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**Oppression and Hope: Linguistic Analysis of Daud Kamal's 'A Remote Beginning' in Pakistan's Political Context**



**<sup>1</sup>Zafran Saeed, <sup>2\*</sup>Arif Khan, <sup>3</sup>Humayun Arshad**

<sup>1</sup>A Lecturer in English, Department of English, Kohat University of Science & Technology. Email [zafransaeed@kust.edu.pk](mailto:zafransaeed@kust.edu.pk)

<sup>2\*</sup>MPhil, Lecturer, Department of English and Applied Linguistics, University of Peshawar. Corresponding Author Email: [arifkhan@uop.edu.pk](mailto:arifkhan@uop.edu.pk)

<sup>3</sup>MPhil, Graduate from the Department of English, Kohat University of Science & Technology, Kohat. email: [arshadtk2010@gmail.com](mailto:arshadtk2010@gmail.com)

**Abstract**

This study explores the stylistic features of Kamal's poetry, especially in his poem, *A Remote Beginning*, in order to determine how these stylistic features, correlate with the socio-political situation in Pakistan during General Zia-ul-Haq rule (1977-1988). This study seeks to answer two key questions: First, how do the stylistic features of the poem capture the essence of the realities in an authoritarian political setting? Second, how does Kamal's poetry being authoritarian in nature at the same time cater to the practices of preserving collective memory of the people of Pakistan? Zia-ul-Haq's rule was characterized with extreme oppression, censorship and the rigid implementation of conservative beliefs that repressed Pakistani culture and literature severely. This research, through a detailed examination of metaphor, imagery, and rhythm in Kamal's verse, shows how these technologies of imagination serve to express political conditions as well as the national pain and resistance at that moment of time. The poem suggests that the society was reeling in constant fear and had succumbed to oppression from an authoritative regime. Besides, it underscores Kamal's position as a dissident who employs his poetry as a means of protest. The research examines the political violence of the regime and its repercussions. Using elements of loss, memory, and resilience, Kamal's poetry engages the collective imagination, allowing for remembrance and reflection. This cultivates a national consciousness among Pakistanis that enables them to face their past struggles while working towards a more equitable future. The study contributes to the literary and political discourse of South Asia in the sense that it demonstrates how poetry can serve as a lens to understand and challenge societal structures. This analysis places Kamal's "*A Remote Beginning*" within the framework of Zia-ul-Haq's regime to articulate the central theme regarding the ability of literature to dissent, memorialize, and sustain life under oppression. Daud Kamal's reputed work has transcended that of mere artistic expression. In many ways, his work constitutes an act of resistance against a nation in crisis.

**Keywords:** Stylistic Analysis, Levels of Stylistics, Discourse Evaluation, Foregrounding

**Introduction**

In efforts to uncover an author's artistic style within their works, researchers conduct a stylistic analysis. This involves analyzing an author's linguistic features such as their diction and style. A thorough stylistic analysis is grounded on the principle of foregrounding. This as

defined by Haider, G, & Ramzan, M. (2023) "is artistically motivated deviation" which includes many linguistic effects within the text. As noted by Ramzan et al (2021), style or stylistic approaches allow for both literary and non-literary texts to be interpreted. Al-Qudsi (2016) has emphasized that the synergy of the two, style and language, is what defines stylistics. While Leech and Short (2007) saw style as an author's technique to relate with their readers. Analyses are done at different stylistic levels such as phonological, graphological, semantic, morphological, and even at syntactical levels.

In addition to a writer's unique stylometric approach, it highlights the author's specific chosen messages. Unlike other linguistic techniques, stylistics has the advantage of having an objective stance due to careful application and observation. As noted by Khan and Jang (2020), stylistics give room for deeper analysis of concepts concealed in literature which is why it is treated as an analytical tool for gauging style and an author's particular decisions. This, as stated by Ramzan et al (2021) has shown to unveil the concealed meaning of a phrase.

According to Leech and Short (2007) it is apparent that certain levels of language analysis exist phonological, semantic, syntactic, and graphological dimensions. Aspects such as sound patterns of language and their meanings are studied in Phonology, including alliteration and assonance (Lodge, 2009). Graphological analysis focuses on visual text aspects—capitalization, punctuation, italics, and spacing—that contribute to a work's structure. Morphological analysis, as described by Ackema and Neeleman (2004), explores word formation and grammatical structures, including affixes and compound words. The lexico-syntactic level merges vocabulary study with sentence structure analysis, examining word categories and their interrelationships (Radford, 2004).

Daud Kamal, a notable Pakistani poet writing in English, began his poetic journey in his twenties. Literary critic Carlo Coppola (1998) likens Kamal's work to a fundamental scripture reflecting a people's betrayal. His poetry, rich in historical references and vivid natural imagery, is shaped by modern imagist poets like Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot, earning him the title "the T.S. Eliot of Pakistan" (Rahman, 1991). Incorporating imagism, fragmentation, and multi-layered themes, Kamal often portrays nature, rural life, and culture, reflecting feelings of loss and spiritual dislocation amid violence and cultural erasure. His influence from Urdu literature is significant, and he was one of four Pakistani poets featured in the anthology *The Blue Wind* (1984).

### **Overview of the Poem**

The poem starts with exciting contemplation regarding the complex aspect of self-remembering by explaining the theme of the far away beginnings first. In this first stanza, Kamal has put us at a place where he hints at sorrow that there is so much value attached to our origins and it does not matter who we are in the present. This kind of imagery is bound to evoke strong feelings or emotions and kamal has done exceptionally well in capturing the myriad of emotions that early memories etched at the back of one's mind invoke and slowly shape their identity. As the poem shifts into the second stanza, the narrator zooms in on particular memories that definitely shaped him. A moving tension appears between the distinct and ephemeral quality of these memories and their lasting power in the speaker's life. The imagery has a type of beauty and sadness in how specific moments from the past, no matter how short-lived they are, have imprinted themselves on one's memories and the mind.

This reflection of memory gives the speaker the opportunity to depict their inner self and paints for them the strongest memories that seem so easy to forget but remain deeply scribed within us. Moving to the third section of the poem, there is a shift to the directions of cultural identity and heritage. The speaker thinks about how expectations and traditions that come with his background brings him to heavy thoughts, he ponders the intersection of self and shared history. Concrete images bring to mind particular places and cultural relics, anchoring the individual experience within a larger societal framework. That blend of imagery does not only aid in the study of identity but also in the ways that cultural heritage shapes and adds value to individual experiences, aiding in comprehensive understanding of what it means to belong. In the fourth stanza, Kamal reflects on the possible interaction between stability and change. The speaker considers how the bygone has provided a key to anchor from where one is to where he is. Throughout, there's an inward looking examination of life's journey as one lived in a state of flux, but that change is often from a set position and the contemplation reveals the idea that our identity is a product of a motion, ever on the move but rather integrated. Finally, in the last stanza, the poem encapsulates the important aspects of memory, identity, and belonging. The speaker expresses how much their origins matter to them, and reconciling with the complexities of their current identity is a lot easier. The final lines echo with an incentive for the audience to think about their own origins, inviting further analysis on the concepts of self-discovery and lineage. In so doing, the poem succeeds in providing, through Kamal's personal and cultural narratives, the ways in which our histories

shape our identities in very profound ways. Chang's poem serves to broaden one's perspective of the human experience.

### **Statement of the Problem**

General Zia-ul-Haq's regime was rife with chaos, violence, and a constant battle for one's identity. Such complexity can best be described using the rich stylistic features in the poems by Kamal in his collection *A Remote Beginning*. This collection is a vivid representation of blood and suffering of people during the time of authoritarian rule, blanket censorship, political strife, and a very rigid socio-political structure. The analysis of stylistic features facilitates the understanding of the lived realities of people, the nuances of struggle, and the ability to endure. In addition, Kamal's poetry does not just attack the destructive force of authoritarianism, instead, it serves the overpowering duty of healing the fragmented cultural memory of Pakistan. His vivid and strong words at believing and making the people rethink and reconstruct the shared consciousness of "remembering" instead of forgetting – which is so imperative for a society entrenched in history. This study seeks to accomplish both objectives which are: One is to reveal the specific stylistic features of Zia-ul-Haq's rule and the socio-political realities of his regime, and Two is to understand the way Kamal's poetry against authoritarian government serves to build and consolidate the national memory.

### **Significance of the Research**

The poem "A Remote Beginning" by Daud Kamal is important in literary works and 'A Remote Beginning' by Daud Kamal holds great importance in the practices of literary research as well as the social and political history of Pakistan. Understanding the poem's stylistic features like phonology, imagery, and metaphor allows us to see how Kamal expresses the complexities of oppression and hope in the midst of a dynamic political scene. Through eloquent imagery, the poet critiques General Zia-ul-Haq's militaristic governance that dismantled democratic processes and freedom of expression. This work seeks to understand the historical context of the author's life in relation to his work, focusing specifically on the general patterns of military control the country faced. Kamal's art exposes the endless cycle of unrest in the nation's politics. The framing of the poem within its socio-political context reveals the importance of literary pieces as politics, showing how art can oppose totalitarian rule and help retain history. Studying the interrelation of elements of style broadens the scope of comprehension of a Kamal's work as well as the emotional aspect of it. A sophisticated manner of using sound, rhythm, and imagery instills a mournful sensation

leaned towards the past, while at the same time giving a 'hopeful' view. This duality increases the level of engagement and forces a harder reflection on the human condition in pain, making the poem relevant outside its specific political setting. This study aids the endeavor of literary scholarship by showing how effective political poetry can be as a sociological tool. It highlights poets' roles as social thinkers and claims that the reinvention of past traumas is necessary to make sense of current life struggles and hopes. In particular, Kamal's poetry reminds readers of how literature can provoke discourse surrounding democracy, identity, and resilience. In the end, what makes this research significant is the fact that it is a call to action. Engaging with Kamal through a vision of democratic inheritance energizes the reader to reconsider their position in society and how they can help nurture the existing democracy. Such an examination of memory as solace as well as an underlying cause of discomfort helps individuals revisit their historical narratives and encourages a form of cosmopolitanism that respects old battles to inspire new ones.

### **Delimitation of the Research**

The analysis of the poem "A Remote Beginning" is the main focus of this study which is broken down through three levels of stylistics: phonological, pragmatic, and morphological. The study seeks to deepen understanding of each level's individual contribution towards the overall meaning and aesthetics of the poem by limiting the scope examined. The phonological analysis will examine patterns of sounds and their effects, while the pragmatic analysis will focus on the meanings and implications of the text within context. Finally, the morphological level will focus on the structuring and formation of words in the poem. The emphasis of this research is on the concept of foregrounding which aims to establish features of interest and significance within a remote beginning. The concepts of specific intended stylistic devices having the ability to elevate a poem's theme and emotion are what this study seeks to reveal. It is through these avenues where exploration of the chosen work focusing on the relationship between form and meaning.

### **Research Questions**

- How do the stylized features of "A Remote Beginning" reflect the socio-political background of Pakistan during the regime of General Zia-ul-Haq?
- How does Kamal's poetry critique authoritarianism and encourage collective remembrance among the people of Pakistan?

### **Research Objectives**

- To examine the stylized features in “A Remote Beginning” and the socio-political climate in Pakistan during the regime of General Zia-ul-Haq.
- To examine the way that Kamal’s poetry authoritarianism and, at the same time, instills a sense of collective memory within the Pakistani society.

### **Literature Review**

This part attempts to assess the approaches and scholarly works pertinent to this research problem through an analysis of articles that have been published regarding style, stylistics and other relevant theories related to the literature. As comprehensive research into Daud Kamal's work indicates, there is quite a noticeable absence of interest from critics and reviewers which are largely superficial having to do with investigation of his style, tone, some covert meanings and central themes. Rehman and Khan (2018) argue that in the poem “A Remote Beginning” by Kamal there is a struggle between the past and present which reveals a more complex blend of hope and despondency coupled with nostalgic memories. This duality illustrates Kamal’s artistry and his ability to juxtapose layered emotional experiences.

Rehman and Khan (2018) identify Kamal as a formidable mystical poet with Sufi undertones due to his emphasis on spirituality and recurring desolation. Moreover, they point out the Sufi imagery which informs a great deal of his poetry, and which came from Imagists like Yeats and Pound. Kamal’s fragments of poetry are lively and clearly expressed bringing a new perspective to his work.

In further examination, Rehman and Khan (2020) praise Kamal’s use of paradox in ‘A Remote Beginning’ as similar to John Donne’s style of weaving differences together. The term ‘remote’ ‘paradoxically entails the ‘nature’ of the poem’s title, which suggests that a starting point may be distant. This invites one to probe into issues of legacy and the skeptic’s ‘remote’ past. This is one of the main techniques in Kamal’s poetry, which shows how deeply emotional and innovative he can be at the same time. Building on this multi-faceted theme, Ali (2019) notes that Kamal’s poetry is deeply rooted in the theme of loss, cultural disarray, and even defiance against dictatorship, which gives context to his insights on socialism and democracy in Pakistan. This social critique is also captured by Ali’s assertion which postulated that Kamal dramatically portrays the feeling of powerlessness of the ordinary people in the face of oppressive rulers, their struggles and sufferings under a despotic regime.

Furthermore, advanced research has been done on the stylistic analysis of different poets which has expanded the scope of contextual understanding of the language of modern poetry. For instance, Hanif et al., Mumtaz Ahmad and Maria Aftab have conducted a comprehensive stylistic analysis of William Henry Davies' "Leisure" poem where they studied its graphological, syntactical, and phonological patterns. Their results have shown how modern people have become captives of worldly matters to a point that they fail to appreciate the beauty of nature and life. In the same way, the analysis of S.T. Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" examined verbal imagery and poetic diction, as well as the autobiographic fragments and stylistic devices in different linguistic layers such as phonology and syntax through the matrix proposed by Leech and Short (1981).

Hasmi et al. (2019) seems to have also further researched on Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" focusing on the language features and themes of the poem. Their thorough analysis of phonetics, graphitics, and grammar reveals that Frost's manipulation of language was profound. Hidayati (2015) also undertook a stylistic analysis of Wordsworth's "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" and was able to identify different styles including figurative language and even the use of different types of syntactic arrangements. This analysis brings out the poet's love of nature which is central to the entire poem. These studies highlight the main phonological levels of the prose but differ in their scope of intervention and their hypotheses making them contributory to the field of literary stylistics. Daud Kamal's *A Remote Beginning* encapsulates themes of oppression and hope, deeply intertwined with Pakistan's political landscape. The poem's linguistic construction, particularly its use of metaphor and syntactic parallelism, mirrors critical discourse strategies that shape ideological representation (Gill et al., 2025; Ishtiaq et al., 2022a; Ishtiaq et al., 2022b). The intertextual layering in Kamal's poetry aligns with broader stylistic and conversational analyses that highlight the role of discourse in constructing sociopolitical realities (Ali et al., 2019a; Majid & Ishtiaq, 2019; Ali et al., 2019c). Additionally, Kamal's evocative use of modality and imagery reflects a textual resistance against systemic power structures, a phenomenon explored in feminist and digital discourse analyses (Gill et al., 2025; Ishtiaq et al., 2021b; Gill et al., 2024). His work also exhibits structural patterns reminiscent of Urdu and English linguistic frameworks, reinforcing the universality of poetic expression in resistance literature (Arshad et al., 2024; Ishtiaq & Gill, 2024). The political subtext of *A Remote Beginning* aligns with analyses of transliteration challenges, where linguistic shifts



influence meaning and perception (Ishtiaq et al., 2022b; Ali et al., 2020b). Furthermore, Kamal's thematic engagement with struggle and resilience echoes the pedagogical and sociolinguistic dynamics of language acquisition, where idiomatic and symbolic expressions shape comprehension and identity (Ali et al., 2019b; Ali et al., 2020a; Ali et al., 2021).

The poem's stylistic features also resonate with studies on nonverbal and paralinguistic communication, emphasizing how silence, rhythm, and structure contribute to meaning-making in resistance literature (Ali et al., 2019c; Ishtiaq et al., 2021a). Additionally, Kamal's portrayal of displacement and nostalgia reflects linguistic patterns of characterization observed in comparative literary studies (Ali et al., 2018), further reinforcing his poetic discourse as a site of resistance and identity construction. His work aligns with broader analyses of linguistic density and communicative strategies, demonstrating how poetic expression shapes political consciousness (Ishtiaq et al., 2021a; Ishtiaq et al., 2022c; Majid et al.). Thus, *A Remote Beginning* serves as a linguistic artifact that encapsulates both historical memory and future aspirations, positioning it within a broader framework of discourse analysis and socio-political critique.

## **Research Methodology**

### **Research Design**

For this study, the researcher has taken a qualitative and descriptive approach to stylistic analysis of the poem by Daud Kamal titled "A Remote Beginning" on three levels: phonology, pragmatics, and morphology. Style is considered in this study as a manner of expression covering composition, speech, or performance of a given text, whereas stylistics is the discipline that deals with the systematic study of such elements. Leech and Short (1980) define style as scientifically studying a given sociolinguistic community in relation to language and meaning of the utterance in discourse.

Wales (1989) posits that style reflects individual expression in reading and writing, with each author demonstrating a unique approach to similar themes or subjects. Furthermore, Wales emphasizes that style can be quantified through various linguistic features, with a writer's personality often apparent in their word choices and combinations. Carter and Stockwell (2008) describe style as the selection of specific linguistic structures, noting that such choices may be conscious or intuitive; regardless, they influence the reader's experience. Verdonk (2002) reinforces this by defining stylistics as the examination of distinctive expressions in language and their intended effects. This study aims to uncover Kamal's

stylistic nuances and hidden meanings, employing a descriptive and interpretive methodology centered on the selected poem, utilizing both primary sources (the poem itself) and secondary resources such as critical literature and scholarly articles for comprehensive analysis.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Stylistics investigates the unique modes of expression utilized by authors, focusing on how language conveys meaning. Foregrounding, a concept introduced by the Prague School of Linguistics and elaborated by Leech (1968), pertains to deviations from linguistic norms that emphasize certain elements of discourse. This notion, rooted in Jan Mukarovsky's theories, encompasses a variety of stylistic effects present in literature across phonetic (e.g., alliteration, rhyme), grammatical (e.g., inversion, ellipsis), and semantic (e.g., metaphor, irony) levels. Foregrounding is a blend of linguistic styles, serving the purpose of prediction and evaluation of information features that differ from the norms in prose texts. This topic is examined both on a theoretical level and in practice, whereas Mukarovsky recognizes, this form emerges in casual speech, however in a literary context, it is well structured and has a hierarchy within it. Miall and Kuiken add that foregrounding creates an emotional response while prolonging reading engagement. Hunt and Vipond (1985) look at certain non-literal surface features of a text and give the name to them "discourse evaluation" encapsulating the point of view of the narrator to characters and events. Foregrounding is a technique of defamiliarization, focusing the reader to notice certain linguistic features of a text which are marked because of divergence or congruence which increases its prominence (Simpson, 2004). In this case, emphasis will be placed on the new subdiscipline of literary stylistics- how, for the form of the text with the content, language gives meaning and affects the reader's perception. In that sense, studying foregrounding is studying the relation between a stylistic choice and the composition of the text and reader interaction.

### **Analysis and Discussion**

In "A Remote Beginning" by Daud Kamal, the use of foregrounding ensures that its key themes and sentiments are highlighted. The imagery used within the poem is illustrative of one's memories, self-reflection, and natural phenomena. Because of the imagery, the audience gets to understand the turmoil of the speaker. Along with this, the speaker's alienation and nostalgia due to the change in time is also understood. The comparison and contrast made between the distant past and the present day evokes the feeling of disconnection. The beauty of this poem does not stop there. The rhythm is enriched with

additional devices like alliteration and assonance which highlight certain lines and further enhance the speaker's emotional experience. The repetition of phrases deepens the engagement by recalling the central ideas of memory and existential thoughts. Along with this, Kamal also contemplates deeply into philosophical thoughts to elaborate on the meaning of life. Because of this, the readers' feelings unravel, making them closer to the deep emotions and themes within "A Remote Beginning."

Daud Kamal critique, "A Remote Beginning," sharply highlights the political situation during General Zia-ul-Haq's military rule. The gloom and strife that plagued Pakistan during martial law gets vividly illustrated through the opening line, "This night". The years 1978 to 1985 are politically described as dark and chaotic due to a blatant failure of democratic practices. In Kamal's words, we will forget the darkness, in the same fashion we have forgotten the previous military regimes. The poet's commentary captures how under almost all post-independence military rulers, divisions and splits became synonymous with the Pakistan came around the world's focus. However, all democratic governments have claimed that they represented the will of the people. As a concerned citizen, Kamal embraces and expresses the fact that there is a desperate need to restore democracy, a desire that is understandably present due to excessive military rule. Pakistan was founded on principles of freedom and autonomy alongside equality and justice; these must be restored. Pakistan was supposed to represent the will of the people within the premises of justice and equality, yet modern day military rulers have turned the state into a class of voiceless followers from where the right to choose is absent. When people are not free to make choices for themselves, they become helpless spectators of the choices that are made for them. In this grim truth, there is light where Kamal suggests that even the worst of reality has the power to seed hope. The dance of hopelessness and hope is pictured in the piece called "A Remote Beginning" which embodies the subtle nature of the political situation.

The title "A Remote Beginning" implies anticipation in the socio-political landscape, and mystery in the outcomes of this new era in the poet's life. "Beginning" could suggest the military seizing control and then subsequently legitimizing it through amendments to the constitution. The democratic decay of these years are exemplified by Zia's coup, which formed a strategic partnership with the United States and reorganized the political environment. Kamal's perception of such dramatic disconnection points towards a loss of control over the impending consequences such action would bear on the groundwork of the

political face of the nation. At face value, a remote beginning seems ironic because the term beginning implies immediacy. This irony adds value to the title, providing it with a sense of dread and the possibility of unforeseen consequences. The context enhances the feeling of sorrow and the conjectural nature of the encompassing narrative surrounding the political face of Pakistan's history hints towards the turbulence that manifests from the poet's unexplained sentiments.

Phonological analysis looks at the sound features in the poem by highlighting the phonetic devices employed by the poet. Phonology looks at the use of speech sounds in constructing meaning, bringing out music and imagery through different levels of creativity. In "A Remote Beginning," Kamal employs alliteration, rhyme, rhythm, assonance, consonance, repetition and forms of poems like metaphors and personification. The poem has four stanzas which are written in a free rhyme style capturing the flow of thoughts and imagination of the poet. The structure shows the juxtaposition of hope and despair, doubt and assurance, as well as the past and present. The interplay between nostalgic reminiscences and current memories echoes throughout the lines of a poem in its rhyme and rhythm. Consonance which involves repetition of the same consonant sounds in a sequence of nearby words adds to the musicality of the poem. One example is, "This night too will collapse." In this phrase, consonance is found with the repeated /t/ sound and also, "will collapse" where /l/ sound is used. These sounds upgrade the lyrical depth of the poem while highlighting the supposed emotions offered by it. Taking the phrase "That came before," /a/ sound is highly dominant which shows the use of assonance. Alliteration is crucial for rhythm and enhancing the overall value of the poem. An example from the last stanza is "come circling back," in which the rhythmic interconnection of the words through their uniting sound coordinated contribution increases the musicality of the poem.

Pragmatics specializes in the study of context and meaning. Kamal's voice in the short story "A Remote Beginning" is filled with nostalgia and melancholy which results from the overarching dread that comes with martial law. The constant weight of military oppressiveness is clear as the poet tackles the consequences of uncontrolled politics. The first line, "This night," is a metaphor for the overarching chaotic disorder that exists and symbolizes a dark period in Pakistan's history. There is some optimism in the words of Kamal – this darkness will someday fade to be replaced with light, like all nights have to. The rhythm of day and night tells us that no matter how dictatorial a regime may try to be, it will

not last forever. He emphasizes that the voices of the people, though currently silenced, will eventually rise against tyranny. By juxtaposing despair with hope, Kamal encourages the populace to remain vigilant and strive for a future grounded in democracy. In his reflections, he illustrates the betrayal faced by citizens under military rule, equating the regime to a “Demolition Squad” that dismantles the foundation of democracy while masquerading as saviors of the state. Kamal's portrayal of military leaders as “professional mourners” underscores their insincerity, highlighting their disregard for the people's welfare. The poet questions where he might find his true legacy in this context, suggesting a longing for the democratic principles that initially shaped Pakistan.

Kamal employs rhetorical questions to deepen the reader's engagement and highlight the dire situation in Pakistan. In the third stanza, he poses questions about his true inheritance, reflecting his disillusionment with the current state of affairs. This self-reflective inquiry illustrates his despair over the loss of democratic values and the ongoing cycle of betrayal by military rulers. By creating vivid imagery of “mad calligraphy of trees” and a “pool of many betrayals,” he emphasizes the chaos and disillusionment that characterize the political landscape. Morphology, focusing on the structure and formation of words, examines morphemes—the smallest meaningful units of language. This, will, and where highlight free morphemes, while trees, dreams, and beginning identify bound morphemes. The root words point out the basic units from which different interpretations can arise. Moreover, Kamal makes use of several contending morphemes in his poem and increases the sophistication of the language. These are the prefixes and suffixes like featureless, daylight's, and wakefulness, which extend the meanings of the tokens and add value to the text. Even from this closer look, it is evident how Daud Kamal puts together the sound, the construction of the words, and the essence of what needs to be said about the socio-political state of affairs in Pakistan, where some hope, while others mourn and urge for the restoration of democracy.

With “Remote Beginning,” Daud Kamal iteratively unfolds a complex story where memory and identity are intricately woven together as metaphors for the human experience. Distant shore is metaphorical - it is a representation of one's origin, which is, in fact, impossible to comprehend because it is indistinctly beyond our grasp. Daud's employment of faded photographs as a metaphor serves to evoke the emotions of nostalgia. Moreover, the ‘faded photographs’ represent how memories blur over time, making the past painful as well as elusive. In addition, winding paths extend beyond the physical setting serving instead as a

metaphor for undertones of life in self-discovery. Each path taken represents choices that define our identity. However, the paths also depict ambiguity towards our ties to the past, as at many times over the course of life, the choices we make limit the understanding lesser understood facets of ourselves. Finally, the repetitive pattern of echo serves to underline the impact of our beginnings eternal. The 'echoes' of our origins forcefully relentlessly stalk our present and dictate the course of our future, similar to a whisper of a long-lost melody.

Finally, Daud's effort encourages the readers to reflect on the mystery of memory: memory is always a safe haven as well as an uneasy burden. The metaphors he uses do not let us off the hook easily and compel us to examine the multi-facetedness of our reality. In spite of our best efforts to understand one's roots, they are perpetually elusive, like stars flickering in a vast night sky. For this reason, Daud's paintings, in particular, "Remote Beginning" captures an attempt to ascertain one's identity in the wake of history's memories

### **Findings**

The current research intends to pursue these two primary objectives: to study the particular stylistic features that encapsulate the socio-political scenario of Zia-ul-Haq's rule, and to investigate how Kamal's anti-authoritarian poetic discourse functions to redeem and integrate the national memory of the country. In appreciating the necessity of understanding how poetry serves to unify a nation and craft collective identity, one witnesses the use of poetry not merely as a form of resistance but also as a weaponry to cohesive national identity amidst tremendous turmoil. This deepens into how art encapsulates and engages with the socio-political history of a nation.

A careful analysis of Daud Kamal's "A Remote Beginning" displays some findings in regard to his different stylistic levels. At the phonological level music of the poem is enhanced through the use of sound devices like rhyme, consonance, alliteration, etc. The sound devices aim to enhance the emotional experience of the poem. Thematic concerns within the text are deepened by repetition and figurative language such as similes, metaphors, and personification.

The poem in consideration must be understood through the lens of its context for a complete meaning. The social political environment of the military era in Pakistan and the oppression that came with it greatly impacted the presented themes. This is where symbolism comes into action; for example, "night" is a metaphor for pessimism and chaos, which the poet is optimistic will be turned into a new era of democracy. In phrases like "demolition

squad” and “daylight’s thieves,” the poet showcases his critical view towards his political environment, revealing his displeasure with the regime. Morpheme and affixation usage within word formation implies the poet’s skillful ability. The careful choice of language in the poem reveals the overall impact, balancing simplicity with complex themes but making the poem accessible yet profound.

In conclusion, the poem illustrates a noticeable change from pessimism to the slightest dash of optimism which embodies Kamal’s yearning for freedom and metamorphosis in the midst of political suppression. His nostalgic reminiscences and critique of societal problems formulate appeals of emotion and intellect to the reader. The analysis reveals that Daud Kamal’s poems are simultaneously autobiographic and socio-political in nature. The many stylistic devices emphasize and beautify the text, but also serve to render the poet’s aspiration of an ideal tomorrow, further intensifying the appeal of the poem as an indictment of oppression and plea for transformation.

During Zia-ul-Haq’s regime, Pakistan experienced turbulence that entailed repression combined with an overwhelming struggle for identity. These elements serve as the foundation to Kamal’s poetry, particularly “A Remote Beginning.” These poems serve as a reminder to people about the Zia regime and the authoritarian rule where there was censorship, constant political uncertainty, and a rigid ideological structure that did not allow dissent. Looking closer at Kamal’s choice of diction- the imagery, the symbolism, the language- gives us a better understanding of how the poetry spoke to people living during this highly oppressive time. These stylistic choices expose the nuances of defiance and strength, depicting how people dealt with and fought against the dictatorship.

In addition, as with attending any performance, Kamal’s poetry serves as a criticism of Zia’s rule and simultaneously serves as an important feature for fostering collective memory for the people of Pakistan. His work motivates the Pakistani society to think about the past and works as an antidote to memory loss - active and passive amnesia within a society contending with its fierce history. This dual focus on confrontational critique and politically oriented remembrance seeks to empower people and serves to instill empathy in people, which in turn generate unified and collective identification amongst people, overcoming their oppressive politics.

### **Conclusion**

Daud Kamal’s poem, “A Remote Beginning” serves as a potent reminder of the socio-

political state of Pakistan under the rule of General Zia-ul-Haq. The poem employs rich stylistic features such as imagery, alliteration, assonance, consonance, and metaphor to emphasize memory, nostalgia, and political disillusionment. Kamal uses the technique of foregrounding to alienate important concepts like loss of democratic citizenship and the silencing of dissenting voices. His stylistic choices not only enhance the poetic enjoyment but further serve to indicate the critique of authoritarian rule.

Kamal's metaphors associated with dark images and faded photographs depict the overwhelming reality of Zia's rule, demonstrating how military regimes have sought to erase the collective memory over time. Nonetheless, his work is hopeful. By depicting despair and sharpening the light of resilience, Kamal suggests that although oppressed, the spirit of humanity along with the memory of justice still persist, forming a skeleton of hope. His poetry serves as a reminder to the people and the society to not forget the ideals upon which Pakistan was built, thus aiding the people to remember along with resisting.

In addition, the imagery of Kamal's intricate phonological and morphological devices suggests that there is a search for meaning on a societal level as well. This draws from the paths and shores that serve as markers for personal exploration and self-discovery. The struggle between the past and present, despair and hope, oppression and resistance, is raised through the depth of the poem's intrinsic devices.

Through probing into warm memories, Kamal simultaneously pulls the reader into his anguish filled past, reminding them of the importance to reflect and brace against the endless sphere of oppression. "A Remote Beginning" is more than a critique against the authoritarian government because through his poetry, Kamal demonstrates how his nation is stuck in a cyclic disaster and does not know how to escape it and venture towards a place ruled by justice. It serves as a testimony for the unheard voice to remember, resist false authority, assert, and be free.

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