. The iambic pentameter seems fitting for a ghazal concerning the recurrent war between English and other languages. The trochaic variations within an iambic context do not destroy the iambic norm; they kill the monotony without departing from the duple rhythm, only reversing the stresses and slacks. Interestingly, "Beyond English" becomes the arena on which a struggle between English and other languages is staged, a struggle that is dramatized by the ebb and flow of the trochaic and iambic tide.

A metrical analysis of the poem shows: First, this 22-line, eleven-couplet ghazal produces 110 feet, 79 (72%) out of which are iambic ones. For metrical requirement again, 2 of these feet incorporate demotion from stress to slack (lines 9 and 17), 1 incorporates promotion from slack to stress (lines 7), and 11 incorporate compression of two into one syllable (lines 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18 and 20). These cases of demotion, promotion and compression are standard variations in the iambic line.

Second, in this ghazal there are only 11 (10%) trochaic feet, the main standard variation in the iambic environment. For metrical requirement again, one of these feet incorporates compression of two into one syllable (line 15). These trochaic feet do not disturb the duple rhythm of the poem. Third, there are 9 rising ionic feet (16%) that are treated in English as

double feet, producing what is equal to 18 iambic feet. They do not interrupt the duple rhythm of the poem; they only group two stresses together and two slacks together, producing a deceptive effect of a triple rhythm that defeats the expectancy of the reader and help avoid monotony. Fourth, there are only two anapestic feet (2%) that disturb the duple rhythm of the poem. But this does not mean that there is an actual departure from the iambic normative line.

"Beyond English" again follows the normal practice of incorporating various standard variations and exceptions to the iambic pentameter norm. These are certain effects initially, medially before or after the caesura, and finally. They include (i) anacrusis, as in line 5, (ii) epic caesura, as in line 20, (iii) anacrusis caesura, as in line 7, and (iv) feminine ending, as in line 1. (For the whole metrical analysis of Ali's "Beyond English," see Appendix 3.)

Ali's continuing influence on contemporary American poets:

Most notably, Ali is a model to follow for his efforts to explore unknown and unexpected territories. His influence can clearly be seen in the work of Elizabeth Spires (1952), a contemporary American poet and wife of the novelist Madison Smartt Bell. Ali's influence is especially evident in Spires' Now the Green Blade Rises (2002), a collection of poetry that seeks to maintain some of the formal elements of traditional ghazal. For instance, in her poem "Ghazal," Spires—unlike Contemporary writers of ghazal such as James Harrison and Adrienne Rich who do not follow the rules of the traditional poetic form— follows much of Ali's flawless ghazal both in style and in form.

In addition, the African American contemporary poet Natasha Trethewey (1966) considers Ali an influence on her poetic vision in terms of style and form. In an interview with McHaney, Trethewey explains why she used the ghazal form in "Miscegenation" which was published in her 2006 poetry collection, Native Guard. She states that in "Shahid Ali's anthology Ravishing Disunities: Real Ghazals in English" what influenced her most particularly is:

> …the idea of disunity, the idea that these are closed stanzas that don't necessarily support or aim to support narrative or even linear movement, that they are separate, that in the juxtaposition of one stanza to the next is some sort of tension, and excitement can happen. And movement. And also that it is a form that is a kind of call and response—if the form is done traditionally, audiences know … when the refrain comes and they say it with the poet. That is an interesting collective thing happening. Also, that the poet is supposed to invoke her own name in the final stanza is the thing that made that poem get written for me. I was thinking about all these disunified things. … So it was the idea of

‘‘ravishing disunity’’ that allowed me to do it. (McHaney 55)

In conclusion, Ali had found a way to make a unique contribution to contemporary American poetry; his enormous gift for the English readers is that he revived, even rejuvenated the ancient ghazal. His literary achievement as a poet firmly rests on introducing the Persian ghazal form to the English speaking world. Ali’s handling of “the Persian model” as “the real thing” or the “authentic” ghazal has earned him a reputation as one of the most ambitious contemporary poets who sought to make an uncommon traditional verse form accessible to a wide audience. Formally as well as thematically, Ali has been able to find himself a firm stance in English poetry. His versification is interpretable in one of the two most reputable schools of scansion in English: the European foot-verse scansion and native stress meter.

Appendix 1

Ghazal No. 1: “By Exiles”:

By Exiles: Scansion						
anacrusis	1st foot	2nd foot	3rd foot	4th foot	5th foot	fem end
In Jerusalem a dead phone’s dialed by exiles.						
(In)	Jeru	salem	a dead	phone’s dialed	by ex	iles
anacrusis	Iambic	promotion	iambic	demotion	iambic	Fem. end.
You learn your strange fate:# you were exiled by exiles.						
	You learn	your strange	fate: you were /jʊə/*	exiled	by ex	iles
*/jʊə/ may be regarded as monosyllabic /ʊə/ or disyllabic /ju ə/. We prefer the first choice.						
One opens the heart to list unborn galaxies						
	One o	pens the	heart to	list un	born ga	laxies
	Spondaic	pyrrhic	trochaic	iambic+ demotion	iambic+ demotion	Fem. end.
Don’t shut that folder # when Earth is filed by exiles.						
	Don’t shut	that fol (der)	when Earth	is filed	by ex	iles
	Iambic	iambic + epic caesura*	iambic	iambic	iambic	Fem. end.
*Epic caesura is the one that occurs after an extra weak syllable in the end of the first half-line: fol(der) # when ….						
Before Night passes # over the wheat of Egypt,						
	Before	Night pas	over	the wheat	of E	gypt

		(ses)				
	Pyrrhic + spondee = rising ionic + (ses) epic caesura*		trochaic	iambic	iambic	Fem. end.
*Epic caesura is the one that occurs after an extra weak syllable in the end of the first half-line: pas(ses) # 0ver …						
Let stones be leavened, # the bread torn wild by exiles.						
	Let stones	be leavened	the bread	torn wild	by ex	iles
	iambic+demotion	iambic+compression	iambic	iambic+demotion	iambic	Fem. end.
Crucified Mansoor # was alone with the Alone:						
	Cruci	fied Man(soor)	(was) alone	with the	Alone	
	Troachic	iambic+ epic saecura	iambic+ anacrusis caesura*	trochaic+ promotion	iambic	
*Anacrusis caesura is the one that occurs before an extra weak syllable in the beginning of the second half-line: … # (was) alone …						
God's loneliness—just His— # compiled by exiles.						
	God's lone	liness	just His	compiled	by ex	iles
	spondee + pyrrhic = falling ionic		iambic	iambic	iambic	Fem. end.
By the Hudson lies Kashmir, # brought from Palestine—						
By	the Hudson	lies Kash	mir, brought	from Pa	lestine	
anacrusis	iambic+ compression	iambic+ demotion	iambic + lyric caesura*	iambic	iambic+promotion	
*Lyric caesura is the one that comes in the middle of the iambic f00t: … Kash | mir # brought | from …						
It shawls the piano, # Bach beguiled by exiles.						
	It shawls	the pia	no, Bach	beguiled	by ex	iles
	Iambic	iambic	iambic	iambic	iambic	Fem. end.
Tell me who's tonight # the Physician of Sick Pearls?						
	Tell me	who's tonight	(the) Physi	cian of	Sick Pearls	
	Trochaic	iambic+ compression+ demotion	iambic+ anacrusis caesura*	pyrrhic + spondee= rising ionic		
*Anacrusis caesura is the one that occurs before an extra weak syllable in the beginning of the second half-line: … # (the) Physi | cian …						
Only you as you sit, # Desert Child, # by exiles.						
	Only	you as you	sit, De	sert Child	by ex	iles

		/jʊəz/*				
	Trochaic	trochaic+ compression	iambic	iambic	iambic	Fem. end.
*/jʊəz/ may be regarded as monosyllabic /ʊə/ or disyllabic /ju əz/. We prefer the first choice.						
Match Majnoon (he kneels to pray # on a wine-stained rug)						
Match	Majnoon	he kneels	to pray	(on) a wine	stained rug	
anacrusis + demotion	trochaic	iambic	iambic	iambic+ anacrusis caesura*	demotion + iambic	
*Anacrusis caesura is the one that occurs before an extra weak syllable in the beginning of the second half-line: … # (on) a wine | stained …						
Or prayer will be nothing, distempered mild by exiles.						
	Or prayer	will be no(thing)	distem	pered mild	by ex	iles
	Iambic	anapestic + epic caesura*	iambic	iambic	iambic	Fem. end.
*Epic caesura is the one that occurs after an extra weak syllable in the end of the first half-line: … | will be no | (thing) # …						
"Even things that are true can be proved." Even they?						
	Even things	that are	true can	be proved	Even they	
	iambic + compression	iambic + promotion	trochaic	iambic	iambic+ compression	
Swear not by Art but, O Oscar Wilde, by exiles.						
	Swear not	by Art(but)	O O	scar Wilde	by ex	iles
	Trochaic	iambic + epic caesura	iambic+ demotion	iambic	iambic	Fem. end.
Don't weep, we'll drown out the Calls to Prayer, O Saqi—						
	Don't weep	we'll drown	out the Calls	to Prayer	O Sa	qi
	Iambic	iambic	anapestic	iambic	Iambic + demotion	Fem. end.
I'll raise my glass before wine is defiled by exiles.						
	I'll raise	my glass	(before) wine is	defiled	by ex	iles
	Iambic	iambic	Double anacrusis caesura + trochaic	iambic	iambic	Fem. end.

Was—after the last sky—this the fashion of fire:						
	Was—af	ter the	last sky	(this) the fashion	of fire	
	iambic	pyrrhic + spondee = rising ionic		anacrusis caesura + compression	iambic	
Autumn's mist pressed to ashes styled by exiles?						
	Autumn's	mist pressed	to a	shes styled	by ex	iles
	Trochaic	iambic + demotion	iambic	iambic	iambic	Fem. end.
If my enemy's alone and his arms are empty,						
If	my e	nemy's	alone	(and) his arms	are em	pty
anacrusis	Iambic	iambic + promotion	iambic	anacrusis caesura + iambic	iambic	Fem. end.
Give him my heart silk-wrapped like a child by exiles.						
	Give him	my heart	silk-wrapped	(like) a child	by ex	iles
	Trochaic	iambic	iambic + demotion	anacrusis caesura + iambic	iambic	Fem. end.
Will you, Belovèd Stranger, ever witness Shahid—						
	Will you	Belo	vèd Stran (ger)	(e)ver wit	ness Sha	hid
	Trochaic	iambic	iambic + epic caesura	anacrusis caesura + iambic	iambic	Fem. end.
Two destinies at last reconciled by exiles?						
	Two des	tinies	at last	reconciled	by ex	iles
	spondee + pyrrhic = falling ionic		iambic	trochaic + compression	iambic	Fem. end.

Appendix 2: "In Arabic"

In Arabic: Scansion			
A] language of loss?		I have some business in Arabic	
x] – x x | -	2	x x d] – x x | - x x	2
] is used to set off anacrusis		Trisyllabic anacrusis + demotion	
Love letters		calligraphy pitiless in Arabic	3
| - | - x	2	x] – x x | - x x x| - x x	
No anacrusis		A 3-stress half-line, a standard variation in the 4-stress norm	

At an exhibit of miniatures	2	what Kashmiri hairs	2
x x] – x x x | - x x		x] – x x | -	
Each paisley inked		into a golden tress in Arabic	
d] – x | -	2	x x x] – x | - x | - x x	3
Anacrusis + demotion		A 3-stress half-line.	
This much fuss about a language		I don't know? So one day	2
x d] – x x x| - x	2	x x] – d | - d	
Anacrusis + demotion		Two demotions	
perfume from a dress		may let you digress in Arabic	
| - x x x | -	2	x d x x] – x | - x x	2
		4-syllable anacrusis + demotion	
A "Guide for the Perplexed"		was written–believe me–	
x] – x x x | -	2	x] – x x | - x	2
by Cordoba's Jew		Maimonides–in Arabic	
x x] – x | -	2	| - x x d x| - x x	2
		demotion	
Majnoon, by stopped caravans		rips his collars, cries "Laila!"	
| – x x | - |- x x	3	|- x |– x d | - x	3
A 3-stress half-line		A 3-stress half-line+ demotion	
Pain translated is O		much more–not less–in Arabic	
| – x |- x x |-	3	x | – x | - x |- x x	3
A 3-stress half-line	3	A 3-stress half-line	3
Writes Shammas, Memory		no longer confused	now is a homeland
d | - x | - x x	2	x |– x x |-	2 | - x x | - x 2
A semantically dense, metrically deviant line. But can be regarded as 3 two-stress portions.			
his two languages		a Hebrew caress in Arabic	
x] – |- x x	2	x | – x x|- x |- x x	3
		A 3-stress half-line	
When Lorca died		they left the balconies open and saw	
x]– | -	2	x d x |– x x |- x x |-	3
		A 3-stress half-line + demotion	
On the sea his qasidas stitched	3	seamless in Arabic	2
x x |– x x |- x | -		| - x x |- x x	
A 3-stress half-line			
On the sea his qasidas		stitched seamless in Arabic	
x x |– x x |- x	2	| – |- x x |- x x	3
		A 3-stress half-line	
A case of doubtful caesura that produces a three-stress half-line on one side and a normative two-stress half-line on the other.			

In the Veiled One's harem			an adultress hanged by eunuchs		
x x | – x | - x	2		x x| – x | - x | - x	3	
			A 3-stress half-line		
So the rank mirrors			revealed to Borges in Arabic		
x x |– |- x	2		x | – x |- x x |- x x	3	
			A 3-stress half-line		
So the rank mirrors revealed			to Borges in Arabic		
x x |– |- x x | -	3		x |- x x |- x x	2	
A 3-stress half-line					

Another case of doubtful caesura that produces a three-stress half-line on one side and a normative two-stress half-line on the other.

Ah, bisexual Heaven		wide-eyed houris		and immortal youths	
d x |– x x | - x	2	| – x |- x	2	x x| – x | -	2

Another semantically dense, metrically deviant line. But can be regarded as 3 two-stress sections.

To your each desire they say Yes!		O Yes! in Arabic	
x x | - x|– x d |-	3	d |– x |- x x	2
A 3-stress half-line+ demotion		demotion	
For that excess of sibilance	2	the last Apocalypse	
x d x |– x |- x x		x | – x|- x x	2
Demotion			
so pressing those three forms		of S in Arabic	
x | – x x d |-	2	x |– x |- x x	2
Demotion			
I too, O Amichai, saw everything		just like you did	
x|– d |- x x d |- x x x	3	|– x | - x	2
A 3-stress half-line+ 2 demotions			
In Death. In Hebrew		And (please let me stress) in Arabic	
x | – x | - x	2	x | – d x | - x |- x x	3
		A 3-stress half-line+ demotion	

They ask me to tell them		what Shahid means		Listen, listen	
x |– x x |- x	2	x | - x | -	2	|– x | - x	2

Another semantically dense, metrically deviant line. But can be regarded as 3 two-stress sections, which partly agrees with the 2-stress metrical unit.

It means "The Beloved" in Persian		"witness" in Arabic	
x d x x |– x x |- x	2	| – x x |- x x	2
Demotion			

Appendix 3: "Beyond English"

Beyond English: Scansion						
anacrusis	1st foot	2nd foot	3rd foot	4th foot	5th foot	fem end
No language is old—or young—beyond English						
	(x) No	language	is old	or young	b'yond En	glish
	headless	trochaic	iambic	iambic	iambic+ compression	
So what of a common tongue beyond English						
	(x) So	what of	a com	mon tongue	b'yond En	glish
	headless	trochaic	iambic	iambic	iambic+ compression	
I know some words for war, all of them sharp						
	I know	some words	for war	all of	them sharp	
	iambic	iambic	iambic	trochaic	iambic	
but the sharpest one is jung—beyond English!						
	(x) but	the shar	pest one	is jung	b'yond En	glish
	headless	iambic	iambic	iambic	iambic + compression	
If you wish to know of a king who loved his slave						
If	you wish	to know	(of) a king	who loved	his slave	
	iambic	iambic	iambic + anacrusis caesura	iambic	iambic	
you must learn legends, often-sung, beyond English						
	you must	learn le	gends, of	ten-sung	b'yond En	glish
	pyrrhic	spondee	iambic	iambic	iambic	
Baghdad is sacked and its citizens must watch						
	Baghdad	is sacked	(and) its ci	tizens	must watch	
	trochaic	iambic	iambic+ anacrusis caesura	iambic+ promotion	iambic	
prisoners (now in mi niatures) hung beyond English						
	priso	ners now	in mi	niatures hung	b'yond En	glish

	trochaic	iambic	iambic	rare anapestic	iambic	

Go all the way through jungle from aleph to zenith						
	Go all	the way	through jungle	(from) aleph	to ze	nith
	iambic + demotion	iambic	iambic+ epic caesura	trochaic + anacrusis caesura	iambic	
To see English, like monkeys, swung beyond English						
	to see	English	like mon	keys, swung	b'yond En	glish
	iambic	trochaic	iambic	iambic	iambic+ compression	
So never send to know for whom the bell tolled						
	So ne	ver send	to know	(for) whom the	bell tolled	
	iambic	iambic	iambic	pyrrhic+ anacrusis caesura	spondaic	
for across the earth it has rung beyond English						
	(x) for	across	the earth	(it) has rung	b'yond En	glish
	headless	iambic	iambic	iambic+ anacrusis caesura	iambic+ compression	
If you want your drugs legal you must leave the States						
If	you want	your drugs	legal	(you must leave)	the States	
	iambic	iambic	trochaic	iambic+ anacrusis caesura	iambic	
not just for hashish but one—bhung—beyond English						
	not just	for ha	shish but	one— bhung	b'yond En	glish
	iambic	iambic	pyrrhic	spondaic	iambic	
Heartbroken, I tottered out "into windless snow,"						
	Heartbroke n	I tot	tered out	into wind	less snow	
	trochaic+ compressio	iambic	iambic	iambic+ anacrusis	iambic	

	n			caesura		
snowflakes on my lips, silence stung beyond English						
	snowflakes	on my	lips, si	lence stung	b'yond En	glish
	trochaic	pyrrhic	spondaic	iambic	iambic+ compression	

When the phrase, "The Mother of all Battles" caught on,						
When	the phrase	The Mo	ther of	all Battles	caught on	
	iambic	iambic	pyrrhic	Spondaic+ compressio n	iambic+ demotion	
the surprise was indeed not sprung beyond English						
	the sur	prise was	indeed	not sprung	b'yond En	glish
	pyrrhic	spondaic+ promotion	iambic	iambic	iambic	
Could a soul crawl away at last unshriveled which						
	Could a	soul crawl	away	at last	unshri	veled which
	pyrrhic	spondaic	iambic	iambic	iambic	
to its "own fusing senses" had clung beyond English?						
	to its	own fu	sing senses	had clung	b'yond En	glish
	pyrrhic	spondaic	iambic + epic caesura	iambic	iambic+ compression	
If someone asks where Shahid has disappeared,						
	If some	one asks	where Sha	hid has	disappeared	
	iambic	iambic	iambic	iambic+ promotion	anapestic	
he’s waging a war (no, jung) beyond English.						
	he’s wa	ging a	war no,	jung be	yond En	glish
	iambic	pyrrhic	spondaic	trochaic	iambic	

المستخلص

الدفاع عن الغزل الفارسي كنمط شعري: دراسة لبعض الغزليات المختارة من ديوان "اتصل بي يا إسماعيل الليلة" للشاعر أغا شهيد علي

محمد جلال خليفه

يتناول هذا البحث العناصر الأساسية التي تشكل الغزل كنمط شعري عند الشاعر الكشميري أغا شهيد علي. وذلك عن طريق دراسة ثلاثة من الغزليات من ديوان علي المسمى "اتصل بي يا إسماعيل الليلة: كتاب من الغزل" (2003)، فمن خلال هذا النمط الشعري وجد علي وسيلة لتقديم مساهمة فريدة للشعر الأمريكي المعاصر. يبدأ هذا البحث بدراسة تفصيلية لهذا النوع الشعري والعناصر التي تشكله، ثم يتناول بالدراسة والتحليل الشكل والمضمون لثلاثة من القصائد للوقوف على مدى استخدام الشاعر لأدوات متنوعة للكشف عن تجليات هذا النمط من الغزل الفارسي وتقديمه كنمط شعري معاصر يعتمد بناؤه على تقسيم الغزل إلى أثنى عشرة مقطعاً وكل مقطع مكون من بيتين من الشعر، يشكل كل مقطع وحدة فكرية مستقلة حتى لا يصاب القارئ بالملل على أن يكون الانسجام والترابط الداخلي بين المقاطع ناتج عن وحدة القافية ذات التأثير السحري في نفس القارئ وكذلك عن وحدة الموسيقى الشعرية وذلك باستخدام الأوزان الشعرية الشهيرة في الشعر الإنجليزي. هكذا استطاع الشاعر استخدام نمط شعري تقليدي ووضعه في قالب معاصر وجعله مألوفاً لدى قطاعاً واسعاً من الجمهور المتحدث باللغة الإنجليزية.

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