

**TRACING ECOPOLITICS: A POSTCOLONIAL
ECOCRITICAL STUDY OF UZMA ASLAM
KHAN'S *THE MIRACULOUS TRUE HISTORY
OF NOMI ALI* AND MUHAMMAD HANIF'S
*RED BIRDS***

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Tracing Ecopolitics: A Postcolonial Ecocritical Study of Uzma Aslam Khan's *The Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali* and Muhammad Hanif's *Red Birds*

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ABSTRACT

Title: Tracing Ecopolitics: A Postcolonial Ecocritical Study of Uzma Aslam Khan's *The Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali* and Muhammad Hanif's *Red Birds*

This study endeavors to foreground and investigate the against the grain perspective of both the authors regarding the Western militarization and neo imperialism. By engaging both ecocritical and postcolonial theories, the study underscores how the selected works exhibit humans' intricate relationship with the environment in Pakistani fiction. After much deliberation on this topic opened horizons of other critical aspects among which I have selected the aspect of ecopolitical debate, militarization and weaponization of the desert areas in *Red Birds* and Andaman Island in *The Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali* as mentioned in the selected fictional works. Both texts will be analyzed through the lens of Rob Nixon and Elizabeth DeLoughery's theorization on Postcolonial ecocriticism. Nixon's concept of Slow Violence has been employed to study both texts and DeLoughery's conceptualization on postcolonial ecology has been generally dilated upon. Furthermore, the study reveals how environmental degradation manifests itself in the form of contamination of sea waters and insensate killings of animals. The study further avers those human activities cause atmospheric crisis and challenge and subvert the equilibrium of nature. Since ecological damage is not restricted to any specific geographical region, it has colossal global impacts. The textual analysis method proposed by Catherine Belsey has provided me the way forward for completing my research. I have touched upon the military interventions and the consequences of the political gains of the Western imperial powers in the Third world at the expense of nature.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents and friend Professor Umar Shehzad.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The present research deals with Uzma Aslam Khan's *The Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali* and Muhammad Hanif's *Red Birds* from the panoptical of postcolonial ecocriticism. The main aim of the research would be to analyze the destruction of the indigenous environment at the hands of bloody wars involving killing of humans and environment at large. Currently, we are living in a post 9/11 cosmopolitan global world that is run by the champions of neoliberal capitalist free market economy and our sensitivity towards environment is heightened in the wake of US-led war on terror which allowed downright cutting of jungles and erecting buildings of colossal structures. This war, too, has wrought havoc for the Global South countries especially Afghanistan and the Middle Eastern countries.

'Tracing Ecopolitics' is my controlling phrase. Ecopolitics is a portmanteau. The word Eco has its origin in ecology while politics has its root in postcolonialism. I have selected two Pakistani authors' texts in order to vindicate my research. As far as the choice of my texts is concerned, I have selected two Pakistani authors because of the location/settings of their novels. Khan's new novel is set on an Andaman Island in Japan where there is war between the British and the Japanese over the ascendancy of the Island. While Hanif's novel is located in an anonymous country somewhere in the Middle East. The story is set in a desert which is war-torn. Both these texts lend themselves for a postcolonial ecocritical readings as there is a very strong binary between the powerful and the powerless and, then, there is environmental subversion at the very centre of the stories. So, politics and ecology get enmeshed in both the selected works.

Scientists have been warning the peoples of the world for decades to stop this nasty warfare and savagery as it is very detrimental to the overall environment of the world. Contrary to this, many of the modern powerful sovereigns find democratic paradoxes and exploit them to the fullest and are busy with waging war with the poor countries of the world. These wars, now, seem interminable and irreversible. Many

writers have come forward with their artistic pleas and implored the readers to become an agent for change in these immensely unholy and unreasonable wars. Pakistan has also been imbricated in the US- led war on terror in the wake of 9/11 tragedy and has paid huge price for this.

Moreover, many people became neurotic patients due to suicide bomb blasts in the different cities of the country during the last few years. It hit the country massively alongside both economic and ecological devastation. The imperial powers' unbridled obsession for wealth and resources have consequently led to the ecological catastrophe and rendered the human and animal population utterly vulnerable to the impending apocalypse and these vulnerabilities have finally led humans to an anarchic state of eco-anxieties. This large-scale ecological disaster of monstrous proportion has pushed the weaker nations and groups towards the fringes of the world order. Both humans and nature of these parts suffer incalculably at the hands of these ruthlessly avaricious powers. The 9/11 gave the imperial hooligan states the legitimate reasons for assaulting the already beleaguered countries of the global south in the garb of war on terror.

In this modern digital age, literature of environment has triggered a great debate across the continents. Nevertheless, a heightened sensitivity can be found in the writings of many authors of ex-colonized nations. These writers usually tend to see the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized before and after colonialism. Many modern writers have chosen rustic settings for their readers and made this claim that environment is being exploited. Postcolonialism interrogates and answers to the legacy of colonialism. The theory provides the impetus to study people and culture affected by colonialism. After the publication of Edward Said's monumental *Orientalism* in 1978, many writers from the ex-colonies authored such texts that bore witness to colonial devastation of the environment. Human culture and environment cannot be separated rather they are intimately linked. The gulf between the rich and poor countries has annihilated the ecological balance and has resulted in a massive dislocation from these regions and an unrestrained exploitation of nature. Since we have the advantage of the hindsight and we can now assess the cost of war on terror with considerable accuracy and clarity.

There are many scientists, theorists, activists, and writers who also acted the role of saviors for the reservation of the environment. In this age of global connectivity, these doyens of the rights of environment have found different spaces where they can

explore new fraternities and work ambitiously to advocate their case for nature with a much broader range and intensity. It has become a lot easier for them to raise public consciousness concerning ecological hazards. Sometimes the appeals of these authors are very moving. America and its allies have militarized the most regions of the Pacific. The region's artistic response is also intriguing. This response was due in the wake of world's superpowers usage of the region for testing the nuclear bombs. For example, the most heartrending poem is written by a Maori poet Hone Tuwhare titled *No Ordinary Sun*. This poem was hailed an indispensable anti-nuclear piece of literature in the Pacific. It ends like this:

O tree
 In the shadowless mountains
 The white plains and
 The drab sea floor
 Your end at last is written.

Western militarism has had massive impact on world's overall ecosystem. Gulf war is considered to be the most toxic war fought in the last decade of the last century. After the end of Cold War, America emerged as a world superpower and waged war against naturally-rich countries of the Global South and ravaged their natural habitat apart from scrambling their wealth.

Elizabeth Deloughrey maintains that "war, which has largely been neglected by globalization studies, is constitutive of the globalization process" (328). Many postcolonialists and environmentalists echo Third World countries as a permanent ecological menace. Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin, hold United States as "a country that has actively and aggressively contributed to what many now acknowledge to be the chronic endangerment of the contemporary late-capitalist world" (1).

Western writers orientalized the land of the orient. This orientalization of Eastern lands is the key concern of postcolonial ecocritics. In the eyes of Western writers, oriental lands are uncultivated, hostile, barbaric and menacing. These writers also try to 'other'-- sea, jungle and animals of eastern world. Anne McClintock, a prolific multidisciplinary scholar in the field of postcolonial studies has shed some light on the intersection of postcolonialism and Ecocriticism. In her oft-quoted essay "The

Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the Term Post-colonialism”, she exhibits the horrid picture of West’s immense impact on ecosystem of the world. She writes:

The US “development” myth has had a grievous impact on global ecologies. By 1989, the World Bank had \$225 billion in commitments to poorer countries, on the condition that they, in turn endure the purgatory of “structural adjustment,” export their way to “progress,” cut government spending on education and social services (with the axe falling most cruelly on women), devalue their currencies, remove trade barriers, and raze their forests to pay their debts. (95)

Postcolonial Ecology has recently appeared on the literary landscape and a huge bulk of scholarship is pouring in from across the borders. Before ecocriticism came to limelight, writers resorted to nature solely as a source for inspiration and composed their poems which encapsulate their love and fascination with nature. There is immense sensitivity about Environment in today’s world. Comprehending this through literary and fictional works, it becomes easier to understand that humanity is feeling threatened about its survival as neoliberal capitalist world is thriving in its expansionist move and clearing nature from its path.

We are living in the times of neoliberal capitalist economy, whereby, its agents are ruthless exterminators who know no limits in order to mint money. It would be in order to explain the argument of my thesis so that my intervention in the available critical scholarship may be vindicated. Both Uzma and Hanif are writers of Pakistani origin who have been living in the West for decades and their works are saturated with nature and environment. The selected texts bear witness to a conscious effort on the part of their writers to showcase an environment which is torn by war and its ravages. It is always the weaker factions of the planet which bear the brunt of these military ambitions. Since nature is too fragile and defenseless, it becomes quite susceptible to these military aggressions.

The current research is designed on such parallel lines to trace Khan’s discursive practice of geopolitically comprehending the norms and traditions of presenting the distorted environment of postcolonial exotic lands in her work. Many authors have championed the cause of ‘save environment’ and save human life on this planet. Uzma Aslam Khan is a famous Pakistani female writer who has been residing in America and

has written extensively on the issue of ecology in almost all her novels, for example: *The Geometry of God*, *Trespassing* and other such works.

In the similar way, Hanif, as a Pakistani postcolonial author, describes his sensibilities about animals and their exploitation at the hands of Neo-Imperial countries especially the United States of America. By nature, he is an anti-foundationalist writer who has railed against the colonial ravages of the super powers of the world. His depiction of the Mutt-dog as an important voiced character enunciates his sympathies and empathy for the ecological destruction and exploitation of animal rights in the postcolonial world. Damage to environment is the key line of thought in the works of both these selected texts.

Khan's novel is set in an island called Andaman Island that is under the control of British. Soon, Japanese invade this island and after defeating the British, oust them from the island. The main story gyrates around three characters- Nomi, Zee and Aye. The novel also underscores the insensitivities of war and its repercussions. Whereas, Hanif's novel provides the textual narration of his experiences of War on terror in which non-human(s) are the equal recipient of destruction and damage. Both these texts question, problematize, challenge, and destabilize the discourses coming from the other side of the Atlantic. They depict the landscape, people, animals and cultures of these places which dominant powers have portrayed as the breeding ground of terrorism. Furthermore, these texts offer us a counter-discourse and can be treated as a very pertinent case study. Both these texts, in certain ways, delegitimize the mainstream narrative promulgated by the hegemonic powers of the West. They, further, underscore the narratives of the margin and expose insensate brutalities of these invading powers and tell the world that how unimaginably colossal and big the cost of this war on terror is.

1.1 Delimitation

This investigation is delimited to the militarization and ecocritical aspects of displacement and disposability of living beings in Uzma Aslam Khan's *A Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali* and Muhammad Hanif's *Red Birds*. Both Pakistani novelists' works are saturated with war and environment. These elements have been critically evaluated using Rob Nixon's, Elizabeth DeLoughrey's and Pablo Mukherjee's

concepts related to ecopolitical sensibilities and violent but slow attacks on flora and fauna which are invisible from the eyes due to spectacle deficiency or visual disparity.

1.2 The Statement of Problem

Due to excessive militarization in the poorer countries of the world, chemical toxins are being used which are causing incalculable damage to both human and nonhuman world. The present study reveals the environmental degradation caused by militarization in the selected Pakistani fiction in English.

1.3 Research Questions

The current research has been designed to dig deeper the answers to the cited questions systematically:

Q1- How does militarization cause the ecological apocalypse?

Q2- How are the postcolonial ecopolitical slow violence and militarization figured the selected works?

1.4 Significance of Study

This study is significant in that it explores Pakistani writers' view of indigenous environment and how it is affected by war. There have been a relative dearth in the field of militarism and environment. It informs about the representation of the oriental environment in the selected works as disposable that also seeks the gap in the literary works for this study. Since Pakistan is a seminal player in the US-led war on terror, its role cannot be overlooked. It further reveals how Pakistani fiction in English unpacks the intricate relationship between humans and environmental exploitation. Since, technologically advanced Global North economies have destroyed the ecosystem of the Global South's communities, it is important to unmask anthropogenic activities and their toxic effects. This denigration and demonization of oriental environment is at the center of this study. Moreover, it sheds light on the ravages of war along with turbo-capitalism, and how it brings disadvantage to human beings and the environment at large. It, further, exhibits the impact of this war on the minds of Global South's community members and how it shaped writers' sensibilities in particular.

1.5 Research Plan

Chapter 1: “Introduction” is designed to give a brief overview of the politics behind militarization and slow violence and its depiction in the fictional works of Pakistani authors.

Chapter 2: “Literature Review” has brought forward the rational gap of the current research along with keen insight into the research with reference to previous works in the field.

Chapter 3: “Theoretical Framework” and “Research Methodology” have critically presented the systematic progression of the research.

Chapter 4: Landscape in Uzma Aslam Khan’s *A Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali* has been analyzed in light of the aspects of slow violence and militarization.

Chapter 5: War and Environment in *Red Birds* has been assessed in this chapter that has been underpinned through Rob Nixon’s groundbreaking concepts related to slow violence and militarization under the category of ecopolitics.

Chapter 6: “Conclusion and Recommendations” section provides the concluding remarks on the selected works.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I have critically examined the already existing scholarship in relation to my research. Since Hanif and Khan are famous contemporary Pakistani writers, their literary pieces have been examined through various perspectives. In this chapter, I have shown what previous researchers bearded on the selected novels. I have also underscored what previous researchers have left and how my research has tapped into those gaps. In order to make my research more authentic and resourceful, I have resorted to different media of information. For example, I have garnered help from other dissertations, journal articles, books, and newspaper reviews along with the fictional works inclusive of poetry and novels to look at the history of such works. The main aim of this chapter is to endorse the endeavor of previous researchers. In order to make my research clearer and more precise, I have given this chapter some significant breaks for better comprehension.

2.2 Environmental Crisis as The Global Problem

As cited above, the selected texts bear witness to environmental crisis in the Global South. The meteorological predicament in the Middle East and Japan is at the very heart of these selected texts. *A Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali* is written in the context of Anglo-Japanese war. While Hanif's *Red Birds* is written in the backdrop of American bombings in an anonymous Arab country. It is pertinent to link the knowledge of science with literature in order to get a clear picture. For this very reason, I have reviewed books, articles, and newspapers in order to reinforce my research.

2.3 Disenfranchised Geographies in Said's and Other Philosopher's Concepts

In their journal article "Green Postcolonialism", published in the special issue *Interventions* (2008), Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin have argued that during the imperial reign European colonizing powers scrambled the natural resources of the

colonized lands. For example: “[C]ash cropping, and other European agricultural practices usually replaced hunting and subsistence farming, thereby damaging established ecosystems” (1). It presents the keen insight in the context of Imperialism. A similar observation was made by Edward Said in his formidable book *Culture and Imperialism*. He avers:

The main battle in imperialism is over land, of course; but when it came to who owned the land, who had the right to settle and work on it, who kept it going, who won it back, and who now plans its future—these issues were reflected, contested, and even for a time decided in narrative. (xiii)

While considering Said’s argument, I must fathom that the land and natural resources have the significance that can change the fate of the nation.

The notion of geography and territory have played a seminal role in colonial expansion. One of the pioneers of the field of postcolonialism, Said, argues “imperialism is after all act of geographical violence through which virtually every space in the world is explored, charted, and finally brought under control” (227). He further maintains the necessity of geography in his seminal book *Culture and Imperialism*, foregrounding it as an instinct:

To think about distant places, to colonize them, to populate and depopulate them: all of this occurs on, about, or because of land. The actual geographical possession of land is what empire in the final analysis is all about. (78)

In her conspicuous essay “The Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the Term Postcolonialism”, Ann McClintock reveals how imperialist ideology operates in those countries which have won freedom from colonial rule. She informs how International Monetary Fund (IMF) manipulates developing nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. She observes:

Under the financial spell of the US (and now Japan), and in the name of the fairy-tale of unlimited technological and capital “growth”, the World Bank engineered one ecological disaster after another: the Indonesian Transmigrasi programme, the Amazonian Grande Caracas iron-ore and strip-mining project, and Tucuruí Dam deforestation project, and so on. The Polonoreste scheme in Brazil carved a paved highway through Amazonia, luring timber, mining and cattle ranching interests into the region with such calamitous impact that in May

1987 even the President of the World Bank, Mr Barber Conable, confessed he found the devastation ‘sobering.’ (95)

This shows how the World Bank and IMF facilitate environmental damage in the poor countries of the world. McClintock maintains that it is not easy to define neocolonialism as it carries different meanings in different geographical conditions.

2.4 Research Works on Ecological Studies

Keeping in mind the retrospect of certain research work conducted with this perspective, I have come across Thorsteinson’s work that deals in with Nixon’s theorization of slow violence. He has critically evaluated some factual accounts in the form of fictional works that provide the basis of understanding Nixon’s and other philosophers’ assertions in this regard.

Robert Newton, in his groundbreaking work “Insidious Pollen: Literature and Industrial Toxicity 1935-Present” attenuates the difficulty of responding to the “questions of systemic complicity and frustrated agency” (ii). While discussing the environmental toxic elements and the impact of industrialization on ecology, Nixon’s scholarship in bringing forth the slow violence has received much acclaim. Newton mentions about Nixon’s contribution:

Highlighting the ‘political, imaginative and strategic role’ in this context of ‘environmental writer-activists’, he suggests that through particular ‘strategies of representation’ literary work might ‘turn the long emergencies of slow violence into stories dramatic enough to rouse public sentiment and warrant political intervention.’ (2)

It deals with the aestheticization of feelings about environmentalism and destruction prevalent because of the humans’ nonchalant behavior towards the carcinogenic toxins’ and chemicals’ production, especially after World War- II. It has brought the geochemical shift.

Briggs critically comments on the significance of ocean life and the seas in relation to the environmental pollution when the concept of seeking authority over a nation through militarization comes under vogue. He evaluates Perez’s poetry keeping in mind the same theorization about the connection of land and sea, and the aspect of slow violence and militarization by the United States. Keeping in mind the

environmentalism of the poor in South Asian land and the depiction of fictional accounts through the pens of Pakistani authors, my research work attracts significance due to the critical aspect of ‘war on terror’ as well as the control and coercion through militarization in the past as depicted by Khan.

The criticism in Perez’s poetry on becoming the US army member to seek access to cemetery provides resonance of the idea that militarization and nature have some unnatural bonds made because of the political authority to assert the power of one nation the US over others. It also provides a gap for my research study in which I have focused on slow violence that has, coherently and secretly, brought the downfall of impoverished Third World nations as an unreversed environmental problem.

Especially as far as the nature is concerned, the slow violence is deteriorating the ecologies of the world that directly reflects in the natural disturbed cycles and other anomalies related to natural processes. In continuation of this, increasing pollution has marred the human health that is much vehemently visible in Pakistan where it is immense toxicity and acidity. Change in climate has posed serious threat to human condition and disturbed the sphere of life. Human health, economy, and crops have been affected by human inordinate attitude. Syed Muhammad Abubakr’s essay *Pakistan 7th Most Vulnerable Country* to climate change, attests to the fact that climate change has ravaged the climatic patterns. He holds “the super flood of 2010 placed Pakistan on the top slot among the countries most affected by climate change” (Bakr).

2.5 Pakistani Fiction in English and Ecocritical Studies

In his article “The Pakistani English Novel: The Burden of Representation and the Horizon of Expectation”(2018), Pakistani author and critic, Masood Ashraf Raja, argues that “Pakistani novel in English has finally come of age and had garnered its space within and without Pakistan” (2). Raja’s insight is aligned with Claire Chambers’ concepts, who highlights the fact that contemporary Anglophone Pakistani writers have constructed their identity and public persona with their own separate cultural identities (125).

Scot Slovic, an ecocritic scholar, in his book *Ecocriticism of the Global South* (2016) observes that modern Pakistani fiction reflects “the ubiquitous concerns about environmental degradation and coming to terms with the reality of urban existence that are evident throughout world literature” (5). Uzma Aslam Khan lashes out at the

government and corporate sectors for assisting the upper classes while augmenting injuries of the impoverished and downtrodden. For example, in her novel *Thinner than Skin*, there is a slow increase in the deforestation in the valleys of Northern area and corrupt forest officers are also accomplice in this business.

Saba Perzadeh avers that Pakistani writers like Aslam Khan and Nadeem Aslam represent post partition era with insurgency movements and wars that use environmental objectification to validate their combative ideology and represent nature as passive region meant to be violently conquered (15). Since war is a commodity now, many Pakistani writers who are writing in English bring its horrendous impact on ecology. Another famous Pakistani writer Kamila Shamsie underscores war ecology in her formidable novel *Burnt Shadows*. Her characters transform themselves during the war. Shamsie depicts how the clash between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union brought ecological ravages in the region by the use of “cluster bombs” (235).

The US imposed war on terror in Afghanistan which brought massive ecological damage in the region. In *Violence, Militarism and the Environment in Contemporary South Asian Literature* (2019), Perzadeh argues that Nadeem Aslam in *The Wasted Vigil* has drawn attention to the multifarious ways through which the environment is damaged by war either in the name of war on terror or in the name of ethnic violence within the country (112).

Ecocritic Scot Slovic observes that modern Pakistani discourse that reflects “the ubiquitous concerns about environmental degradation and coming to terms with the reality of urban existence that are evident throughout world literature” (5). In this manner, creating the space for the current research is no less in qualitative conceptualization. Therefore, the study is justified in its critical approach.

Contemporary Pakistani fiction in English is replete with issues of filth-ridden big cities, pollution, overcrowded population, waste, dirty water, disease, crime and violence- “that is neither spectacular nor instantaneous, but rather incremental and accretive, its calamitous repercussions playing out across a range of temporal scale” (Nixon 2). In his novel *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia*, Pakistani Anglophone writer Mohsin Hamid brings forth the dilemma of pollution. The use of compound words like “filthy rich” and “rising Asia” invokes neoliberal global capital in the work. In “Water, Waste, land: Environment and Extractivism in South Asian Fiction”, Sharae

Deckard critically examines ecology in Hamid's novel demonstrating how hydrological crisis and the urban ecology in Pakistan is a reflection of a dystopian vision of privatization and resource exhaustion (14). Similarly, Anis Shivani's characters in *Karachi Raj* gets extricated from the natural beauty. Both these writers are conscious of environmental degradation in Pakistan. They further explain how water pollution and decaying infrastructure is causing harm to impoverished segments of society. These were some instances of human and nonhuman relation in Pakistani fiction that deals with ecocriticism.

2.6 Critical Scholarship on War and Slow Violence

While discussing the concept of slow violence expounded by Rob Nixon, Erden El incorporates Nixon's concepts in his research regarding the nameless violent forces that are encountered by the main characters who fight against the slow violence (El). The authors of the selected texts focus on the invisible forces that bring havoc in the area in the form of coal mine accidents and the vulnerabilities of the labourers. The research hinges on the fact that the collective consciousness and awareness of the imperial projects is necessary to counter the slow poisoning in the environment. This research, however, tackles more with the imperialistic rule and the local people's consciousness as well as their sufferings while the current research focuses on the militarization and its impact on the ecologically distressed environment that provides the gap for the current research.

Dayna Nadine Scottis of the view that Rob Nixon has focused on three main concepts that are as follows: the nature's destruction or ecopolitics as slow violence; the environmentalism of the poor; and the writer's prolific role in raising the consciousness among the readers (480). Mahlu Mertens and Stef Craps discuss the contemporary fiction along with different challenges while considering the timescale of climate change. The researchers have studied the fictional works of Richard McGuire, Jeanette Winterson, and Dale Pendell to discuss the most threatening situation related to climate change and ecological destruction especially in relation to the slow violence as discussed by Rob Nixon. Katherine Eileen Wetzel has studied *Dombey and Son*, and *Bleak House* to comprehend the ecological factors in Charles Dicken's fictional works. She has focused on two categories of violence. According to her, the immediate violence as well as the slow violence as hidden poisoning through the naturalized processes are the most dangerous ones. The settling and unsettling of

different environmental factors in association with the colonial background are juxtaposed in these novels. The character's suffering since childhood is reflected in the contemporary setting that materializes the slow violence.

Shibaji Mridha has analysed the death by water using Nixon's concept of slow violence. In her study, she has comprehended anthropocentrism, speciesism, and different ecocritical aspects that garner the debate fruitfully. She has focused on the animated characters, presented in the selected movies *Silent River* and *A Plastic Ocean* (Mridha), considering the violence they face. The fate of the fauna becomes vague and pose their endangered condition. While studying this, she makes sense of the degraded condition of natural water reservoirs and the water's revenge in return in response to anthropocentric activities against the nature. Considering this fact as in addition to the debate on ecological destruction, after reading this research, we realize that the water force has its natural tendency to protect or re-establish its hegemony by encountering displacement strategy. However, many of the oft-quoted natural elements are found unable to counter the nemesis. These elements undoubtedly include the animals and plants.

Anthropocene, that is the geologic dating and division of geological timing the earth has already faced, plays a pivotal role in creating the monstrous havoc for the environmentalism. In this discussion, we also bring to light eco-cosmopolitanism as a framework developed by Ursula K. Heise in her 2008 book *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet*. It concerns how local systems related to culture and ecology exist on the global scale, and how one's sense of place is related to the concepts of environmental imaginations, deterritorialization, and globalization. "It is a critique of how localism is inadequate at explaining how humans affect nature, how they understand their surroundings, and what to do about the future of the environment in an ethical context". (34).

In this debate, Environmental racism also functions to cater the concept of global environmental destruction. Ecocosmopolitanism, however, is more a concept related to the functioning of capitalism in bringing the destruction of the environment and selling of the key projects to secure the earth. Diviani Chaudhuri has also studied the range of discourses on ecocritical debates and recuperation of Pakistani landscapes imbricated within the juxtaposed historical references of postcolonial emergence and post-9/11 spatial texts. She has also focused on Uzma Aslam Khan's texts along with

some other authors from Pakistan. However, the current research endeavors to portray the militarization and its impact on the colonial era along with the natural resources.

Furthermore, Munazza Yaqoob unfolds the deep-rooted colonialism and neo-colonialism in *The Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali*. Her views related to the environmentalism in the selected novel present the argument on imperialism while opposing:

[T]he paradigms of ‘disassociated thinking’ and support[ing] an integrated vision of the world, thus forming a meaningful contribution to the contemporary theories of climate change and the Anthropocene, as well as to related environmental problems. (91-92)

While, this research covers the aspect of militarization to cater the need of understanding how far the wars’ impact has been felt by the ex-colonies in terms of their devastated environment and endangered animal species.

The exploitation of the environment on the larger horizon damages the existence of human beings. We study this phenomenon to examine the ecological factor so as to why the militarization in the world has brought havoc in the lives of the human beings as the aftershock of the battles, bombings, and use of chemicals on the green lands. The orientalist methodologies, Yaqoob and Cara Cilano have highlighted in their works, are the bitter stance of the reality which we cannot ignore. However, focusing on the human activities as the major cause behind this global warming and ecological damage, we can consider the war times as the crucial factor to be considered and ask the leaders of the world about the planning of the future.

2.7 Dissertations on Postcolonial Ecocriticism

Dr. Neelam Jabeen in her dissertation “Women and the Environment of the Global South: Toward a Postcolonial Ecofeminism” analyzed four different South-Asian fiction works. But she did not shed light on war and militarization aspect. My study is going to plug in this gap. Similarly, Dr. Rabia Aamir in her thesis titled “Questioning Idees Recues: A Study of Interpellative Strategies and Environmental Ethics in Basharat Peer and Ghada Karmi’s Memoirs” threw light on Kashmiri fiction from the panoptical of environment. In this context, my study is nuanced. Another formidable Pakistani scholar in the field of Ecocriticism Dr. Sonia Irum in her dissertation titled “Exploring Environmental Concerns in Uzma Aslam Khan’s Fiction”

capitalized on the ecological aspects of Khan's fiction. She did not evaluate Khan's fiction from postcolonial perspective. My study in this regard is vindicated. In the similar tradition, in 2016, a Pakistani Ph.D. scholar, Dr. Monazza Nazir Makhdoom, has done a comparative study of two Pakistani and two American novels titled as *Transgeographical Ecosensitivity: A Comparative Ecocritical Study of Pakistani and American Fiction in English*. She foregrounded the phenomenon of sensitivity towards the environment across the border but she did not focus on the impact of war on the indigenous ecologies and critical impact of militarization and weaponization on the flora and fauna of the region. This aspect has been dealt in the current research by me to fill the gap.

While focusing on the research works mentioned before, I have come to know how important it is to discuss the nature-human relation in order to highlight the significance of ecology and the factors associated with it to tackle the latest problem of the twenty-first century that is climate change and global warming. In this process of bringing forth the gap for my study, I have come to know that many of the researchers while making their assertions on slow violence or postcolonial ecostudies, have neglected the impact of war, militarization and weaponization as well as the destruction and devastation of the fauna and flora of the third world countries, considering it disposable. The current study holds onto this topic keeping in mind that the ecopolitics function on the basis of the Western powers' capitalistic pursuits and strategies to navigate the attention towards the Global South for all the problems of the universe.

Therefore, all these studies provide a visible gap for the current study in relation to the selected texts as well as the theoretical framework selected for the studies. Ultimately, the study is focused on the purpose of highlighting the war-torn postcolonial world where the natural elements have faced slow violence and drastic climate change in the form of spatial, temporal, geographical, and rhetorical displacement that I have assessed in the current research to transfer the attention back towards the imperial powers and neo-colonizers to make them understand the consequences of the Western-powers' initiative of maintaining and supporting war on terror. In the next chapter I have discussed Research Methodology and Theoretical Framework.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, I have foregrounded the theoretical perspective of the study. I have divided this chapter into two sections. This first section deliberates on research design and methods while the second part is the elucidation of the important steps of ecocritical theory proposed by Pablo Mukherjee, Rob Nixon, and Elizabeth DeLoughrey.

3.1 Research Approach

In this research, I have undertaken the descriptive course of study and unpacked postcolonial ecocriticism in the context of chosen works. Since both texts are innovative and imaginative in nature, they cannot be amenable to any positivist methodology. Both research questions which I have raised cannot be answered with any finality rather they can only be answered in their specific geographical and historical context. I have selected the qualitative methodology as the tracing approach for the critical aspects of ecopolitical debate. To ascertain its results, Rob Nixon's and Elizabeth DeLoughrey's theoretical positions have been applied. In addition to this, the method of the research is selected keeping in mind the literary nature of the research that is the textual method proposed by Catherine Belsey that has been described in detail under the next heading.

3.2 Research Method

I have invoked textual method as a research method for studying these selected fictional texts. According to Belsey "[T]he project of cultural criticism is to understand the texts- or rather, to read the cultures in the texts" (171). The reason for selecting this method is obvious as it capitalizes on what the text has to offer to the readers. Belsey describes textual method of analysis as "[A] close encounter with the work itself, an examination of the details without bringing to them more presuppositions than we can help" (160). She has brought to the front some questions that may be kept in mind while reading any text for its better understanding. The questions related to the significance

of the text in relation to the theme depicted in the plot; the prior knowledge and the understanding of the main concept depicted in the text; the specific historical or textual value added in the text in relation to reality; and the target reader who becomes able to relate with the text in the fictional work, render critical thought process for meaning making in relation to the fictional work.

Therefore, while using Belsey's concepts of textual method, I have tried to make sense of my research. Her method has provided me the framework to cater my research methodically and effectively. I have focused on the critical aspects related to ecopolitical debate and the process of slow- poisoning of the ecology of the world.

3.3 Theoretical Framework

In the current research, I use Rob Nixon as my seminal theorist and allude to Elizabeth DeLoughrey tangentially. I grapple with the main key aspects of militarization and weaponization of colonized lands. Rob Nixon avers at this moment:

[O]ffloading rich-nation toxins onto the world's poorest continent would help ease the growing pressure from rich-nation environmentalists who were campaigning against garbage dumps and industrial effluent that they condemned as health threats and found aesthetically offensive. (2)

Moreover, in the similar tradition, DeLoughrey, in her essay "Postcolonialism" expounds on the similar intervention of the Western forces in the form of militarization and destruction of the ecology of the war-ravaged territories. She holds the far-sighted opinion concerning relegation of the under-developed and the Third world countries which are suffering because of the capitalistic powers. Similarly, in her book *Postcolonial Ecologies*, she has navigated her stand directly towards the ecological factors with the intersection of postcolonialism as also contended by Mukherjee. Albeit, the argument does stand that the European countries support the ecology and try to rescue the ecological elements including the fauna and flora, the postcolonial ecological debate that takes militarization and its impact as the far-reaching influential force in bringing the consequential climate change or global warming along with eco-destruction, may dismiss the former narrative.

Rob Nixon capitalized on Slow Violence. While relegating the Third world countries for the damaged natural resources or destructed nature, the super powers forget about the slow-poisoning they have committed to damage their under-control

territories. Nixon articulates his concerns against the injustices done to nature. Nixon holds the following opinion about the kind of violence nature confronts:

[A] violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all. Violence is customarily conceived as an event or action that is immediate in time, explosive and spectacular in space, and as erupting into instant sensational visibility. (2)

Conceptually, Nixon has provided this detailed description of violence to refer to the concept of victimization of nature through slow poisoning and polluting the environment through militarization. This detailed description has provided the deep insight into the matter of ecopolitical destruction of the Third world countries where the neocolonial powers have brought the havoc of war, and militarization.

Nixon elaborates this concept further by highlighting the facts related to hidden and clear realities of the war on terror:

[T]he politics of the visible and the invisible, as environmental justice movements—and the writer-activists aligned with them—strategize to shift the balance of visibility both in the urgent present and over the long haul, pushing back against the forces of temporal inattention that compound injustices of class, gender, race, and region. (30)

Europe and North America use militarization as the direct means of coercion and control either through persuasion or transgression to provide ‘instant sensational visibility as a coercive means of slow violence (2). However, the political reimagining has critically brought forward the representation of slow violence as the reconstruction projects or sympathy projects of the imperial powers. Nixon mentions this kind of violence as, “a violence that is neither spectacular nor instantaneous, but rather incremental and accretive, its calamitous repercussions playing out across a range of temporal scales” (2).

Moreover, Nixon further writes about the human or non-human losses in the form of deaths or the heightened increase in the mortality rate:

Casualties of slow violence—human and environmental—are the casualties most likely not to be seen, not to be counted. Casualties of slow violence become light-weight, disposable casualties, with dire consequences for the ways

wars are remembered, which in turn has dire consequences for the projected casualties from future wars. (13)

In this manner, the aftermaths of the wars come to the fore in the form of the huge loss. Nevertheless, these wars bring forth the anthropocentric projects of the European and the USA's political stance and deliberate ignorance towards the devastation brought into the third world countries. The heightened desire to take the control of the world matters has made these super powers either European or new European blind in their disposition. Nixon is of the view,

What's at stake is not just disciplinary parochialism but, more broadly, what one might call superpower parochialism, that is, a combination of American insularity and America's power as the preeminent empire of the neoliberal age to rupture the lives and ecosystems of non-Americans, especially the poor, who may live at a geographical remove but who remain intimately vulnerable to the force fields of U.S. foreign policy. (34)

The vulnerability of the natives weather animate or inanimate is increasing day by day just because of the increased threat that they are facing from the US armies and the European powers who collectively enforce their strategies and plotting to destroy the nature whether directly or indirectly. In such critical moment, understanding and inclusion of such vehement destruction that is not time-bound or body-bound into the list of violence is mandatory to critically analyze the dire need of saving ecopoetic. Nixon also enlightens the readers about the effectivity of the native informants who work against their own nation as well as the nature. The critical approach reveals the political stance more significant than the national goals. Nixon writes,

Environmental activists face well-funded, well-organized interests that invest heavily in manufacturing and sustaining a culture of doubt around the science of slow violence, thereby postponing policies that would help rein in the long-term impacts of climate change in particular. (39)

Taken as the oft-quoted example, the writer of the fictional account also highlights the contrary situations to provide the whole view of the coin along with its two sides. Nixon writes:

There are of course exceptions to these tendencies, but in resource-cursed societies, a mineral strike, though less immediately spectacular than a missile

strike, is often more devastating in the long term, bringing in its wake environmental wreckage, territorial dispossession, political repression, and massacres by state forces doing double duty as security forces for unanswerable petroleum transnationals or mineral cartels. In such societies, a highly concentrated revenue stream is readily diverted away from social and infrastructural investment and into offshore bank accounts. The ties between rulers and ruled are typically weak. (70)

When we observe Nixon's critical approach in comprehending violence in the context of environmentalism and colonialism, we assess his aversion in light of the impoverished nations being objective more in the garb of sympathy:

Crucially, slow violence is often not just attritional but also exponential, operating as a major threat multiplier; it can fuel long-term, proliferating conflicts in situations where the conditions for sustaining life become increasingly but gradually degraded. (3)

His qualification and quantification of slow violence throws light on the incremental devastation of environment, possessing unequal heft that displaces the natives and the ruled ones politically and emotionally.

Nixon raises the question critical for consideration, as far as the development of human scholarship in understanding natural processes is concerned. He writes about the immediate problems the humans confront while being the residents of impoverished state. He talks about the stories:

Stories of toxic buildup, massing greenhouse gases, and accelerated species loss due to ravaged habitats are all cataclysmic, but they are scientifically convoluted cataclysms in which casualties are postponed, often for generations. In an age when the media venerate the spectacular, when public policy is shaped primarily around perceived immediate need, a central question is strategic and representational: how can we convert into image and narrative the disasters that are slow moving and long in the making, disasters that are anonymous and that star nobody, disasters that are attritional and of indifferent interest to the sensation-driven technologies of our image-world? (3)

The questions which I have tried to venerate in this study propound the concept that the insistent need of the time in maintaining the victimhood while bringing forth the slow

violence with proper evidences require attention. Moreover, political intervention and public awareness can only be raised by initiating scholarly debates on the topic militarization and ecopolitical slow violence that are paradoxically avoided to systematically enhance the impact of imperialism. Nonetheless, it gives rise to rhetorical displacement and creation of disposable human beings in the artificial environmentalism. I have selected Nixon's assertions related to slow violence and displacement of the poor, keeping in mind the non-avoidance of war impacts in many of the eco-poetical fictional works that have been referred in this critical study. Nixon mentions:

“The poor” is a compendious category subject to almost infinite local variation as well as to fracture along fault lines of ethnicity, gender, race, class, region, religion, and generation. Confronted with the militarization of both commerce and development, impoverished communities are often assailed by coercion and bribery that test their cohesive resilience. How much control will, say, a poor hardwood forest community have over the mix of subsistence and market strategies it deploys in attempts at adaptive survival? How will that community negotiate competing definitions of its own poverty and long-term wealth when the guns, the bulldozers, and the moneymen arrive? Such communities typically have to patch together threadbare improvised alliances against vastly superior military, corporate, and media forces. (4)

When the natives suffer the slow violence in the sense that their resources move to the foreign or offshore land without their knowledge, and then they also are displaced without moving then there comes the true sense of ecopolitics. Whereby, the international organizations indirectly approve of the turbocapitalism and provide false sympathetic rhetoric to the natives to appease their pain. Such slow violence is invisible and cloaked that needs to be revealed. These are the transnational circuits of toxicity, permeating the boundaries and borders. These are the communities, according to Nixon, “whose vigorously unimagined conditions are...indispensable to maintaining a highly selective discourse of national development” (150).

The nature that is neither biologically restrictive nor constructive or socially incremental in its own, as it is dependent on human beings because of their turbocapitalistic pursuits and productive gains, it demands to be protected and preserved instead of wastage or devastated. Nixon highlights the underestimation of

nature's own powers to countering the attacks onto it. Nixon, propounds the active law to ascertain the rhetorical, geographical, or political displacement and damage to the Earth in the colonial nations. Elizabeth DeLoughery asserts "both ecocritics and postcolonialists share an interest in theorizing the planet as a whole and in examining literature's part in shaping consciousness of the globe' (320). She, too, maintains that:

The analytics of place, power, knowledge, and representation are vital to postcolonial studies, which has engaged in an ongoing critique of the homogenization of global space from European colonialism to its aftermath in neoliberal globalization. As a result, postcolonial approaches to environmental thought tend to highlight alterity, difference, and rupture, which are vital methods of deconstructing the discourses of Enlightenment universalism. (321)

Therefore, the current research hinges on this fact that the First World has been remained as the main causal force behind the environmental degradation, military attacks and slow violence that the environment faces. The current research hinges on the same debate keeping in mind the status of Pakistan, and other South Asian countries as the main geographical site of displacement without movement and creation of disposable people in the era of turbo-capitalism. Thus, in Rob Nixon's words, "Climate change, the thawing cryosphere, toxic drift, deforestation, the radioactive aftermaths of wars, oil spills, acidifying oceans, and a host of other slowly unfolding environmental crises confront us with formidable representational obstacles that hinder efforts to mobilize for change" (2). In the next chapter I have analyzed Khan's *The Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali*.

CHAPTER 4

LANDSCAPE IN UZMA ASLAM'S KHAN'S *A MIRACULOUS TRUE HISTORY OF NOMI ALI*

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will analyze the text of *The Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali* by employing Rob Nixon's theorizing on Slow Violence. This analysis will also propose means of conceptualizing how the repercussions of militarism and neoliberal capitalist economies morphed individuals and their surroundings in the context of Pakistan. Khan's novel is a terse and multidimensional fictional-historical account of ecological crisis. The locale of the novel, the characters staged in it, and the almost interminable strife between the two different contending colonial powers make this document an apt enunciation of the critical issues that I intend to underscore in it.

The story of the text gyrates around the character of Haider Ali who has been transported to Andaman Island along with his wife and two children- Nomi and Zee. Andaman Island is occupied by the Britishers and soon they are defeated by the Japanese and they become the new masters of the Island. The beauty of the Island is marred by unending conflicts, prison life and war ravages. The novel starts off with the Japanese's assault and incarcerating of Zee, eponymous Nomi's brother. The whole novel is saturated with surreal island and seas. But the moment the Japanese assaulted the island, these lofty landscapes and seas become battlefields ensuing in gory tragedy. One of the central figures in the story Prisoner 218 D wages war through her body. Throughout the novel we witness horrendous atrocities committed against both the political prisoners as well as the environment. Seas are ravaged due to incessant explosions. Many animals including elephants flee due to excessive bombings. In the beginning British robbed and raped the island and later same was done by the Japanese.

4.2 Militarism and Ecological Damage

Elizabeth DeLoughrey observes, "both ecocritics and postcolonialists share an interest in theorizing the planet as a whole and in examining literature's part in shaping

consciousness of the globe” (3210). Khan has profoundly presented the environmental problem occurring in the twenty-first century as the aftermath of World War-II and occupation of the colonies. She has also brought forth the annihilation of lofty landscapes caused by ruthless wars waged by the contending imperial powers. She writes, “There were bombers in the sky and battleships in the sea” (3). Her illustration of the ecological destruction in the sky and in the sea, procure the losses and damages from the history as the rhetorical displacement without any activism against it to present the ecopolitics of the West. The children are told by their father to, ‘wait and see,’ as ‘The Japanese are here to help’, prove to be the dilapidated situation (3). This transition of colonial government is laden with many paradoxes as the very saviors are destructors. Since the island was first governed by the British and now taken over by the Japanese, they bring more disaster and damage. The dilemma of apparent freedom brings another havoc of ecological destruction. Khan has given us many passages where insensate violence and incessant bombing get the better of environment.

The very first instance occurs when she writes, “When the Japanese bombed it [island], the cry of elephants could be heard even over the sirens, and some people reported seeing monstrous globes of fire charging into the sea” (6). Although, it is a type of aggressive violence and damaging oceanic life but it seems clandestine and endorses what Nixon calls “causalities most likely not to be seen” (13). This is also an instance of Turbo-capitalism as these invaders are unstoppable in their ambitions and dropping bombs even in sea and killing fish and other oceanic life. Since the important theme of Nixon’s book is displacement of three types- temporal, geographical, and rhetorical, we witness geographical displacement when we learn that due to these bombings she could hear no elephants now (6). They have got displaced. In the same vein, readers get to know that prisoners get displaced number of times during the course of action. The second conspicuous instance of geographical displacement occurs when assaults grow fiercer and cause “animals to flee” (268). Same happens when prisoners are sent to the promised land and they are reluctant to go. While they were unwilling to embark someone shouted “We are again being transported” (299).

Khan further situates the island historically when she depicts the war-torn Island in following words:

The Malays ruled the islands till the mid-eighteenth century, when the East India Company came in search of an outpost for their fleets. The man they sent,

Lieutenant of the Royal Navy, Archibald Blair, was to obtain information about the aborigines, make a detailed survey of the three main land masses; examine the soil for possible cultivation; collect samples of flora and fauna; and gauge the depths of the waters. (53)

From the very start reader come to know that the Japanese soldiers are “lying in the grass with their boots off” (5). This shows how, in its very essence, the novel tries to capture the adverse effect of militarism on environment. Secondly, the prison, is “[s]haped like a starfish and the color of a wound, its seven arms severed by the tall, tall tree” (5).

The beauty of the island is simply mesmerizing. In the beginning, when Nomi and her brother Zee go on “Mount Top” despite their mother’s warning, they see “the ocean flew through the trees” (5). Later we are told that:

Andaman Islands were the tip of a submerged mountain range. Below the surface of the sea, there were many Mount Tops, far taller than the one on which they now stood. If Nomi shut her eyes and listened closely, she could hear a rhythmic rumbling all around her. The islands were breathing. The whole universe seemed to sing. The sea was so many greens, and blues, all glassy and glittering. (6)

We are told that Nomi’s mother work in a factory and she often frequents that place. This factory was built by “clearing the jungle and building roads” (26). This downright cutting of jungles and buildings of road at the expense of jungles is lamented by Khan. These disasters can cause incalculable loss and, in Nixon words, “sustaining life become increasingly but gradually degraded” (3).

The whole text is saturated with militarism and its adverse effects on the environment. Khan underscores the turbulent history of Andaman Island where two imperial powers- British and Japan- are contesting for their hegemony. The Japanese establish their ascendancy over the Island at the expense of colossal damage to the environment. As Pablo Mukherjee has observed, “Modern capitalism’s relationship with the environment now had to be understood through the histories of old and new imperialisms that continue to be a crucial medium for the expression of ecological phenomenon” (30). Since capitalism is the driving force behind all this ecological damage, we can study these imperial histories of Andaman Island in the light of

Mukherjee's observation. Both these colonial powers are invaders on the Island and want to scramble the rich resources of the Island. Both equally plunder, murder, rape and denigrate the Island and its denizens. The inhabitants of the island think that Britishers were their callous masters while the Japanese have come to redeem them from the brutal colonial yoke of their erstwhile masters. As the first observation by Haider Ali comes that "The British have left. We are free" (3). But is retorted, "We are not free. We are now under the Japanese" (3). The whole imagery is that of soldiers all around carrying their satchels.

Khan explicitly underscores the militarization of the Island when she writes, "There were bombers in the sky and battleships in the sea" (3). All these things attest to the fact that the Japanese did not just militarize the sky, they also harmed the ocean life. The Japanese are more domineering as we know when children pass by one of the shops the "Japanese taxidermist [had] kept stuffed birds in the window" (17).

When the colonizers came, they, settled on the Island. When they decided to settle:

[T]he forest was partly cleared and a few structures were built, such as the jetty in Aberdeen, the barracks and crude cottages like the one assigned to Susumu San. During the year, the settlers tried to approach the aborigines with offerings of biscuits and knives. (54)

Khan has also narrated those incidents and happenings, which may not be of any specific significance in the history, but, the minor incidents have brought to light the fact that the soldiers of oppressing nations never bothered about the destruction of the ecology or the loss of animals, as also conceptualized by Nixon and Mukherjee, instead they carry the project of displacement either geographical, rhetorical, or political.

Similarly, as the plot proceeds, we come to know there are some more animals which suffer because of the blind attacks on the human beings. These animals are considered as disposable entities because of the self-healing property of the nature and its elements, by the powerful. Khan writes, "[A] soldier caught the sharbat-pink hen. He put her in his satchel" (12). In this manner, we can realize more profoundly that the animals including elephants, hens, horses, mules, donkeys etc. are under severe threat because of the attacks of the military forces which belong to the neo-colonial powers including the USA, Japan, and other European countries.

The colonial powers were so fiercer that they fought madly. Khan observes, “[T]he island turned red not with the blood of comfort women and mad men, but of soldiers” (268). This shows how water was transformed due to the blood of the soldiers and marine life was made to bear the brunt of these imperial powers. The most horrendous description of an attack comes when:

Aye heard the cries. Hundreds of bodies thrashed in the water. He watched as a woman was dragged backward with her long hair towards the boat’s propeller, her mouth open to the sky. Why did the night not hide this too? He did not yet understand that there was fire on the water, that they were being attacked from the sky, that children drowned each other to save themselves. (301)

Khan zeros in on the worst type of militarization of Island when she writes, “There were fewer missiles breaking the water” (303). This breaking of water by missiles showcases the most horrible type violence done to the oceanic life. Few pages earlier Khan informs the reader that oceanic creatures conspicuously sharks and crocodiles “had grown ravenous since the Japanese began feeding them corpses” (297).

Throughout the text we witness enormous brutalities like uncountable bombings in the sea and jungles, insensate murder of prisoners, downright cutting of jungles, forced labour, plunder and rape of women, and stealing of birds’ eggs. All these things have adverse and far-reaching effect on human beings as well as nonhuman lives. Nixon acquaints the reader with two types of violence- “spectacular” and “unspectacular” violence (6). We witness spectacular violence being made explicit in the text in the form of ruthless bombing, merciless beating, raping, force-feeding and chaining. Same happens with the environment in the form of downright cutting of jungles, incessant bombing etc. while unspectacular violence or slow violence in the form of diseases. When forests were cleared, it ensued those mosquitoes assaulted human beings which resulted in malaria and for this disease quinine experiments were done. In the same vein, dogs and other ravenous creatures began to develop a taste for human flesh after looking at deserted and stranded human bodies on the whole of Island (309-323). This is a vivid example of war and environment getting mutually engaged.

Khan rails against both colonizers- the British and the Japanese- who threaten, “symbiotic network of the entire human and non-human fields of existence” (19).

The proper investigation, done by Rob Nixon, describes this indirect violence against the environment as, “media bias toward spectacular violence [that] exacerbates the vulnerability of ecosystems treated as disposable by turbo-capitalism” (4). Khan’s novel presents the concept of eco-destruction during World War I in such profound manner that it highlights the impact of capitalistic gains through bombing the woods and animals and targets the same turbo-capitalism.

Khan further describes the militarization when the, “Japanese bombers began circling the island two months ago” (61). She narrates the incident mentioning all the minor details related to the impact of such circling and bombing on the ecosystem. “The first bombs fell on the first of February. They exploded in the sea” (62). The chemicals affecting the marine life and ecosystem is beyond the scope of explanation. These harmful chemicals unnoticeably function to bring slow violence that is ignored by the world powers deliberately to reduce the criticism on their actions that highlights their nonchalant attitude towards the ecological damage under the sea.

While in the twenty-first century, considering the Glasgow COP 26 meeting of the major powers of the world, the worst role of colonizers in the past has been ignored that was the actual cause behind the destruction of the environment. Khan writes, “Two weeks later, the Japanese dropped bombs for sixty five minutes. Two Gurkha soldiers were injured” (62). In her novel, she has highlights the worst side-effects of war in which the powerful country tries to end every kind of life on the land of the opponent/oppressed country. Nixon has profoundly explained the same phenomenon in terms of lacking the spectacle of the ecological destruction as well as the active consciousness of the loss. He writes, “Confronted with the militarization of both commerce and development, impoverished communities are often assailed by coercion and bribery that test their cohesive resilience” (4).

Khan, then, expounds the aftermath of bombing by writing, “across the sea, Ross island was shrouded in darkness” (65). The inhabited risk that was a part of the natives’ fortune, has been discussed by Khan. Apart from the “empty belly” and “full stomach” environmentalism as proposed by Ramachandra Guha and Joan Martinez-Alier, Nixon delineates the expansion of colonizers’ hypocritical role. In such dual role, they not only show fake sympathy towards the colonies but also plunder all the colonial legacies and resources. All those elements or environmental factors which they cannot

transfer to their own country, they try to destroy them by using different chemicals and biological wars.

Furthermore, Khan deliberates on the same misfortune of the colonial areas and their plight in her factual depiction. She writes, “Every wind halted; trees tensed” as if they, despite being sense-less fathom the forthcoming danger (65). In this way, she has expounded and illustrated in minute detail the plight of the wind and the tearing trees that have been taken for-granted as disposable. The downright cutting of the trees for use during war-times also hints towards the misuse and abuse directed towards the plants.

Khan’s critical role in bringing back into discussion the impact of war on the poor colonies, especially in the current era when environmentalities and ecocritical destructions are in debates, has raised the question on the super powers about their past behavior towards bringing the same damage. She describes the historical significance of fauna and flora in the subcontinents and the nearby areas. She writes:

The talk shifted to Aye’s great-grandfather, who was among the first prisoners shipped to these shores, soon after the Indian Mutiny. He had cleared the forests and swamps to build this village, and, upon his release, the village continued to grow around him. It was where some of the most fertile soil on the colony was farmed. It was also where malaria had caused the most deaths. The clearings had brought the mosquitoes, the mosquitoes had brought the quinine, and the experiments. (64)

According to Khan, the people are ignorant of the luxurious islands and the marine life these islands have. The foreigners and the colonizers are taking advantage of that land. She writes, “no one in Aberdeen had any understanding of the island’s geography” (67). This lack of knowledge among the colonizers especially in the European countries has brought to light their hypocritical role as well as the ignorance of the common European masses of their leaders’ misdoings and ill-planned wars. They are unable to control it because they do not know much about the territorial and colonial land.

Same is the condition of the native people of the colonies. The critical situation of handing over the treasure to the British people first and then to Japanese, is equal to bringing their own destruction with their own hands. Khan even highlights the installment of mines inside sea. She writes, “There are mines in the sea” (67). Such

depiction actually forsakes the ecopoetics and highlights the ecopolitical stance more profoundly where for the personal or political gains, the world leaders never think about the poor ocean life and the harmless creatures less human beings.

The sequence of events which she has mentioned in her novel, also portray the scene of recurring destruction in the environment and the nature. She writes, “Abilio Vaz’s house was a sad little island waging a sad little contest” (84). The miniature picture of the global problem has been summed up brilliantly by Khan. She further maintains:

Ahead, the trees drew spells in their sleep. When he first came here, said Mr Howard, on nights such as this, he believed himself to have washed up on nights such as this, he believed himself to have washed up on a chain of dreaming islands, all glassy bays and whispering surf. Our lovely lost world, he had called it. ‘As though there was something here that caused the clay of the physical body to glow.’ Though there was much still to be done, one had to remember that a lot had been accomplished already. ‘After all, it is men like me who make dreaming islands real. (141)

Khan’s illustration of the struggle of the natives to preserve the land and the process of cultivation to grow crops and use natural resources, has provided the evidence how the colonized people were concerned about their land and ecology. She writes:

The plants he collected for their grandchildren, the joy of winning the old man’s approval, the soil that fed the plants, the rafters where the pigeons roosted, watching him as he worked: all of it belonged to his children. Only through ritual could continuity be maintained, and so could tenderness. (190)

The landscapes in this novel have been described to enunciate the effects of war on the colonial land under the control of Japan and the United Kingdom. The militarization and weaponization of the harmless areas, seas and oceans brings forth the coward nature of the colonial powers who to appease their insecurity sacrifice their nature, considering it belonging to the colonies that may otherwise impact them vice versa. The people who desire to get independence, they suffer along with the environmental degradation that demonstrates the havoc of the war and colonial impact.

Lawrence Buell and Bartosch both share the same thought on the destruction of ecological elements i.e. the flora of the colonized countries, which demand the better

understanding of the ecocritical political interventions to protect the ecology for the future generations (9-10). Describing it as the failure of narrative as articulated by Bartosch, Rob Nixon, Mukherjee or others, do suffice the need of the time to initiate the debate again on environmentalism. However, despite all fatal possibilities and reality-based presences of environmental destruction, imprecisely touched upon in this novel by Khan, the fictional work still lags behind while catering the need of profusely comprehending how much destruction the Japanese occupation brought right after the oppressive control of the British colonialists.

The verbal camouflage that Nixon has described in his works comes to the fore when the Western authors show the silence on the matter of environmental degradation in their previous colonies, especially during the war days. Khan has profoundly brought forward the matter tugged under the rug to the limelight in this fictional account of Andaman Island in Japan and the Japanese and British colonies. The suffering of the land immediately unfolds the tale of slow violence not only on humanity but also on the environment. The cataclysmic aftermaths in the form of ravaged habitats (Nixon 3) have been described by Khan by incisively focusing on the human characters' sufferings and relating them with their choices of trees and then the destruction of the same due to the Japanese attacks during World war; and occupation and colonization of the South Asian land. Nixon enquires about this problem with concern and caution. He writes:

How can we turn the long emergencies of slow violence into stories dramatic enough to rouse public sentiment and warrant political intervention, these emergencies whose repercussions have given rise to some of the most critical challenges of our time? (3)

The slow violence keeps on functioning despite all activism of the Western and European rehabilitation schemes and powerful ecological protection projects.

Khan's depiction of environmental degradation or blurred boundaries between choice of plantation and the shocking attack on the green belts of the region is the fictional account of Nixon's philosophical declaration of postcolonial ecologies and destruction. Nixon is of the view that these marred debates on environmentalism, "blurring the clean lines between defeat and victory, between colonial dispossession and official national self-determination" have not been considered significantly in the

past (7). However, Uzma Aslam Khan has taken this bold step after Hanif Muhammad to excel the debate on postcolonial ecological damages caused by the powerful countries. The ongoing debate on climate change and the call for seeking action against global warming and damaged trees have become the current matter of ultimate importance.

Khan is of the view that war not only does affect the humanity but also the other living beings including the trees and green plantation. *The Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali* raises questions related to planetary consciousness, imperial violence, and “apprehensions that elude sensory corroboration” (15). As Nixon has also described the quality of Indian or the subcontinent fiction, this novel reveals the unseen sights to witness. The novel also unmasks the dependability of human beings on the same trees destructed under the slowed but profound violent and oppressive forces. It, ultimately, represents the facet that is hidden from the corporate media’s eyes or it may have shown indifference towards the significance of the trees, their existence and benefits.

The process in which Nixon the presence of witness “[T]o address violence discounted by dominant structures of apprehension” (16), is what adopted by Khan in her novel. The current struggle to protect the environment especially that is visible in the conference held in Glasgow in 2021, represents the fear of the future. The United Nations’ Secretary General Antonio Guterres has apprehended the main cause of global warming as the negligence of the World’s leaders. The root cause emerges from the World War II, when the British left and the Japanese took the control as also mentioned by Khan in her novel.

Khan’s subtle nuances to represent the environmental crisis as a part of slow violence or in Nixon’s words, “an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all” have revealed the ecopolitical stance of the imperial powers, whereby, the natives who are dispossessed and displaced in their own lands are ignorant about the phenomenon (2). According to Nixon, violence that is conceived as an event or action, “immediate in time, explosive and spectacular in space, and as erupting into instant sensational visibility”, I have found its relevance in Khan’s novel (2). Nixon also writes, “the radioactive aftermaths of wars, acidifying oceans, and a host of other slowly unfolding environmental catastrophes present formidable representational obstacles that can hinder our efforts to mobilize and act decisively” that are visible as aftermaths of militarization in Khan’s work (2).

After carefully comprehending Khan's allusions to the past and the impact of colonizers' horrendous acts, we realize that the greatest threat to the environment is the powerful countries themselves, which not only colonize the human beings but the nature also. The destruction of the trees, killing of animals, and damaging the sea life are among such examples.

Khan's illustrative covering and depiction of war times not only invoke the fear of gothic war scenes, but also the horrendous bombing in forests and unforgettable havoc to the environment. She writes, "How the sea raged, beneath the sparest of words. War" (222). The same aftershocks of war have been discussed by Nixon. Deloughrey has also expounded the militarization as the major cause of ecocritical violence and destruction. "The analytics of place, power, knowledge, and representation" are clearly visible in Khan's novel (321). The significant terrains of the postcolonial ecologies and the cartographies of empire are evident in *The Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali*.

Among the cluster of approaches, qualitative approach has been selected to deal with the problem of ecocriticism, through which the analysis of Khan's fictional work brings forth the convergences and contradictions of environmental factors, especially the flora, and postcolonial theory around the key theme of postcolonial knowledge of suppression of the colonies, and their representation, indigeneity, and justice and globalization. In this study, I have not focused on gender issues, rather, the main focus is on the militarization of imperial powers, slow violence onto the natives, and the rhetorical, geographical, temporal, and political displacement of narratives, sufferers and the environmental factors without showing any visible movement.

The indigenous people and their preferences have deeply emphasized in this fictional and factual account of the war times as far as the natural preservation or the ecological rehabilitation is concerned. Even the background of the fauna and flora and the practices of the natives have also been discussed by Khan that resonate with the aspects under study very well. State-directed developmental agenda also affects the priority list for the problems in hand. The banality of evil increases in this case when ecological damage is ignored. It also validates the privileges available to the elites or the more developed countries.

American sentimentality in ecological damage has also become critical. Despite its greater access to the centers of influence the ecocritical colonialism is increasing day

by day. One cumulative effect of this policed language is that when someone dares to point out something as obvious as white privilege, the nonchalance attitude is shown towards it. Nixon has propounded it to be the visual disparity or spectacle deficiency that is deliberate in its contextualization as far as the ecological organizations belonging to the Imperial powers are concerned.

Moreover, all this mass bleaching, bombing, killing of marine life along with the pets and trees, have pointed the attention towards the dying nationalism and Eco protectionism. The author's voice resonates with the twenty-first century's green activists who constantly divert our attention towards the dying species of the plants and animals.

Hence, the author rightly highlights the cause as the most recent problem in the current century which is also addressed by the premier of Pakistan Imran Khan. From smog to mining and use of nuclear weapons, the rise in the ethical questioning related to devastating environment have taken the hype in the last decade. Addressing this problem by focusing on its past and then its future, has become a critical issue. Literary fictional and non-fictional writings have played a pivotal role in bringing forth the plethora of such debates to nominate the main reasons. *The Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali* has pivoted the point by catering to the factual accounts of three characters Nomi, Zee, and Aye who have their own war traumas relegating to the trauma associated with environmental loss or the displacement in their own land because of militarization.

The story fosters on the concept that how the people are considered as 'disposables' when their native forefathers and fathers are taken as laborer and then the prisoners of British Empires for not following their rules and transferred to Japanese prison cells as the displaced criminals in their native land. They are not allowed to live freely in the similar way the nature suffers and faces bomb blasts, the atrocities imposed onto them by the Japanese armed forces, as well as the British forces. The basis behind such suffocating environment and suffering is the synchronization of the community with the ecological factors' nature.

The civilized English people who ravage and torn the condition of the native land of Andaman Island by harvesting all the benefits from this land through pillaging the resources and killing the animals, transfer the valuable extracted resources to other

rich imperial nations and earn huge profit at the expense of the native communities. The savagery they introduce in Andaman Island is covered in the garb of sophistication and protection that is revealed by Khan in her factual account.

Khan profoundly analyses the situation and the false hope associated with the event when the Japanese take over the control of the islands from the British during World War II, whereby, the islanders start believing that they might finally end up embracing freedom. Contrary to this, that hope is brutally stabbed when the soldiers publicly torture and kill a child considering it a disposable inferior human. From there on a new reign of horror is unleashed onto the natives of Andaman Islanders, with the revelation of the addition of a whore house at the place of a Gurdwara, to serve the soldiers. Such devastating condition of the natives brings forth the concept of slow violence as propounded by Nixon, where the turbo-capitalism becomes uncontrollably plying and snatching the agency of the communities.

However, amidst all brazen cruelty imposed on the local communities, the fictional work also poses optimism and hope for the revelation of the turbo-capitalism, its aftermaths, devastation of environment in the hands of the so-called false saviours who in the garb of NGOs are proliferating deeper into the roots of the ecosystem to plunder the valuable resources at the expense of environment. The paradoxes presented by Khan in her work provided valid evidences to support the idea of slow violence prevalent in the Andaman Island.

While concluding the whole analysis of Khan's fictional work, I have come to know that the empirical rupture in the epistemic historical truth has been excavated by Khan in her novel. She has miraculously presented the hidden aspects of the history. Her enunciation of the ecological damage during World War II has opened the eyes of the leaders of the developed countries in the twenty-first century. The current global warming and endangered species of animals have brought serious criticism on the policies of the colonizers of the past. Therefore, Khan has played a pivotal role in bringing forward the critical topic of ecological damage to marine life and Andaman Island meticulously in front of those who are oblivious of the repercussions of the World War I and II as the part of ecopolitical project of the Western Imperial powers. In the next chapter I have analyzed Hanif's *Red Bird*.

CHAPTER 5

WAR AND ENVIRONMENT IN MUHAMMAD HANIF'S *RED BIRDS*

5.1 Introduction

Red Bird is a text which shares the pitiable story of an anonymous war-torn region and the cause of this havoc is US's uncontrollable imperial designs and its capitalist exploits. Hanif's novel incriminates the Western powers for causing the incommunicable and incalculable non/human sufferings.

Red Birds is the story of war on terror in which America takes control of an unknown place that is a desert area. Captain Ellie becomes successful in saving his life and takes refuge in the refugee camp. He meets a boy and his family there who sells the parts of aircrafts and unusable motor vehicles. *Red Birds* is Muhammad Hanif's satirical novel written in the genre of dark comedy. It was published in 18th October, 2018. *Red Birds* is about war, family and love. The story is narrated by the fourteen years old protagonist Momo, a stray dog Mutt and an American Major Ellie whose intentions are to explode the bomb at the place where he is rescued by the native people because of the sudden plane crash.

The two characters Mother Dear and Doctor also provide their side of the story in the form of the narration. Hanif satirically discusses the hegemony of American army and the role of humanitarian organizations especially USAID in the war-stricken areas after seeking his own lived experience while serving in the Pakistan Air Force. His second career in journalism and literary field brought him much insight in the poetics and politics of literary field.

While critically evaluating the fictional work, I have come across this fact that the use of satirical language to comment on the First World's brutal acts and neo-imperial/neo-colonial agendas is Hanif's expertise. By using this power of creative writing in the genre of fiction, he has taken the character of the MUTT as the animal character as the more voiced and vulnerable creature to the damage and destruction in

the war-torn area. The character Mutt has provided the main debate related to the ecopolitical concept and postcolonial impact on the ecology of the world. He is the real embodiment of the disposable fauna as propounded by Nixon in his concept of slow violence. This conceptualization of the threat to the flora and fauna of the war-stricken area has highlighted the ecopolitical debate on the role of the Western powers and their corrective approaches to bring in the rehabilitation of the same environment and the nature as the juxtaposed hypocritical aspects associated with the imperial powers' ruling strategies.

In many of the occasions, the matter of environmental justice and unequal distribution of natural resources start the unending war among the powers. The Anthropocene and the erasure of the major ecological factors from the land are the major concerns due to militarization of the US armies in this novel *Red Birds*. Harbouring the belief that the human conditions are becoming inextricable and the ecological damage may not be reversed, the current fictional work represents the severe condition of the war-torn area under the imperialistic rule of America.

5.2 American Supremacy and Militarization

Focusing on human exceptionalism or human centrism, human supremacy and more importantly white men supremacy in postcolonial context, I have touched upon the idea of human militarization against the natural resources and environmentalism as the root cause especially in times of current war against terror. However, these novels challenge anthropocentrism and present not only the advocacy movement for the animals and the plants but also the impact of such anthropocentric human beings onto other colonized or neo-colonized human beings belonging to the third world.

Hanif technically uses the voice of the narrator who is present as the first person in the setting of the novel to ascribe the dilemma of weapons during war time especially the French weapons and fighters in a sarcastic manner as the militarization. This militarization is the major cause behind the ecological destruction. Hanif writes,

At first I had thought they were talking about the Mirage fighters, those French contraptions that were handsome beasts, like most things French, but completely useless in a real war, like most things French. But this mirage, Colonel Slatter, said was like sand blinging, sand pretending to be not sand,

sand playing its oldest tricks, sand which from a distance looks like water. (34)

Nixon and DeLoughrey hint towards the similar military interventions and transgressions with uncontrollable power that destroy the natural beauty slowly and silently, without even being noticed by the super powers themselves. Considering this fact, however, bring to light the ecopolitical project effectively working in favour of the containing super powers instead of bringing the sense of accountability. This slow poisoning has altered the geographical position of the third world countries from pollution-free to the most polluted countries loaded with impoverished creatures. Notwithstanding, the value of the native green lands and ecological factors providing livelihood to majority of the peasants, the native informants focus on their personal gains, ultimately, bringing in havoc in the form of militarization and weaponization.

The writings of Pakistani authors in English have been advanced to the level of social criticism based on the current scenario in political and cultural domain. The First World has crossed the level of advancement which the Third World and the developing countries need to comprehend as slow violence imposed onto them to achieve the level required for their survival. But, the resisting force of hegemony, based on political and social control on the minds and the cultural maneuvering of the subjects of the Asian and third world countries, acts as the subjugating force containing the power of discourses between the third world and the first world as rhetorical displacement. America, being the super power in the world, is the main hegemon in the twenty-first century who is in the race of colonizing the third world in the name of saving humanity and human rights. The war-stricken Afghanistan, Iraq, and many other countries in the military race are the clear examples. The literature of such countries also focuses on such political, geographical and social issues to present their case in front of the world and categorized as the resistive literature. However, the spectacle deficiency proves the point of the powerful imperials.

The current study deals with the problem of American war on terror and ecocritical destruction, global warming impact on war-stricken and neo-colonial areas to reveal the exploitation of their ecologies to subjugate and oppress the lesser or lower-ranked class in Asian desert and war-stricken areas. It also exposes the human rights agencies' agenda of commodifying humans as objects as also discussed by Hanif in his fictional account as an eye-opener. The satire on the local leaders and the strategies of

the US armed forces to oppress the local people and get benefits from them, is the excellence of Hanif's narration, which depicts the nonchalant attitudes of the leaders towards their nation and their own actions as the cause of the war in those areas.

The literature produced in the Western market especially by US publication houses deals with the conservation project of nature as the representation of the West and most prominently America. Such hegemony represents the technologized bombing on the fauna and flora of that region as the savior's strategy to protect the land from terrorists. However, contrary to this, through textual analysis the modern world has started revealing the utilization not only in the past but in the present also of the resources of the same communities.

To analyze the ecological devastation depicted in the literary works in the twenty-first century world, the political role in the environmental postcolonialism and destructive anthropocentrism highlights the text as part of the politicization of the issue more than the poetics of the postcolonial world. I have used Nixon's concepts to cater to the need of the study to bring to the pivotal position the concept of militarization and turbo-capitalism as the main aspects to destroy the ecology of the Global South.

While considering this parochialism, American imperialism is promoted through the oppressive control of the region by taking the charge of the land area as geographical displacement of the natives. *Red Birds* is selected for the current study to extrapolate on the need of the fictional work, its readership, the value of the plot and the depiction of natural devastation due to militarization in favour of highlighting American neo-colonial strategies and imperial war projects in the region. The way Asim Karim, in his research, expounds on the anti-colonial textuality and sentiments in *Red Birds* by critically apprehending the US neo-imperial war strategies as the revolutionary military strategies, the USAID's role's duplicity and the pursuit of a capitalist economic order in an unnamed Muslim territory (Karim), it provides me the insight into the matter and redirects my thoughts towards the problem of militarization that is profoundly discussed in the novel. However, the major concern of USA's agential power utilizing the natives to endorse their destruction as their development projects, have been unraveled in the current research by examining the technologized slow violence markers in the desert area mentioned in the novel.

5.3 Capitalism at Large

Capitalist enterprise is at the heart of *Red Birds*. The story gyrates around an American pilot Major Ellie whose venture is to gain imperial benefits. Since Hanif lashes out at US foreign policy vicariously, he underscores war and its clandestine motives to collect maximum capital. Momo, another character, is also a capitalist but his business ventures do not get materialized. Hanif implicitly avers that war can be synonymized with capital for the imperial powers of the world. Western capitalism is making no end of earning coins by waging wars in the global south countries.

Red Birds starts with Shah Hussain (Madhu Lal Hussain)'s quote, "And when I look through it, it's red" (1). The 'red' color is used to technically handle the red-colored blood-stricken earth. The use of specific adjective to ascertain the color of blood validates the war time. Muhammad Hanif discusses the same hegemony and destruction of the ecosystem by United States of America in his novel *Red Birds* when the NATO armed forces attack on the desert located in an uncertain land of either Pakistan or Afghanistan that is geographically discussed but not named. However, the mineral resources are plundered and pillaged to get benefit out of the natives' land as a part of turbo-capitalism that uncontrollably targets the natives.

Major Ellie as a struggling soldier is given a task to attack on the place where his fighter plane crashes and after three days' struggle, he finally understands the situation. Although, he has only a brief set of belongings including four biscuits, two vitamin smoothies, a roll of surgical cotton, a roll of surgical gauze, needle and thread and an expensive parachute, he continues struggling to live under the shade of the war (3). He sarcastically comments on the US army's use of expensive gadgets which are more important than the human soldiers who are 'disposable people' by mentioning, "They give you a 65- Million dollar machine to fly" (3). The disposability of human beings in turbo-capitalism not only targets the native commoners but also the military men who are not considered as the human beings by the USA. The confession made by Ellie about the US army's nonchalant behavior towards the subordinates is visible through this extract.

The crashing of the fighter plane hints indirectly towards the loss of trees, burning of the grass, and the foresighted killing of many of the endangered animals that has been discussed indirectly by the author to ascertain the worth of the land and its

elements which are under severe threat and at the verge of extinction due to war. However, the war-torn area is already ravaged and plundered of all the valuable minerals and resources. The deserted land has only the refugee camps and the armed forces camps where the soldiers like Major Ellie try to survive and struggle with the climactic as well as the natural disasters including sand storms, famine, or floods.

The fact when Hanif talks about the missing persons and Ali bro's absence of missing case, he subtly questions the presence of humans as objects whose selling and buying business is at its peak because of the presence of the buyers in the form of US army or UN bodies and their employees. Hanif mentions Bro Ali's contractual employment with US army and then his absence from the whole week from house that opens over eyes towards the anthropocentric projects visibly and noticeably working in the South Asian land. Hanif writes,

“contractual employment was code for kidnapping” (19). Father dear's moral rectitude is all-encompassing: Father dear is the person who is not gonna piss on his own cut finger. He is not gonna help me bring Bro Ali home... We are chronic lovers not thieves. Mutt is also a chronic lover... dumb but reliable. He needs appreciation like we all do... Mutt is essential to the mission. (21-22)

The critical analysis of the ecological factors, inclusive of humans and the anthropocenes, as the destructive agents have been used by Hanif to state such mechanic people “A slave...some people are born to be slave” (28). He calls the US army men “white cabbages” who act as the destructive forces to disintegrate the fauna and flora (28). Even though he gives vent to his anger through the narration of the condition of the deserted area, his agony is visible from the sarcastic tone that he uses while depicting and illustrating the war area along with the nature's degradation.

Nonetheless, Hanif discusses the plight of the native people through his innocent native characters, “Momo says his father sold him to the Americans at the Hangar because he was very good at sending signals to the planes telling them where to bomb. If you are cooperating with the people who destroy your houses, it can have tragic results” (15). The destruction of the houses refer to the destruction of the natural habitat. The revelation of consumerism where selling of the destructed building material, tree trunks, dead animals' body parts for industrial usage refer to the nonchalance of the human beings in their anthropocentric projects, whereby, even the

selling and buying of human beings is also in process despite all postcolonial debates and end of oppressive era of apartheid.

Later, Hanif uses his narrator to ponder on the fact, “But you don’t sell your sons even if you are being paid in dollars. Even if your son is a brat. Even if your son is asking for it” (29). Such worst impact of anthropocentrism and the ecological damage, as the neo-imperialistic projects, have been exemplified in this novel. Not only are the humans under severe oppression but also the animals who are not spared in this war. That is why, he mentions, “God left this place a long time ago” that relates to the ecopolitical project of the powerful countries that is not based on honesty or ecofriendly projects (26).

Hanif talks about children’s slavery and commodification projects as insinuated evils in the desert area for earning money, “say your father sold him like sheep” (40). The confession made by Momo in the narrative reveals the capitalism in function that works in selling out even the human beings between US army and the local people. The anthropocentric deception is the clear marker of their eco-destructive activities during war-on-terror. Nevertheless, the consumerism has grown to such an extent that, as Nixon holds in this account, besides human beings, the plants, animals, fishes, and insects are not even spared because they are considered as disposable.

5.4 Visual Disparity and Spectacle Deficiency

Visual Disparity and Spectacle Deficiency both terms have been used by Rob Nixon. By this he means that we are accustomed to conceiving of violence as immediate and explosive. He unpacks this assumption by arguing that a violence that is neither spectacular nor instantaneous but instead incremental, whose calamitous repercussions are postponed for years or decades. He further avers that climate change; deforestation and the radioactive aftermaths of wars are formidable environmental crises and this violence is often bloodless.

Ellie’s monologue in the desert presents the discursual discipline which is used by Hanif to create the satire on the hegemonic strategies of American army in Afghan deserts to find the right destination. I have used Nixon’s concept of slow violence to navigate on this phenomenon where the visual disparity is employed and used in the favour of the powerful, to which Hanif gives voice in the form of character Major Ellie who hears the cries of US soldiers, “yelping their war cries and trying to scare me” (57).

Ellie has used the contents of his own bladder but his struggle has not ended here. He has to face the “cruel climate of the desert without food and water” (58). At the time of distress, Ellie uses bad names for Arabs and Arab civilization forgetting his “Cultural Sensitivity Towards Tribals’ module” (60). The courses mentioned by Hanif also hint towards the mechanized and technologized manipulation of the ecology.

While the commodification of the war as the anthropocentric project forbids the Third world countries from excelling and using their own resources, many of the native informants support these projects as they suffer from spectacle deficiency. Instead of fighting for their nation, peace in the area, and their own personal independence, they rely on the Western powers for their rehabilitation from the same war that has been imposed onto them by these super powers. This unfortunate situation is solidified as the irreversible reality just because of the political and personal pursuits of the native informants who themselves are displaced later after seeking benefits.

Hanif, in *Red Birds*, also presents the comparison and correlation of salt and the bombs. “If you lick salt you cannot die. If the animals lick them they do not catch those nasty diseases which generally bombs create” (31). In this way, Hanif sarcastically highlights the menace of war and the creation of different diseases in the world to end the life. Undoubtedly, he illustrates the condition of the character’s plight by writing that the narrator is with fractured leg and broken heart that highlights the slow violence faced by the character (31). While, the US army is the representative of the destruction of the ecology as the anthropocenes’ much advanced plan of bringing havoc in the third world countries for proving their control as legitimate.

The introduction of the foreigner- the new Coordination Office as a USAID Consultant, conducting a survey on post-conflict conflict resolution strategies that involve local histories and folklore, makes the father cough slightly to understand that he has committed a mistake to bring a foreign lady at home where his wife is in charge of all matters (43). The democratic attitude of the mother dear does not allow the outsider to come without permission and she protests in front of father dear.

USAID provides support to build houses who are broken or damaged due to war (45). The character of the mother dear uses her talk to reveal the actions as commodification project of the US and to create its imperialistic rule as the US military strategies. Mother dear says, “First they bomb our house, then they take away my son

and now you are here to make us feel alright” (48). The chapter exposes Americans’ neo-colonial project on the desert of Afghanistan where only the rule of US army is effective. Even Mutt dog’s narration reveal the cruel treatment as the disciplinary oppression of the army by US forces when Mutt’s leg is injured (32). This act is enough to target the main aspect of ecopolitical war instead of the war on terror. The devastating fauna and flora as well as the slow violence against the life on planet Earth has been discussed in this novel with profundity and deep insight. While the technologized anthropocentrism is visible when the Lady Flowerbody reveals the delay in the rehabilitation process till the recognition of the losses which she calls “our” to create the sense of compassion from the imperial powers (47).

The character of mother dear is created by Hanif to criticize the hegemony and diplomatic hypocrisy of USA. Mother dear says to the Lady Flowerbody:

You work for them but you don’t know what they really do? You mean to say that there is one department that picks them up and then another department that is sent out to make us forget them? Are you here to make us feel heroic for losing our son? (47-48)

Hanif has criticized the rehabilitation projects of the Imperial powers, whereby, using the character of Mother Dear for this purpose. He has revealed the American and European countries’ relief projects as the neo-colonizing projects in the garb of development projects in the war-stricken areas.

The character Momo, who is a neutral character and only gives voice to the other characters especially Ali, reveals his own urges and needs. The narrator Mutt in *Red Birds*, declares Momo to be a hypocrite who uses his language to help US creating its hegemony by taking dollars from them. Hanif writes, “But oh, the human duplicity. Whenever I hear the word “care” or “Compassion” on Momo’s lips, I can see dollar signs in his lips” (50). Momo’s idea of trading Sheikhs’ misery on wings with Range Rover (51). Hanif gives his voice to describe Arabic Sheikhs’ business strategies that also hints towards the capitalistic pursuits going side by side. Hanif writes, “This is not how distribution of wealth works in post-war economies”, whereas, the powerful nations depict themselves to be compassionate and sympathetic towards the war-torn nations (53). Hanif highlights the commodified version of the human nature when he sacrifices the nature and even his loved ones for the attainment of power and money as

the new World's anthropocene, "The boy needs to resist his unreasonable, consumerist urges" (54). However, the gains in the form of money and the lust for more keeps him going in his endeavours that proves the point of visual disparity.

The "fugee camps" settled by US army are also targeted by Hanif in his novel to technologize his hatred to present his critique on the inhumane and capitalistic benefit of the forces. He also exposes the target of Colonel Slatter and Major Ellie whom they consider the existential threat to America as a failed attempt of kitchen garden in reality with neat squares marked with pebbles and with no signs of "evil festers" or "enemy combatants" Hanif uses his character Major Ellie to call Colonel Slatter "a cold-blooded killer" who has hegemonized the land through his disciplinary orders (92-94).

The importance of food is also evident from the discourse of commodification where the native people have the opportunity to use Major Ellie as the commodity or the "bargaining chip to be traded for tinned food?" (94). By using the imagery of the food, Hanif presents the plight of the hungry desert people where UN functions to provide them food after the terrorists' destruction programme of US army. Hanif writes, "standard UN Food Programme rubber flask. I pick it up, the water sloshes inside it. The flask is ice cold" which is in Major Ellie's approach but the common people have to suffer first to desire the same water that was previously available free of cost (79).

The same benefit is directed towards them by the local people who have no knowledge of their mistakes and naïve actions. Momo is the clear example for such characters who narrates, "first we used to drink wine from our enemies' skulls" (37). Linking Genghis Khan through a direct bloodline is the demonic stance of the author to build the bleak picture of the historical reference of the tyrant ruler. The memory of the past and the horrors of the present and the nation who has been abandoned even by the conquerors explains the tumultuous nature and filth in the country that represents how much danger is present for the flora and fauna. Hanif writes, "but I am a survivor of the most useless war in the history of wars. Even our conquerors have abandoned us" (37). The useless war refers to the destruction as the aftermath of the war instead of any creative or constructive effect.

Momo's Father dear also serves to American soldiers and UN coordinators because he is weak in position and accepts their hegemony by "licking white men's boots" (97). Same is the case with Ali bro who leaves for job right after the bomb attack

on their house. Hanif writes, “It was a startling claim, as if the bomb demolishing our house was not a senseless aerial attack but a job offer” (99). Bro Ali is courageous showing mixed emotions. His discourse with father dear was accepting the hegemony of Americans but he is determined to play his role. His convincing strategy is also a part of the disciplining action where he has to obey orders because Ali bro works for them as a job (101). Such spectacle deficiency from cellular to transnational level brings forth the concept of slow violence as evident beyond the horizon of imaginable time.

When Momo catches Ellie stealing his dog Mutt, he takes him to the refugee camp and tells his father about the case to which father dear greets Ellie with thanks. In response, Hanif writes about the “culturally sensitive smile” as a part of technologized action of Ellie to show his anthropocentric nature despite all destruction (103). The revelation of the garb of sympathy proposes the idea of slow violence how perforated it has become in the natives’ lives that it is not even felt.

Hanif talks about “Nat Geo Adventures, and capital talk” as the television channels ‘political talk shows which increase the knowledge of the war situation and create the debate on the environmental degradation. The hegemon’s severe treatment with the lesser nation is the hegemony through discourse. According to Hanif, all these whites who do not consider humans as the living beings with the basic rights, not even half-humans in this case let alone care about animals. The Lady Flowerbody considers the animals as the sufferers while Momo explains Mutt’s violence on him (74). Hanif writes, “I better prove to her who is being cruel to whom” (74). “What makes you think white people always gonna keep their promises?” (72). The mistrust and subordination created by developing the concept of ruthless attitude and tyranny of the controlling hand by using discourse and also sympathizing with the sufferers using the eloquent speeches as the technologized discourse to contain the power of the neo-colonies.

Ellie, on the other hand, considers himself an American zombie lost in the desert (76). He experiences the same pain, hunger, dirt, fear and threats as the local people experience from American army that Hanif describes with sarcastic tone. He looks at the American Jeep on which the armed forces and UN coordinators move for rehabilitation processes which is the satirical situation in the commodified world clearly entailing the hegemony of America. Similarly, revealing the ecological destruction in an indirect manner to hint towards the slow violence faced by the deserts and the green

lands in the war-torn areas, has also been focused in the fictional account of the war on terror.

5.5 Animals, Nature and Slow Violence

Mutt as the animated voiced character is used by the author as the narrator to hint towards the suffering of the animals due to militarization and weaponization. Hanif criticizes the human endeavors as more materialistic than sympathetic towards the living beings, by holding the opinion narrated by Mutt. Hanif writes, “They see the bared teeth, they don’t see the lolling tongue. They see the curled-up, shivering tail and not the intellect at work. They hear the growl and not the whine that says *give me some love, oh please give me some love*” (23). The question whether human beings themselves are sympathetic towards the other living beings or not has been sarcastically represented by Hanif. He has profoundly commented on this materialistic approach using the character of Mutt who pleads for love instead of harsh treatment. Nixon has also given the reference of *Animal’s People* to comment on the treatment that human beings show towards the animals to solidify the concept of disposable animals as the part of slow violence onto the animals.

Hanif also talks about “glacial indifferences” and “smell of fear of death” that puts forth the concept of a dog’s deep insight about war and the shocking revelations in the form of insecurities that he presents (23). Hanif further writes, “The wise ones don’t only imagine being bitten, they imagine catching rabies and being drowned in freezing water and then buried in wet earth where the angels who turn up to ask questions will also be dog-faced” (23). The satirical comment hints towards Mutt’s illustrative depiction that opens up the debate about the anthropocentric fears and insecurities where considering which they try to kill the dogs and other animals. While, the poor and innocent creatures are the harmless parts of nature who are removed from their abundant status and forcefully made the endangered ones to let them acknowledge the power of human beings.

Hanif’s commentary on “instincts for self-preservation” also caters to the need to focus on the requirement of self-security and self-esteem as the valuable elements (23). Even animals know about their existence and basic rights which human beings ignore while imposing war onto them because of visual disparity or turbo-capitalism working at cellular levels.

Later, Hanif describes the war-torn body of the dog Mutt, “broken and bloodied leg” that raises the sympathy towards the dog (24). Mutt’s situation and his injured body represents the threat faced by the animals in the warzones. Hanif depicts the slow violence on animals by highlighting the downtrodden condition, “To smell is to survive” (80). Mutt himself criticizes and complains against the hypocrisy of human beings by saying, “It was difficult to leave home but I decided to withdraw from that heartless household, where they hark on about your loyalty but never appreciate your intellect” (25). The representation of animals as thought-bearing creatures bring to light the fact that even animals think about the nature because of owning some intellect whereas, humans are devoid of such sacred thoughts. They have some purposes and plans to fulfil them they can transgress all boundaries.

In the similar way, Mutt also criticizes the neo-colonial European countries who have some war projects to run in the Third world countries. Hanif writes in the voice of Mutt, “Big, rich nations get a bloody nose in far-off countries and start slashing the milk money for poor babies at home” (25). The characters belonging to the Third world countries, many of them have the knowledge about the impact of militarization and weaponization. They even admit the slow poisoning and gradual violence that is ending the natural elements and making animals endangered. However, they are silent that is the crucial aspect in this discussion. In the same sequence, Hanif gives voice to the insecure Mutt:

I’ll starve to death. I’ll roast under the sun. Better than limping in these desolate streets for the rest of my life. Are these streets desolate, you ask? You haven’t seen desolation. When good citizens like me, sons of the soil, start abandoning their ancestral abodes, you should know there is no hope left. (26)

The hopelessness as the part of the slow violence that affects the life and motivation to live gradually and ends it at last, seems evident in this narration, especially in Mutt’s voice. Hanif’s critical evaluation of the animals’ sufferings and downgraded ignored position prevails throughout the fictional account of the story to make the readers feel the pain of the living creatures which are the part of the ecology of the war-torn areas. These animals are well aware of the pain one feels after sniffing the blood and flesh mingled with soil (28). They are in the process of nonchalance towards bombing especially when Mutt’s voice becomes more sarcastic and insolent, “Have they run out of bombs?” (29). His famished body complains against the indifferent human beings.

Mutt writes, “There is nothing to lick but sand. I can smell hunger approaching me” (31).

Hanif also discusses the plight of the camels in the desert areas who suffer because of the unforeseen war and the blind bombing and shelling. Their owners themselves are baffled about what would happen next. Hanif writes, “No camel-herder messes with their camels” (35). Similarly, while describing about the commodification of the earth, Hanif writes, “This sand is the earth you walk on, it’s like selling your mother” (39).

5.6 Ecological Damage and Rehabilitation

Parallel to all these turbo-capitalistic structures mentioned previously, when the mother dear who is depressed because of her son’s abduction due to its unresolved mysterious nature, wants her voice to be heard. She wants her son’s status to be acknowledged as a valuable human being and not just the disposable commodity. Hanif uses Momo to narrate:

I saw the first red bird on the rooftop the day Mother Dear went on a cooking strike. Her stated position, just like that of any professional agitator, was only a front: she said there was no salt and so she wouldn’t cook. But it was a deceptive little game. What she was really saying was bring me my son or go die, starve yourselves to death or go eat flour and raw meat. Or learn to cook your own food (81).

Mother dear is habitual plastic rosary only to repeat and reread and reproduce the names of God to lessen the burden on her heart as the technologized containment in war times. Her despair is also prominent on the clothes line which create the stronger hegemony of American troops which are unbeatable (81). Hanif writes that “An American in pain is a fucking pain the ass of this universe” and then “I can’t believe the cruelty of this fifteen-year-old. Where is his humanity? Here I am dying after starving for eight days, and the boy is accusing me of excessive consumption” (57). The narrator Mutt and Major Ellie both understand the reason of UN food provision as compulsory to survive in the desert. Mutt exposes the project of US forces to convert the desert into more sand to start the new company with the name *Sands Global* which is the commodification through discourse which is also the similar project Momo thinks of. Mutt realistically criticize the capitalistic thoughts of the local people and the disciplinary actions of US

army which are devoid of humanity (85). Hanif writes, “You begin to think you can money out of sand and beautiful birds. Imagine selling the souls of your loved ones so that some horny sheikh can devour them to get a stiffy” (86).

I shut my eyes and hunker down in the seat and think of all the lessons I learnt in my Cultural Sensitivity course. ‘There are many reasons they hate us and one of those reasons is our love for our pets,’ our ‘Cultural Sensitivity Towards Animals’ module instructor had told us in our ‘How To Defend American Values Without Offending Their Own’ seminar. ‘They think the money we spend on dog shampoos could feed the entire population of a Central African country. And they don’t even know about the Americans who feed live rats to their pet pythons and hug them before going to sleep. (88)

Hanif declares Mutt as the “native informant” who knows about the intentions of the men; and Bro Ali as the agent whose arrival at the hangar guarantees the stop of falling of bombs (61). He never came back because either he has stopped helping Americans in their commodification project or he has single-handedly ended the war (63). Momo’s suppositions are the resultant thoughts of the disciplinary goals of the armed forces which he has observed in the camp. He considers Ali bro the brave fellow who is the only one to fight among the local people.

Even major Ellie feels awkward about the war-stricken area’s condition. Hanif writes for Major Ellie, “The wind howls around me” (57). Ellie becomes fearful of the deserted area where there are no signs of life. The earth is even dead. Hanif mentions the place “look poorer than Afghanistan, and more violent than Sudan... They bomb us because they assume we are related to bad Arabs” (65). Hanif also criticizes American army’s strategy of kidnapping or arresting young boys considering them the only commodity available in the desert which is harmful for them and can easily be disposed of (65). The technological advancement in bombing style or the technologized destruction may not cater the compensation by rehabilitation projects. The imperial projects cause two-way damage to the earth and its inhabitants in the garb of saviours.

The attractive military equipment fastened on the heavy armoured Jeeps are the attractive things which capture young boys’ sight towards them. Whereas, in reality it is the visual impairment or spectacle deficiency that stops them from analyzing the real situation. While on the other hand Ellie’s savior Momo considers him the USAID

worker as their agent who is the Major in US army but keeps his mouth shut to save his face by presenting the cover story (Hanif 89). Momo curses the camels, “Stubborn like American” which is the confessional ecopolitics in the form of Momo’s revelation about Americans to confess their hegemony and control not only of the territory but also the ecology, animals, and the human beings (91).

Lady Flowerbody is the agent of the International donor-funded projects that is another means of earning money. She provides treatment to PTSD patients as a part of her commodification project through her discursal power, despite understanding the main cause of such trauma as the slow violence imposed by the same imperial powers from whom she belongs. Hanif writes, “She is businesslike” creating her hegemony through the words she uses for providing relief as a part of turbo-capitalism (68). She sympathises with those who are suffering because of her national interests. Her wages are \$120 per day and five days working week on a contract to save the earth and provide refuge to the war-struck areas and people (65). Her anthropocentric role is evident from her presence as the agent of the super powers to provide the poetic solution of the militarization and destruction on the land. It is evident from her monologue in the novel when she discusses about certain limits and the hard work to earn dignity. Hanif gives her voice in a nonchalant capitalistic manner by writing, “pay me my fee on time, honour my contract, respect my culture, stay out of my physical state unless I invite you in” (266).

Hanif discusses the murder of Ali bro by American army and the logic for their action presented by them that they killed him because he targeted their planes is the hegemonic discourse (280). American soldiers know that not a single local person responds back. Their weakness brings their defeat in the discourse with American army.

Hanif writes that, “But here everyone is accusing everyone else of being American. God save America” (122). Ellie narrates, “I have a feeling that I am being treated like a refugee” (123). “Central Command don’t like it when too many people want to do the same thing” (139). Lady Flowerbody represents the powerful nations which are not concerned with the destruction caused because of their needs. Rather, her acts become the strategy of sympathy, exposed by Mother Bear when she thrashes Lady Flowerbody as the one who first attacks their houses and then come to rebuild them.

Hanif as the social and political critic unravels the hidden realities of the developing and the Third world countries. His commentary on the USA's strategies of first bombing the Eastern world and then sending UN humanitarian agencies for rehabilitation and rebuilding the infrastructure compels the readers to think about their future. He critically examines the war-struck land as colonized because of the gullibility of the naïve people who lose their land because of technically maneuvered speech. Hanif has used the terms USAID, UN, NATO many times in the novel. While the name Lady Flowerbody itself turns our attention towards the person who has brought flowers for the martyrs of the USA bombings.

At the end, Hanif mentions Mutt's death as the severe destructive act to the mother-nature. It metaphorically represents the death of the ecological factors like animals and plants which are damaged by the constant bombing, firing, and weaponization of the territory. Hanif writes:

Now there's a hush. No shooting, no ghosts butting their heads against the walls. Puffs of red dust everywhere. I think it's the perfect moment to make our exit, say our fare-wells. Momo thinks it's time for victory celebrations. He's seen Mother Dear dispatch the ghosts, and he launches into a victory speech. My land, my people. One day he'll make a fine businessman-politician and I wish I could be by his side. But he has to be careful with these guns. The man who only thinks in dollarized profit margins is suddenly talking about freedom and passion. (274)

Thus, the fictional account clearly focuses on the postcolonial ecological debate that caters the military transgressions in bringing havoc for animals and plants. The damage to the nature is irreversible that only suits the human's intention of earning more money or capital instead of securing the devastated nature. The nature in return brings critical conditions for the human beings in the form of spreading deserts, floods, famines, and attacks of locusts that are visible in the twenty-first century. The author Hanif brings it as the aftermath of the human activity in the context of uncontrollable turbo-capitalism.

The above discussion brings to light the nature's worst condition and the demonization of human beings where they start acting like the anthropocenes and use the nature commercially for their benefits. The war and the militarization being imposed

on the poor countries, act as the slow poisoning for the nature, whose side-effects remain visible for longer period of time.

Hanif has demonstrated the impact of war on terror in *Red Birds* as the ecological damage and the murdering of animals the way Mutt gets injured and then dies as disposable in nature who brings more fertility in land after its death. Hanif's strategy of indirectly commenting on the developed country's role in destroying the nature is the eye-opener for the readers that provides the ecopolitical realities. Mutt as the representative of all animals and ecofriendly force, provides an insight into the revenge of the nature. The way water takes revenge and becomes flood as depicted in the previously quoted research, in the similar way, Mutt also dies to present the death of the ecological factors which were once supporting human life's possibility on earth.

This death is symbolic for the death of life and earth. The ecological damage has brought havoc for human beings in the form of climate change and global warming. The ecocritical condition is evident just because of the Western powers' ecopolitical ventures and war ravaging activities which are irreversible because of their uncontrollable nature. Hence, the human beings now have to suffer because of their political activities that are apparently in their favour, however, they have deep antagonistic impact on the nature in the context of turbo-capitalism. In the next chapter, I have concluded my analysis of both novels.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

As a middle-stage postcolonial ecocritic in Pakistan, I set out to explore Pakistani fiction in English and viewed how humans overpower nature in Khan and Hanif's fiction. Both these writers hail from Pakistan and their stories are multilayered. Hanif's story has multiple narratives even nonhuman agency has got a voice in the character of a dog called Mutt. The seminal theme behind both stories is the devastation of nature.

After analyzing these texts, I conclude that both writers' goal is to propel their readers' attention towards environment. They advocate eco-conscious values to be disseminated. They both deem anti-ecology attitude a sheer act of ignorance. Since the premises 'how militarism affected the environment formed the basis for this study, Khan and Hanif come forth as seminal harbingers who are against environmental destruction at the hands of these aggressive military wars. In the current study, Khan's novel is replete with surreal landscapes like beautiful jungles, plants, oceans but all these are devastated at the hands of colonial powers.

In our contemporary times when global warming and climate change are indispensable issues, Khan and Hanif's contribution as first Pakistani ecocritics writing in English must be acknowledged. Both these texts speak to international as well as national communities. Nonhuman world is endowed with immense voice while in the case of Hanif, there is a full animal character voicing his concerns against human excesses. Giving voice to nonhuman agency is one of the most intriguing techniques practiced by these Pakistani writers who underscore negligence towards ecology. Khan brings forth amazing landscapes marred by bloody wars waged by contending colonial powers.

Both writers do not showcase nature is a living entity. They further, vicariously, assert that nature is deemed so insignificant and unworthy that it is not felt. Khan went a step further in lambasting the Japanese for excessive bombings which made the animals flee from the jungles. Both Khan and Hanif make the point that imperial powers misuse, pollute and destroy nature in the name of development. Similarly, both writers rail

against capitalist and hyper-technological world which is the cause of environmental degradation. Both these writers are pro-environmentalists. The kinds of issues foregrounded by both these writers are getting more entrenched and the world needs to respond to these issues. Both authors are ecological restorationists who endeavored to remove the disruption between human and nonhuman chords.

Eco-theory is burgeoning in Pakistan and still in its infancy. In this context I see Khan as a prophetess and Hanif as a seer. In both texts there are scenes which arouse feeling of pity and guilt. The anthropocentric devastation brought to the environment and the nature has been discussed in this study. I have tried to deal with the topic with full devotion through the lens of Rob Nixon and others. My argument that militarization and human activities have become the main cause of destroying the nature especially in the postcolonial countries, has become evident in this study.

I have provided the visible textual references to support my stance that nature and militarization are antagonistic in their presence, merely to support turbo-capitalism. I have also ascertained ferocity and benign quality of nature that becomes visible when it faces destruction and damage. I have designed this study to second the proposition that nature is being polluted by human beings' proclivity for war in the two selected texts. I have explored the malignant impact of human beings' militarization on the earth. While discussing Nixon's concepts in relation to the postcolonial world, I have showcased those factors that are dismantling human environment. Furthermore, I have also exhibited how non-human entities like animals are being affected by human's unhealthy activities and are presented as disposable with all their meaningless existence.

In my argument, I have focused on the representation of war as the corrective measure along with the rehabilitation. The selected authors have presented these rehabilitation projects as the part of ecopolitical mantra of the European countries and the US. I have grappled this discussion in relation to Nixon's concepts of violation of nature and slow poisoning of the earth. The several aspects already highlighted by DeLoughrey, Nixon, and others have now come to the fore in these texts. The American imperialism is one such aspect which has been highlighted by many authors and researchers previously. In contrast to their works, Muhammad Hanif's *Red Birds* prolifically provides the grounds for the destruction of ecology and greenery. We can

also call it a landscape fetishization which nonetheless is significantly far from imperial pastoralism.

Khan's *The Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali* also deals with the same militarization during the colonial era. She also tackles the problem of environmental degradation along with the killing of human beings through blind bombing and shelling. The colonialism was the tormenting force not only for human beings but also for animals and plants.

Nixon conceptualizes this tyranny of the West as slow violence that is faced by majority of the animals and human beings. Even the colonizing powers are treating human beings as animals. It also depicts that how poor the condition of animals' rights is. Animals look for protection towards human beings. While, human beings themselves are involved in the anthropocentric projects.

Both of these novels cater the same ecological problem and climate change along with the destruction of fauna and flora of the Third world colonized or neo-colonized lands. Khan and Hanif clearly mentions the problem related to the European powers' control of the land and the ecology, Hanif writes, "At first I had thought they were talking about the Mirage fighters, those French contraptions that were handsome beasts, like most things French, but completely useless in a real war" (34).

Similarly, the clear references of Japan, European countries, Britain and the USA along with the rehabilitation projects of USAID, NATO and other UN bodies are also criticized and referred to in these fictional works. The critical commentary of Khan and Hanif brings to light the controversies associated with these powerful organizations and their preplanned projects in war-torn areas. Therefore, the study unravels the anthropocentric projects of the military and the aggressive countries whose role in bringing peace to the world is dismantling the nature and destroying the flora and fauna of the earth. Ultimately, the selected fictional accounts of the historic events have acted as the eye-openers.

Thus Hanif's and Khan's fictional accounts of the colonial and neo-colonial times, provide us the deep insight into the matter of ecological pollution, climate change and global warming in light of the critical lens that I have used to underpin my argument. War, weaponization, militarization and the anthropocentric materialistic

approaches of human beings have brought forward the real causes behind the murder of the nature and killing of animals.

By doing close analysis of both texts, I have come to the conclusion that “the reorientation of human attention and values according to a stronger ethic of care for the nonhuman environment would make the world a better place, for humans as well as nonhumans” (Buell 6). Both texts, especially Khan’s text, oscillate between androcentrism and ecocriticism and raise concerns for environmental degradation.

6.1 Recommendations for Future Researchers

Primarily, I have worked on Pakistani novels written in English but my co-learners can work on poems. For example, in my introduction, I have alluded to Maori poet Hone Tuwhare’s poem “*No Ordinary Sun*”. For future researchers, I have a few more recommendations. For example, Johnny Frisbie’s autobiography *Miss Ulysses* from *Puka-Puka* (1948), Vincent Eri’s novel *The Crocodile* (1971) Michael Ondaatje’s *Warlight*, Mohsin Hamid’s *Exit West*, and James George’s novel *Ocean Roads* are a few war novels apt for studying through the panopticon of Postcolonial Ecocriticism. All these texts play out militarism and war at their best.

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