NECROPOLITICS AND LEARNED HELPLESSNESS: A STUDY OF THE SELECTED TEXTS OF MIRZA WAHEED AND ATIQ RAHIMI

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Candidate of **Master of Philosophy** at the National University of Modern Languages do hereby declare that the thesis **Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness: A Study of the Selected Texts of Mirza Waheed and Atiq Rahimi** submitted by me in partial fulfillment of MPhil degree, is my original work, and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

I also understand that if evidence of plagiarism is found in my thesis/dissertation at any stage, even after the award of a degree, the work may be cancelled, and the degree revoked.

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ABSTRACT

Title: Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness: A Study of the Selected Texts of Mirza Waheed and Atiq Rahimi

The paradigm of this research is in socio-political and psychological perspective. The primary texts, The Collaborator and Earth and Ashes, are grounded in the war-stricken condition of Kashmir and Afghanistan, respectively. This study employs the theoretical concepts of Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness to explore the primary texts for factual fictionality. Necropolitics, proposed by Cameroonian author Achilles Mbembe in his book Necropolitics, has been employed in the socio-political manner. Whereas Learned Helplessness, proposed by the American psychologist Martin Seligman, talks about the psychological aspects. Moreover, the method employed for the analysis of the texts is Textual Analysis propagated by Catherine Belsey. The study, however, has highlighted the socio-political effects of Necropolitics and the consequent psychological and behavioral helplessness that the victims suffer. The effects of Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness have badly affected the socio-political situation of society and psychological condition of the characters. Regarding the relation between the two theoretical perspectives in light of the texts, it has been found out that Necropolitics intensifies Learned Helplessness; but, the effects of latter on the former is dependent on uncontrollability of the event, contingency of future, and cognition and explanatory style of the characters. In the last, the study is significant in the sense that the effects of socio-political and psychological application of Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness on characters and society have been explored in a new dimension which will effectively broaden the contours of the research repository.

Table of Contents

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DEDICATION

To my Father and Mother for my being and becoming!

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"Man is born free but everywhere is in chains"

(J. J. Rousseau)

This study aims to explore the selected texts from Kashmiri and Afghan fiction for highlighting the socio-political and psychological conditions of the characters in the primary texts under the theoretical underpinning of Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness proposed by Achille Mbembe and Martin Seligman, respectively, using Catherine Belsey's Textual Analysis. Necropolitics helps foreground the power exercised to control the life and death of characters- by creating death-worlds and maximal extermination of masses, whereas Learned Helplessness explores helplessness in face of uncontrollably calamitous circumstances. The study further explores whether necropolitics leads to helplessness or not. Necropolitics is employed in the socio-political sense that how states create death-worlds for maximum killing of people as portrayed in the texts. Whereas Learned helplessness is exploited in its psychological aspect for the effects on individuals. Moreover, textual analysis is useful as it provides the opportunity for considering a wide spectrum of meanings and interpretation, in a contextual manner.

The selected fiction for this research is representative of the lives of the characters who happened to be stuck in the chaos; spatially and temporally, which has been caused by the global necropolitical practices of the dominating states. Seeping to the political setup of the post-World War 2 states, the ideological propensities of control and surveillance are still at work, though in another form but with the same intentions and aims. These measures and maneuvers are perpetrated by the government of (consciously shaped) natives and the assaulting forces; controlling the reins and resources of the state, as highlighted in the analysis section. Having innocent civilians at their disposal, these governments control the social and political pursuits of their lives- or their lives-as-a-whole, as became evident in the analysis section. Consequently, the affected characters suffer from various psychological disturbances, in which learned helplessness is of concern to this study.

Moreover, working as a cobweb system of suppression and marginalization, these Necropolitical practices aim at juggling with the lives of those who are at its stake, or the

least capable of defending their collective national and ethical self, as is portrayed in *The Collaborator* and *Earth and Ashes*. Such endeavors employ the tool of terror, as proposed by Foucault in explicating the politics of sovereignty. Building his argument on the social contract theory, he asks that was this power not the foundation of the authority of sovereign that was granted over an individual's life (Foucault, p. 243)? If so, how could necropolitics be performed over this sacred trust, this is where the politicization of life and death comes into play.

As Elleke Boehmer has proposed in his book *Postcolonial Poetics*, "the modern neo-colonial state in fact solicits the terror through which it constitutes its authority" (71). The inherent capacity of terror and panic in the subjugation of masses has also been illustrated by Foucault in his book *Society Must Be Defended*. Moreover, steering the argument to helplessness, Robert Peckham in his book *Empires of Panic: Epidemics and Colonial Anxieties,* proposes that "the human response to threatening conditions is more dangerous than the threatening conditions themselves" (5). This is where the psychological mechanism of the consequences of necropolitical practices start to surface.

To begin with, the term, Necropolitics has stemmed from Michel Foucault's concept of Biopolitics. In the last lecture of his book *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault states that the politics exercised over life is not at individual-level but life at mass-level. Initially, Biopolitics included controlling individuals' birth rate and death ratio at mass level by inflicting or curing epidemics. Later, it led to be involved with the endemics that affected life, not as inflicting death but as weakening life. This resulted in the decline of the health of labors which consequently affected the industrial production and efficiency. Lastly, Biopolitics was concerned to control Birth rate, mortality rate, and the fertility of population (Foucault 243). That is why public hygiene and medical care was emphasized and normalization of knowledge was focused to help sustain life in face of gnawing death that weakened life (244).

Necropolitics enables institutions to control the life and death of characters, and this is further justified under the guise of eradication of corruption, war against terror, and protection of liberty and rights of citizens. Necropolitics consists 'in the power to manufacture an entire crowd of people who specifically live at the edge of life, or even on its outer edge — people for whom living means continually standing up to death …. This life is a superfluous one, therefore, whose price is so meager that it has no equivalence, whether market or — even less — human …. Nobody even bears the slightest feelings of

responsibility or justice towards this sort of life or, rather, death. Necropolitical power proceeds by a sort of inversion between life and death, as if life was merely death's medium (Mbembe 37,38). Sometimes, this leads to the diminution of resistance and initiation of passivity, which breeds helplessness.

Similarly, learned helplessness; a concept in behavioral theory of psychology, has its roots in classical conditioning theory of response and stimuli. This concept was foregrounded by Martin Seligman, an American psychologist, in 1960s and 70s when he conditioned dogs in escapable and unescapable situation. Later, he applied this on human in laboratory setting where he furthered his argument that unescapable events reduce response initiation and escapable event does not. Martin E. P. Seligman states in his book *Learned Helplessness* that psyche, and actions are interdependent and work in a pair. That is to say that actions are determined by understanding the nature of the event. The comprehension of a stressful or traumatic event as possibly escapable might result in the significant response initiation. But the thought that a traumatic situation could hardly be escaped, reduces response initiation and results in the passivity of action.

Similarly, the relation between the selected fiction and above theoretical perspective is the textual and geographic locality where necropolitical practices are exercised and learned helplessness has been observed in characters. Consequently, this substantiates the current study and provides the umbilical cord. Moreover, the social and political vulnerability of the characters of these texts lay out the logical foundation as explicated hereafter.

In South Asia, the geo-political situation of Kashmir and Afghanistan has always been very crucial to the stability of whole region. The claims of India and Pakistan on Kashmir, and Soviet Union and American invasion of Afghanistan has resulted in prolonged suffering of characters as portrayed. To call this era an age of terror and insurgency would not be wrong because throughout the globe a lot of nations are trying to survive the atrocities inflicted by the powerful opponents, for instance Indian occupancy of Kashmir and United States invasion of Afghanistan. Such conditions are quite aptly portrayed in fiction from Afghanistan and Kashmir. For instance, Nadeem Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil* and Fahad Shah's *Of Occupation and Resistance* quite aptly capture the calamitous condition of the two states.

The *Wasted Vigil* captures the prevalence of the effects of war in the past, present, and future lives of the five characters. Aslam has aptly portrayed the horrors of war in the aftermath of the Soviet and American invasion of Afghanistan. The fictionalization of this systematic horrification has captured or at least tries to capture the multiplicity of issues that have been caused in the lives of different characters. Though few, these characters are representatives of the troubled and chaotic lives of different genders, age groups, and ethnicities. Whereas Fahad Shah's book has thoroughly penned down the conditions that Kashmiri people have been through. Although fiction, but still it is linked to reality in one way or another. As Freeman states in his essay 'Lies Like Truth: On Fiction, Reality, and Fictional Reality', that "fiction, no matter how surreal or otherworldly, is a response to reality" (Freeman).

In addition, the hyper-advancement in technology and modern warfare has resulted in a rivalry between states on the basis as 'afraid of having been invaded and being on the verge of disappearing' by technologically more stable states (Mbembe 2). This can be observed in the instances where power was exercised by India and Soviet Union- later United States, in as close a place as Kashmir and as remote as Afghanistan, respectively. As stated above, this has been portrayed in various fictional, factual, and fictional factual accounts. If history fails, only fiction has the depth and breadth to capture the profundity of these instances.

[Fiction] contributes to a better knowledge of how a social actor strategically adapts a story to produce a socially adequate presentation of self and actions (Longo 3). According to Eco, "culture 'sees' the world" through a conceptual system, and it is through this system that literature reflects reality (Eco 274). Turner observes that, from a cognitive point of view, literature and language are the same as the study of the everyday mind, since "literature lives within language and language within everyday life" (Turner 4).

Arundhati Roy, regarding the representation of reality through fiction, states in an interview, 'I always knew instinctively that the truth about what happened in Kashmir can only be told in fiction. It's so complicated. It's not all about evidentiary value and human rights reports, you know? For 20 years or more now, the air has been seeded with such brutality, such nightmarishness, through these cycles of loss and renewal. So how to write about it was a challenge. It's one of those things that you need fiction to capture'. (Roy).

Moreover, Ackerman and Puglisi in their book *THE EMOTIONAL WOUND THESAURUS: A Writer's Guide to Psychological Trauma* states that "throughout the ages, story has been used to guide and teach, allowing us to pass on important information, ideas, and beliefs in many different forms" (17). This trembles the foundation of, if not completely dismantles, the classical belief that fiction is for entertainment purposes only. The breadth of only fiction has the capacity to digest the stark picture of reality without puking it.

Evidently, this fictionalization of the objective realities of vulnerable places in the text helps provide agency to the voices of people. The multifarious accounts portrayed in the primary texts help in the substantiation of the above discourse in a logical and systematic manner.

As presented in the text, in Kashmir, over the past few decades, characters are struggling for gaining freedom, politically and through armed expenditure. The emergence of armed uprisings has been in the backdrop of banning civil campaigns, beating up journalists and social activists, and suspension of freedom of speech. These armed uprisings are even being crushed viciously, with the massive use of weaponry and armed forces as portrayed in *The Collaborator*. The Indian forces do not permit freedom of expression in Kashmir and the violent repression always leads to drastic measures and calamities for whoever tries to unearth the truth behind made-up crisis in Kashmir (Shah 4).

On the other hand, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the subsequent tyrant military deployment has resulted in the mass extermination and bombing of many civil places. The prolonged war in Afghanistan has resulted in many social and political issues at the time to date. A major portion of Afghan youth has become physically disabled because of mines and shelling, as has been portrayed in *Earth and Ashes*. Psychological issues such as trauma and PTSD are also diagnosed in many youths, children, and women. Political suppression and state-terror also resulted in the psychological issues and hopelessness among masses. Of the many children interviewed after and during war revealed that they had always felt a fear of dying in the conflict, moreover, exposing children to public amputation and executions had an enormous effect on the impressionable mind.

Looking at society, such events distort the overall sanity of characters and leads to distress and trauma. It may also force characters to violence in response to atrocities and brutalities that they are subjected to. The daily ritual of violence greatly tampers their vision of the world. Both Afghanistan and Kashmir are subject to decades long war and political turmoil and terror. The countries geography and multi-ethnic population have been major elements of instability because of the claims of neighboring countries and the involvement of international powers like Soviet Union, Britain, and United States.

The characters in both texts are subjected to appalling treatment that has affected and disturbed their socio-cultural setup and resulted in the chronic suffering. Such situations lead to severe psychological and mental disabilities which are difficult to escape and cure, at least in such painful conditions where an individual's sense of being is continuously at stake. Basharat Peer's *Curfewed Nights* and Malik Sajad's *Munnu: A Boy from Kashmir* quite artistically present the terrible condition of Kashmir, whereas Khalid Husseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and *The Kite Runner* capture the downtrodden image of Afghanistan in quite an over-arching manner.

Regarding such chaos and mayhem, Mbembe states, 'killing is the lowest form of survival' (Mbembe 88). 'In this era of great brutality' life is at the stake of death. 'In our contemporary world, weapons are deployed for destroying maximal number of persons and creating *death-worlds*, that is, new and unique forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to living conditions that confer upon them the status of the *living dead'* (Mbembe 92).

While explicating the complexities of Necropolitics, Mbembe in the conclusion of third chapter states that in current era ordnance and weapons are employed for the maximal extermination of masses and consequently shaping 'death-worlds'. Here, the lives of characters are constantly and continuously under surveillance, which is a new form of social existence. The uninterrupted suffering subject them to living a life in face of death- humiliating, and more dreadful. It also produces uncontrollability and unpredictability. Consequently, it is not the vicious situations alone but learning that an event is 'uncontrollable that causes helplessness' (Seligman 59). Therefore, when a character learns that his actions are futile in face of a problem, it leads to Learned Helplessness.

Seligman has presented three major postulates of Learned Helplessness: contingency, cognition, and behavior. By contingency he means the uncertainty of a future event; characters who are more sensitive often pre-consider the risks and dangers of a future event which burdens their conscious and unconscious thinking and leads to mental stress and tension. Cognition means that taking the uncertainty of a future event seriously and blaming oneself for the responsibility of such occurrence. It also encapsulates the idea of considering an event inescapable which leads one to inaction and passivity. Finally comes behavior, the expression of inescapability of an event despite one's action. This signifies that the traumatic event has overwhelmingly burdened the character's consciousness and he is unable to cope with inescapability of the event which results in accepting that one's actions are completely futile in face of the drastic situation, and anything done could never result in positivity. He further states that Learned Helplessness has three main effects on human psyche and actions, that are: lack of response initiation, retardation of learning, and finally depression, stress and sometimes trauma (Seligman, Peterson and Maier 8).

The two-tiered theoretical proposition for this study as stated above is used in such a way as to provide basis to each other. This is so because Necropolitics is the cause and Learned Helplessness is the effect which signifies that these have a direct relationship with one another. Moreover, textual analysis as propagated by Belsey in her essay 'Research Method for English Studies' has been employed as a method for analysis. While explaining textual analysis, she has emphasized on the recognition of meaning in a text which provides foundation for operational schema of textual analysis. Furthermore, she states that it is the coming into contact of the reader with the text that meaning is generated. The triangulation of the two concepts with textual analysis works as a complex mechanism which attempts to look out for the related themes and motifs through careful and critical investigation. In the next paragraphs short summaries of the primary texts have been produced so as relation among them, the theoretical concepts and methodological design can be made apparent, initially.

In the selected texts the lives of characters are subject to brutal procedures, where it can be observed that these people have no authority or jurisdiction over their lives. The protagonist of *The Collaborator* is faced with horrible conditions where life is at the stake of death. The story unfolds itself in the poor border village where a small community of nomads live. The border is basically the Line of Control where the state of Kashmir has

been divided between India and Pakistan. When armed forces of India are fighting the freedom fighters, the unnamed 19 years old protagonist is employed by an Indian captain to collect IDs from the corpses. Throughout the novel the protagonist oscillates between joining freedom fighters and not. He tries but fails. His father has understood the helplessness and lack of control of the situation and, as a Sarpanch, warns villagers to remain calm and do not join militants if brutalities of the Indian forces are to be avoided. As an elder and Sarpanch of the village, the protagonist's father decides not to leave their houses because it is safe to remain unnoticed. Several of the villagers and protagonist's friends are murdered just as being suspicious.

Whereas, in *Earth and Ashes* the protagonist has already gone through such an event where he could not exercise control over the lives of his dear ones and could not save them. Many members of his family are burned to death. The protagonist is still unable to deal with the psychological repercussions of his condition. He utterly feels at loss and his mind is constantly shifting between past and present. The memories of the destructive event are constantly blurring his understanding and cognition of the events at hand. In Mbembe's words, 'death-world' has been created in the village. The Soviet soldiers had some suspicions which caused the destruction of the whole village, and it was burned to ashes. In short, both the aftereffects and causes of the event have been portrayed in an unconventional narrative form.

Consequently, from the above explanation of theoretical concepts and the summaries of the texts it is justified that the conceptual relation between the two is evident as the former provides the notions of understanding, the latter, instances for substantiation and exemplification.

1.1 Thesis Statement

In face of the prolonged war-stricken social, political, and psychological conditions, it has become difficult for characters, though not all, to lead a normal and domestic life without being a target to Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness. The current research endeavor attempts to explicate the exercise of Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness and its socio-political and psychological effects on characters as portrayed in the selected texts. Moreover, the study also highlights control over life that leads to dejection or otherwise. It also explores whether both, control over life and dejection, intensify each other or not.

1.2 Research Objectives

1. To explore the effects of Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness on characters' lives and socio-political functioning.
2. To highlight the relation between dejection and control over life and death.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the effects of Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness on characters' lives and socio-political functioning as reflect in *The Collaborator* and *Earth and Ashes*?
2. How does control over life and death lead to dejection in the characters of selected texts and whether both intensify each other or not?

1.4 Research Methodology

The approach of the current research study is qualitative in nature because this study is investigative and interpretive in style. The analysis has been carried out with the help of Textual Analysis as propagated by Catherine Belsey in her essay 'Textual Analysis as a Research Method'. According to Belsey, "textual analysis is indispensable to research in cultural criticism" (160). Similarly, she states that "textual analysis as a research method involves a close encounter with the work itself, an examination of the details" (160). The essence of textual analysis lies in the fact that it unfolds an array of meaning which may help reach logical conclusion. Similarly, various elements of the texts like, structure, diction, loaded phrases and ideologies are analyzed. "That material is by no means an empty space, a vacancy into which we pour whatever we like; instead the text itself participates in the process of signification" (167) Furthermore, she has linked textual analysis with the post-structuralist notions of signifier and signified. She states that this process of the coming into contact of reader and the text generates meaning which does not lay in them separately. She, moreover, says that 'meaning' have 'materiality…which intervenes in the world' and defines 'our understanding of the world' (Griffin 167) . Moreover, the analysis has been carried out through critical and careful inquiry of the primary texts through the broader lens of Necropolitics and Learned helplessness.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is that it broadens the scope and usability of Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness in contemporary state-politics. Moreover, it unfolds the cunningly designed structures that the current global and local actors have adopted to deceive masses and make their own ends meet. The study aims at finding out the lethal acts and activities exercised by states which are justified in the guise of good cause. Such violations are highlighted, explicated, and their reality has further been unfolded by explaining the effects of these conditions on human life. Moreover, a vivid picture of life-in-face-of-death has been excavated for how it has manipulated the basic human right to live a peaceful life. The study is also significant in the sense that it underpins the analysis of fictionalized reality and clarifies the conscious efforts to maintain immoderate conditions that the characters are subjected to, as represented in the selected texts.

1.6 Delimitation

The study has been delimited to Mirza Waheed's *The Collaborator* and Atiq Rahimi's *Earth and Ashes.* Further, Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness has been applied to the selected texts.

1.7 Chapters Breakdown

The present work begins with Introduction which gives a sort of orientation and background knowledge about the topic and the concept to be explored in the selected texts. The introduction is followed by Literature Review which provides a survey of some related works and themes especially with reference to Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness. Its major focus is to find gap in existing body of works regarding the themes and concepts being explored. The third section consists of Research Methodology which make clear the theoretical underpinnings of this study. It also clarifies the research method known as textual analysis, its strength and weaknesses, its appropriateness for the present work. Finally, a detailed analysis of selected texts has been provided, conclusion drawn, and recommendation suggested for future work.

According to the research pattern the next chapter will provide a review of the secondary resources to provide the conceptual background and frame the current study in the existing related scholarship for better understanding of this research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The research works that have already been conducted on related topics and texts are presented here to highlight the gap in the research repository that this research endeavor is going to fill. It also contextualizes the current research into the broader picture of the issue to highlight the importance of this study. The studies that have been conducted on the current theory and primary texts, that are selected for this study, have also been mentioned chronologically, though not strictly adhered to, because of the conceptual intricacies of this study. Some studies that foreground the context of the current study are also presented at the end of the current chapter.

To begin with, a study conducted by Ghosh analyzes the discourses of power and overt forms of violence that the works present. First, it contextualizes events from the last three years that have occurred in Kashmir to present forms of violence Kashmiri people undergo in the quotidian of life. Then the essay argues that the selected literary works represent Kashmir as a unique postcolonial conflict zone that defies an easy terminology to understand the onslaught of violence, and the varied forms of power. The study finds a curious merging of biopolitics and necropolitics that constructs the characters as "living dead" within this emergency zone. Thereafter, essay concludes how the texts illustrate Agamben's notion of the bare life is not enough to understand subjects living in this unique postcoloniality. The presence of death and the dead bodies go beyond bare life and shows how that bodies become significant signifiers that construct a varied notion of agency (Ghosh 30-49).

Similarly, Smith, in his study, employs necropolitics in the broader picture of international surroundings and happenings. The study highlights the recurrence of killings in Salvador as a multi-surfaced phenomenon rendering it a racialized, sexed, gendered, and classed occurrence. Moreover, the killing has been linked with or an indirect consequence of black suffering and inequality across Brazil and cross-temporally and transnationally highlighted by its relationship with US's geopolitical landscape of torture, war on terror, and legacies of slavery and colonialism in the American continent. The study situates the death squad murders in Bahia within the montage of transnational reciprocity of torture execution between US and South America, the so-called war on

terror as exemplified by happenings in Abu Ghraib and the legacy of racism against people in US. Through this broader historical and factual picture of placing the deaths in Brazil the study emphasize that these are connected to transnational necropolitical practices that target queer, black, female, terrorist, and Other body (Smith 177-198). This study and the previous one provides spatial foundation to the current study as it supports the relativity of the current study in the global economy of Necropolitical.

A research endeavor by Saba proposes that to account for the indiscriminate ruination of that land and its people, war discourse generally depicts the people and the landscape of target countries as intrinsically dangerous or threatening. Resting on this conception, the research study utilizes Waheed and Aslam's fiction to analyze the war strategies of codification and transformation that Other landscapes into militarized zones known as environmental Othering. Whereby its ecological complexity is erased, codification shows reductive normalization of land and instead it gets generated as alarming and hostile space. This codification paths way to transformation, whereby the land is reshaped into a space of imprisonment for the subjugation of enemy groups, as seen in the aggressive alteration of natural spaces into military bases and deathscape. In going after the causes of this phenomenon, this essay states that environmental Othering achieves militant utilitarian purposes but, in doing so, acts as a threat multiplier for natural spaces by perpetuating epistemic shift, biotic rupture, and topographical cooptation for territories at war (Saba 892-907).

In their study, Lucy et all explore the conditions of asylum seeker in UK who are being subject to unjustified social, economic, and cultural conditions, despite UK's abiding by human rights law. The study explores the conditions which these asylum seekers are put to for creating a blockade to the inflow of migrants in search of better life to UK. This consequently leads to ill treatment of asylum seekers who are thought of to be dejected by such treatment. They have questioned the regime of differential humanity by contextualizing their study in the postcolonial perspective. Furthermore, the study has used Franz Fanon's concept of 'being' and 'non-being' to differentiate between the hierarchical conception of human existence, which is often used for the justification of differential treatment of people belonging to global south versus those from global north. In short, their study has used Necropolitics in the postcolonial paradigm to analyze the present every day. Their everyday lives have been studied in relation to their past in all the three aspects that are social economic, and cultural and the differences have been

pointed out for highlighting that asylum seekers are living on the edge of life and wounded physically and psychologically (Mayblin, Wake, Kazemi 107-123).

Motyl and Arghavan, in their research, discuss the lives of Iraqis during the US assault on Iraq in the backdrop of so-called War on Terror. They have analyzed the condition of Iraqis through the lens of Necropolitics under the broader paradigm of neo-coloniality. Dunya Mikhail's poetry and Sinan Anatoon's novel have been studied to highlight the atrocities inflicted on Iraqis. The study has also used Giorgia Agamben's distinction of Zoe (social life) and Bios (cultural life) to express that not only their biological being, but their social aspect of life has also been disturbed. Moreover, the destruction of National Library and loot from National Museum emphasize the fact that Iraqis' historical and cultural identity was at stake during the invasion. They have focused on the ubiquity of death and supposed impossibility of art in face of Necropolitics. The study also employs postcolonial terminology of writing back to the US' imperialist designs but with a twist. It further says that the twist lies in writing in the indigenous language Arabic while the implied reader is in fact native Arabs/Iraqis. Moreover, the sexual atrocities inflicted in Abu Ghraib prison also highlight the death of the spiritual being and soul of the oppressed. Thus, these writers' very act of preserving the atrocities through post-2003 literature implies the performative survival of US empire necropolitical assault on Iraqi Bios and Zoe (Motyl, Arghavan 128-141).

Dealing with certain aspects of Necropolitics, the previous two of the three studies provide a roadmap and scheme of arrangement to the current research study. Whereas the last highlights the exertion of necropolitics in Neo-colonial perspective which is the closest to the current study because of employing Necropolitics in regional and local politics.

Thom Davies has conducted a study on the environmental degradation resulting in the health deterioration. He has employed Mbembe's Necropolitics in relation with Rob Nixon's concept of Slow Violence for highlighting the humans and plant's vulnerability due to petrochemical industries in St. James, Louisiana. He further elaborates that once used for plantation these places are heavily industrialized despite residential areas nearby. The study explicates that such practices, though not instantly harmful, may result in environmental decay. The slow violence caused by these industries has caused environmental injustice to the local communities who are gradually plunged into the pit of death. Though, these changes are hardly observed with the naked eye, but the statistic

comparison of the data elucidates that environment is constantly degrading in the neighborhood. The study concludes that though industries are producing a large portion of GDP but such necropolitical practices and slow violence are harmful for human as well as animal's biological life (Davies 1537-1553).

A research study by Broadfield, Dawes and Chong illustrates the systematic employment of Necropolitics in the Australian Criminal Justice System against aboriginal Australians. The study emphasizes that this differential treatment is further alienating and marginalizing the indigenous population which is resulting in a higher ratio of incarceration of aboriginal people. The study has focused a few cases and brought into light the historic background of this systematic suppression to strengthen their argument. Authors being non-indigenous state that it must be noted that the study has not been conducted on indigenous people but with them, to minimize the risk of being an outsider. Moreover, the conditions of these people have been critically analyzed, their perspective privileged, and recommendations have been given to empower indigenous population and provide justice to the suppressed. The concept of necropolitics has been used to indicate that state has the power to render certain people as less human or dehumanize them physically, socially, and politically. Therefore, creating a state of constant subjugation in a systematic way where it could hardly be questioned (Broadfield, Dawes, Chong 5-26).

A research study by Flacks into 'stop and search' has mainly focused on how it falls short of achieving its purported goals (for example, the prevention of offending), and on the damage it causes to people and communities. The study also proposes to evaluate the stop and search of young people not just as a temporary inconvenience or a mere challenge to police legitimacy or police-community relations, but for the long-term effects on specific communities. The case of Mohidin highlights the ways in which some young people's use of public space is problematized by police officers, and how stop and search powers function as a form of punishment as well as, or instead of, legal ways of crime detection. The study has also discussed that the judicial defense of such powers and muting of objections to their racist and exclusionary effect, result in the authorization and legitimation of the deathly logic of policing as part of a promise to preserve the security of citizens. The "almost mythical belief in the efficacy" of stop and search powers, in face of evidence to the contrary, might therefore be a function of the necropolitical investment in such tactics rather than the result of a dearth of rational policy-making or adequate legal safeguards. Whereas criminal justice measures, particularly regarding the young,

have tended to be explained with reference to Foucault's elaboration of the 'disciplinary' society, it is his less frequently deployed understanding of biopolitics, and subsequent iterations, that may prove most fruitful in understanding the continued authorization and legitimization of stop and search powers (Flakes 387-405). The previous two studies help in the understanding the capability of Necropolitical practices to curtail freedom of individuals and the systematicity of such practices.

Olof Ohlson has conducted a case study on the Mexican conflict among state, corporate group, and social uprisings. The subversive form of Necropower in the shape of social protest is against state necro-governance and corporate Necropower. The deaths and killings in corporate activities and state's operation against drug cartels have resulted in missing of a lot of people's loved ones, dead and alive, and subsequently flamed social protests in solidarity with the victims. The study has employed the concept of Necropolitics in a triangular form, in which subversive Necropolitics opposes the other two to the extent of breaking them down. It is because subversive necropolitics has accumulated a considerable account of repertoire of the cases in which state and corporate has suppressed lives of civilians. Through their politics of visibility and emotions they are crying out to the world for recognition of the loved ones they have lost. Whereas Necrogovernance and corporate Necropower renders citizens and workers expendable in the interests of capital accretion, subversive Necropolitics serves as collective reciprocal force trying to maintain the equilibrium (Ohlson 245-259). This study has highlighted the forward and reverse working of Necropolitics which helps us in determining whether reverse Necropolitics is also at work in the current study or not.

A study conducted by Sumba has attempted to explore the power politics involved in the Covid-19 pandemic vaccines' distribution across the globe. The study explores the necropolitical practices involved in creating hinders in the way of delivering vaccines to the marginalized sections or the third world countries. The further focusses the point that it is not pandemic that is necropolitical but the system that governs it. The uneven disposal of pharmaceutical products to the privileged and lack of providence of vaccines to the poor is a proof that death and life is being controlled in the corona pandemic. Moreover, it highlights the fact the crisis, whether it was during Ebola or HIV, was basically a monopoly of the pharmaceutical market and a control dispersal and disposal of the pharmaceutical products. It has been explained that necropolitics is not just the infliction of death or creating death-causing conditions, but the lack of medical assistance

is also the politics of necropower which has been quite skillfully exercised in the Covid-19 pandemic (Sumba 1-5).

Talking about the anti-lockdown protest in US, Bratich has employed necropolitics in another dimension. He states that Mbembe talked about necropolitical practices on behalf of the states who exercise the power to control death and life, but it can also be extended to non-state actors who are posing a threat to other's lives and their own also. The study has linked the protestors with the historical happenings against state policies, for instance it has talked about the fascist practices of the Nazis which ultimately resulted in their own destruction. The study further highlights that these protests are basically based on the hyper-individualist notion of self, which is more than just selfish. The death-driven chants among these libertarians are invoking the silent citizen also and motivating masses for martyrdom also. It has linked non-state necropolitics with cultural fascism as propagated by Walter Benjamin or with micro-fascism as coined by G. Deleuze and F. Guattari. In short, the study has basically employed subversive necropolitics to highlight that these protestors might not only fell prey to the pandemic themselves, but they might also draw a lot more public within that circle turning from insurgency to down-surgency (Bratich 257-265).

The Israeli government's management of Palestinian dead bodies has been discussed by Nashif. He argues that necropolitics also includes the authority over dead bodies to control the collective actions of people. The study points to Israel's policy of withholding the corpses of Palestinians in 2015 when many a lot were denied a proper burial by their families. The fact that Palestinians collectivity was to be dismantled was retrospectively intensified by the collective deprivation of their deceased. The study also highlighted that such a strategy was used to manage who might die, when, and with whom; an extreme level of necropolitical practice exercised by Israel government to suppress insurgency and protests which, vice versa, inflamed it (Nashif 1-8).

Yilmaz and Erturk has conducted a study on the Turkey's ruling Justice and Development party's (AKP) tactics of maintaining a grip on the government. The study has analyzed the Populist literature for how the AKP attempt to appeal to the marginalized classes of society and dragging them to have a say in the public affairs. The study highlights that it is appealing solely for the stability of their government and having a strong hold in the country's politics. The study has employed the framework of necropolitics for highlighting the populist narrative of AKP for power politics as it is

based on martyrdom and atavistic nationalism. Moreover, the perpetrators instrumentalise these populist necropolitical discourses for legitimation, repression, and co-optation to maintain authoritative stability (Yilmaz, Erturk 1524-1543).

The preceding three paragraphs talk about the employment of Necropolitics by non-state actors, occupying states, and indigenous governments for multiple ends. This broadened use of Necropolitics lay out and justifies the operational schema of Necropolitics in varying circumstances.

Drawing upon Heinz Isnu Fenkl's novel Memories of My Ghost Brother, Hee; a Korean researcher, argues and highlights the impacts of necropolitics on the personality of people whose life is constantly under surveillance and control. The study has employed necropolitics from Freudian perspective to explore the psychoanalytic implications on an individual going through necropolitical circumstances. Focusing on the experiences of the protagonist and the conditions through which has loved ones has gone through, the author argues that such circumstances always result in PTSD including anxiety, guilt, and melancholia and frequent dreadful daydreams and nightmares. Moreover, the study concludes with the remarks that protagonist's traumatic neurosis will continue uninterrupted (Hee 111-138).

Up till now, it has been tried to discern the use of the concept of Necropolitics in a variety of circumstances and make its operationalization evident so as it may be understood that this has wider implications in a range of forms. Moreover, the current study has employed it for apprehending the condition of the characters in the primary texts. In addition, it has also been made obvious that it has psychological repercussions where the second element of the theoretical framework of this research comes into play. Focusing on the second concept employed in this study that is Learned Helplessness, following are some of the research studies from the repository of research that helps understand its functioning.

Prihadi et al. highlight the relation between cyberbullying and depression in the light of learned helplessness and self-esteem. The study attempted to find out whether depression is caused or not in case of cyber-victimization or not and if so, how is it related to self-esteem and learned helplessness. It has been found out that the depression resulted from online bullying is greater than the depression caused offline. It has also been highlighted that helplessness occurs only when an individual perceives that he is

helpless and cannot do anything to dodge online victimization. Moreover, when self-esteem deficit also intensifies depression because in case of cyberbullying it is difficult to chase the bully. Further, the study also suggests that there are many other factors such as education levels of parents, social economic status, perceived parenting styles and others can be explored to strengthen the relation between cyberbullying and the resultant helplessness or low self-esteem (Prihadi, Hui, Chua 563-574). This study helps understand the causes of Learned helplessness and relating it with those at work in the primary texts of the current research.

Prihadi et al. have attempted to highlight the mediational effect of internal locus of control between procrastination and learned helplessness among university students. Drawing upon the previous research the study states that it has been maintained that high level of procrastination is found among university students. The findings of this research article conclude that procrastination has a direct root in the internal locus of control, that students who perceive that they do not have any control over the achievements or completion of tasks solely abandons any struggle and work. Moreover, this perception of helplessness ultimately leads to procrastination and lack of attempt to complete a task (Prihadi, Yeow, Tan 579-595).

Rizvi and Ratika have conducted a study based on the assumption of the impact of learned helplessness on work involvement in the 21st century's rapidly developing, globalizing and advanced environment as workforce face a lot of pressure that was unknown in past. The study hypothesizes that in such stressful work environment the employees may face high work stress which might also adversely affect their performance. The study basically attempts to highlight the impact of learned helplessness on work involvement and has consequently found that it is negatively related to employee's performance. This organizational level research study has also suggested that supervisors and managers should at least have the basic understanding of identifying learned helplessness and human resource expert should use techniques and methods to minimize learned helplessness and boost employee's self-esteem (Rizvi, Ratika). Though, limited in its approach this work helps countering and finding the solutions of Learned Helplessness in a professional environment. It helps the current study in suggesting ways to counter Learned Helplessness in an effective way.

A research study conducted by Gacek et al. attempted to highlight the effects of learned helplessness and identification of the state of cognitive exhaustion in individuals

with slight intellectual disability. The outcomes of the subjection to unsolvable tasks and the capability to identify the symptoms of cognitive enervation were tested in 120 individuals. Persons in the control group scored higher than persons in the experimental group in avoidance/escape learning task, when exposed to insolvable task; but same was the result in complex analytical fluency task. In short, the study concludes with the finalized remarks that, although those individuals may not recognize the cognitive state coupled to decreased performance, attempt of unsolvable tasks may not positively influence the cognitive functioning in persons with intellectual debility (Gacek, Smolen, Pilecka 42-51). The relevance of this lies in the fact that it is concerned with the cognitive functioning of individuals in face of helplessness.

Bano et al. in their research study have attempted to highlight whether learned helplessness leads to suicidal attempt or not, and if so, can cognitive behavior therapy help overcome such intentions of taking one's own life. The study has sampled a group of 400 students divided in experimental and control group. The experimental group were treated with cognitive behavior therapy sessions which resulted in a change in the psychological setup of these individuals. The study, in a nutshell, found that based on worst experiences and failures, and a continual denial or understatement of self-image and a degradation of one's skills and qualities finally result in conception of non-contingency of action and outcome. This leads to suicidality and termination of oneself, but the study also proposed that certain sessions of cognitive behavior therapy may also result in positivity and can ultimately save people (Bano, Aslam, Naz 569-572).

Ulusoy and Duy have conducted a study aimed at experimenting the effect of psycho-education program- based on cognitive behavior therapy, for the reduction of irrational beliefs and learned helplessness in eight-grade students. The main purpose of the study was to highlight if learned helplessness and irrational beliefs could be cured or not with the help of therapeutic lessons. The study was experimental in nature based on the results of a pre-test and post-test examination of students' behavior. The study has concluded that the results of the analysis exhibited that there was no difference between the scores of learned helplessness and irrational beliefs, whereas it also highlighted that significant differences were observed in the results of pre-test and post-test scores on irrational beliefs. Moreover, it has also been found out that cognitive behavior therapy was helpful only in case of reduction of irrational beliefs whereas in case of learned helplessness it was not fruitful (Ulusoy, Duy 1440-1446). This study is related to my

work in the sense that it also deals with the effects of learned helplessness but in a different paradigm.

A research study has been attempted by Joy et al. drawing on the natural calamities inflicted by floods in 2018-19 in Kerala, India. The study has focused on the experiences of three groups; one affected once, second twice, third never. The key variables in the study were learned helplessness, psychological well-being, and pro-environment care. The study analyzed whether victimization of natural calamities lead to the origination of learned helplessness, reduced psychological health, and pro-environment care behavior. It has been concluded that TFA (twice flood affected) group displayed greater learned helplessness as compared to OFA group. Pro-environment care behavior and psychological well-being were high among OFA group as compared to TFA group. Moreover, learned helplessness was higher among NFA group as compared to OFA and pro-environment care behavior and psychological well-being higher as compared to TFA group. Furthermore, the study also concluded, surprisingly, that mild risk is perhaps necessary for better psychological health and excess or dearth of it may prove calamitous for mental health (Joy, Ramachandran, George 137-144).

Finally, it has been highlighted that Learned Helplessness has been used across a diversity of studies, seldom have attempted to employ it in relation with Necropolitics as this study aims. Moreover, the transformation of Necropolitical kind of practices into behavioral and psychological imbalances, cognitive exhaustion, low self-esteem, and passivity have been revealed in the previous paragraphs.

In addition, a review of *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace* by Pye reveals that the problem of Kashmir is more complicated than the comparable clashes of sovereignties in other ethnically split regions. Pye states that the author Sumatra Bose, in the end, proposes some feasible policy measures to create an acceptable form of peace. The Line of Control (LOC), dissecting the Pakistani and Indian-held territories of Jammu and Kashmir; was the outcome of the first war between the two countries, when both armies were led by British generals and the Indian Defense Committee was headed by Lord Mountbatten. The LOC, Bose argues, has held firm through subsequent skirmishes between the two powers mainly because the diverse ethnic and linguistic classes on each side of the line have learned to live side by side. She, thus, argues that a commitment by Pakistan and India to grant liberty and democracy to the respective territories would open ways to peaceful politics in what has long been a dangerous exigency. To what has

seemed a hopeless crisis, Bose bring forth fresh ideas and new information (Pye, Bose 72). The relevance of this study to the current research is that it delves deep into the questions of sovereignty, which is central to Necropolitics, as highlighted in the introduction.

Rather has undertaken a study which states that Kashmir, being the most militarized zone in the world, has suffered miserably and its people are the most victimized as they are the worst casualties of conflict. Moreover, it states that Mirza Waheed, being one of the native writers in contemporary times to speak of Kashmiris, captures the painfully scattered lives of these traumatized people who are forced to live a difficult life. He gives the voice to the untold stories that are part of the conflict of Kashmir. The study further reveals that Waheed writes with a palpable affection for Kashmir and its peoples and gives glimpses of dozens of people whose fragile, fascinating lives are so ruthlessly marred by this conundrum. The study highlights how his novel *The Book of Gold Leaves* is engaged with the tumult and violence prevalent in Kashmir and how well it depicts the pain and sufferings of the oppressed Kashmiris who have been suffering since the onset of insurgency, counter- insurgency and other gory happenings (Rather 30-33). This study is the most relevant to the present research in the sense that it deals with the problems of the same geographic location and ethnic group but it has been very contracted in its approach to deal with a diversity of issues as the current study attempts to deal.

Hanif et al., have researched on the issue of Kashmir to delve into the trauma of people residing in Kashmir, a war-stricken territory in the middle of the third-world Asian countries. Since the division of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, Kashmir is one of the disputed regions and a core problem of conflict between India and Pakistan. The whole Kashmiri people has become listless and vulnerable to traumatic experiences because of the political turbulence as well as the resulting militarization. Regardless of the alarming nature of the traumatic experiences of the people of Kashmir, and as portrayed in the literature produced so far, little scholarly attention has been granted to it to voice out these accounts, which are important for claiming the factual depiction of the Kashmiris. The traumatic memories of Kashmiri people, as a community that the study finds, are no different from the similarly traumatized people of the Global North. The Kashmiri narrative, here, takes the responsibility of showing the reality of life. The investigation sums up that fictional representation, through memory of the past, brings a moving

picture of eternal suffering, upholding the fact that it is not the individual that must bear the moral responsibility; rather, it should be collective or state oriented (Hanif, Ullah 1-10). The state of exception and militarized spaces have been discussed in this study which has been dealt in more detail and in wider scope in the current study for clarity of understanding of the questions of the study.

Tavares has conducted a study on the antagonistic militant game between India, Pakistan, and Kashmir with a spotlight on the factor of religion in militancy. The study propagated a conflict-resolution framework to discuss the Kashmir crisis. Firstly, Kashmir is mapped out as a multi-faceted conflict between several parties. Besides the source of dispute between Pakistan and India, Kashmir is also a loaded conflict both between India and the religious militants who are waging a jihad to create a theocratic state, and between India and the Kashmiris over the right of self-determination. Secondly, to understand the complexity of Kashmir issue, based upon six levels of sovereignty, a framework has been introduced that helps us in highlighting the suggestions of the bargaining process between Pakistan, India and Kashmir. A roadmap is proposed for peace, based on this, which constitutes three consecutive steps: confidence-building actions, reinstatement of the asymmetric original status of Jammu and Kashmir and, finally, joint sovereignty (partial or total condominium) between Pakistan and India (Tavares 276-302).

Eggerman and Panter-Brick have conducted a study on the critical health-related issue in war-affected areas is to highlight how people make sense of adversity and why they show resilience in a high-risk environment. In Afghanistan, the burden of poor mental health arises in contexts of pervasive poverty, social inequality, and persistent violence. The participants selected for study narrated their experiences as part of a systematic health survey, including an open-ended questionnaire on major life stressors and solutions to mitigate them. For adults, the primary concern is repairing their " broken economy," the root of all miseries in social, educational, governance, and health domains. For students, frustrations focus on learning environments as well as poverty, as education is perceived as the gateway to upward social and economic mobility. Hope arises from a sense of moral and social order embodied in the expression of key cultural values: faith, family unity, service, effort, morals, and honor. These values form the bedrock of resilience, drive social aspirations, and underpin self-respect and dignity. However, economic impediments, social expectations, and cultural dictates also combine to create

entrapment, as the ability to realize personal and social aspirations is frustrated by structural inequalities injurious to health and well-being. The study has demonstrated that culture functions both as an anchor for resilience and an anvil of pain and highlights the relevance of ethnographic work in identifying what matters most in formulating social and public health policies to promote a hopeful future (Eggerman, Panter-Brick 71-83).

The previous two studies highlight the multifaceted nature of social and political chaos in Kashmir and Afghanistan. These are relevant to the current study in the sense that these provide a holistic background to the research at hand.

Parashar has conducted a study on the role of women in the politico-religious militancy in Kashmir. Public places have also been at hand to women to lead more political and militant activities, while conventional social structure and gendered order have been withheld. The study considers the different duties that women undertake in the support of militancy in Kashmir and the dialogues around them. Kashmiri women's efforts and involvement in the militancy has not earned any space in the nationalist narratives, to assert their lot in the present political debate. Obscurities persist about how the male-oriented Kashmiri nationalist and conflict dialogues may have impacted exclusions and inclusions. Based on a case study of interviews taken in Kashmir, the research study asserts that women's terrorizing activities or their backup to the militancy is completely excluded or maneuvered to maintain existing gender norms and patriarchal traditions. As it tends to eliminate women's voices in the peace processes this has dangerous consequences (Parashar 295-317).

A study has been conducted by Alvarez and Alexis regarding violence exercised against women and children. Firstly, data provided by international organizations dealing with this problem has been used to examine the most recent bloody cases from India, followed by Afghanistan, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia, Colombia, Mexico, South Africa, and Yemen. However, secondly, it has been seen that the situation is no less worrying in closer cultural environments, where problems of gender violence are adapting to progress and social changes, so that the Internet has become a place where women, and especially younger females, meet with harassment. The study concludes that in both instances the underlying situation is similar: domestic violence, sexual abuse against children and girls, harassment at work or rape, whether by a partner or a stranger, regardless of culture, religion, or economy (Alvarez, Alexis 7-11).

The preceding two studies deals with the most vulnerable classes of society: women and children, in the context of Kashmir with the lens of Necropolitics. This helps the current study in taking into consideration such sections of society also who are the most vulnerable.

So far, it has become evident that people of Kashmir are suffering since it has become a disputed land between the two adjacent states of India and Pakistan. It has also been made obvious that these people have been denied human respect, health, peace, and specifically agency to the voices to express themselves.

To conclude this section, it can be said that the abovementioned research studies have provided a background to the current study and have contextualized it in the broader research repository. Moreover, it has also highlighted the link among the already researched topics and the current, it also highlighted the need for, and the academic gap that this research study fills. Previously, these theories have been used separately whereas this study attempts to combine both in socio-political and psychological perspective. Moreover, this has also been foregrounded that the objectives that this research attempts to achieve have not been attempted earlier. Though, this current theoretical perspective has been employed multiple times but the texts that this study have considered have not been analyzed with the same theoretical underpinning, specifically the combination of Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness and their relation, in socio-political and psychological perspective. In short, this section has located the current study in the broader picture of academic research. The next chapter talks about the theoretical framework and methodology of this study.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the introduction and rationale behind this research study. The study is qualitative in nature, and interpretive and investigative in design. The following sub-heading 3.2 draws the conceptual map of the theoretical framework of this study. Sub-heading 3.3 explicates the method used for the analysis of the primary texts. This study is both postcolonial and psychoanalytic in nature as Necropolitics falls in the domain of postcolonialism and Learned Helplessness is founded in social psychology.

The current research study is qualitative in its approach because of the thematic schema and concern of this study. This approach reveals a holistic image of the overall elements at work in a certain text. The implied abstractions of the text are also laid bare easily through this approach. Moreover, qualitative research focuses on the intricacies like social context, personal experiences of the characters, and knowledgeability of the researcher is also utilized.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical propositions, behind this research, have been derived from the book *Necropolitics* by Achilles Mbembe and *Learned Helplessness* by Martin Seligman et. al. To explicate the primary texts, both these concepts have been properly explained for detailed understanding.

3.2.1 Necropolitics as Structure of Understanding

Necropolitics has stemmed from Michel Foucault's concept of Biopolitics. In the last lecture of his book *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault states that the politics exercised over life is not at individual level but mass level. Initially, Biopolitics included controlling individuals' birth rate and death ratio at a mass level by inflicting or curing epidemics. Later, it led to being involved with the endemics that affected life; not by inflicting death but by weakening life. This resulted in the decline of the health of laborers which consequently affected industrial production and efficiency. Lastly, Biopolitics was concerned to control the "Birth rate, mortality rate, and the fertility of

population" (Foucault 243). That is why public hygiene and medical care were emphasized and normalization of knowledge was focused to help sustain life in the face of gnawing death that weakened life (244). In addition, to maintain equilibrium, it emphasized taking control of life and the biological processes not for the sake of discipline but regularization. "Biopolitics deals with the population, with the population as political problem, as a problem that is at once scientific and political, as a biological problem and as power's problem" (245).

As compared to Biopolitics, which is concerned with the sustenance and regularization of life, Necropolitics is defined as "subjecting life to the power of death" or "the capacity to define who matters and who does not, who is *disposable* and who is not" (Mbembe 92, 80). Biopolitics emerged at the end of the eighteenth century with the rise of industrialization and mass production. For the smooth functioning of industries, life was to be regularized and kept at equilibrium. Whereas, Mbembe has propagated the implications of Necropolitics in the postcolonial perspective of the English occupation of Africa which resulted in the emergence of "death-worlds…as new and unique forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to living conditions that confer upon them the status of the *living dead"* (92).

Furthermore, stretching the concept of Necropolitics, this research study uses it in a socio-political sense. In the backdrop of the 'violence of democracies' which exercise sovereignty for the annihilation of a maximum number of people, this study directs the focus of Necropolitics on the socio-political setup of the existing state politics as reflected in the primary texts (6). According to Mbembe, in current age the injustices and brutalities are the same as in colonial times but, the practices, policies and employment of technological power have changed (Mbembe 20). The lives and deaths of the masses are being manipulated and controlled for maintaining one's dominance over the other. Resisting these powerful stakes "could hardly forgo the use of violence" in response (6). Additionally,, he states that the violence of democracies is resulting in "a lethal circle that grips the imagination and is increasingly difficult to escape" (Mbembe 7).

"The disposability of human body" is one of the central elements of Necropolitics. By this, Mbembe means that human is no more wanted than any material object which is disposed of as soon its utility is lost. Mbembe notes that Necropolitics categorizes "who is disposable and who is not" (80). The utility of humans is tallied with them being submissive to authority rather than retaliatory. Moreover, violence in such conditions is

inevitable from both sides as a source of dominating the other. This concept helps understand us the thematic essence in both texts where the opponent is annihilated and disposed of. Similarly, humans are divided as benevolent and malignant so as the extinction of the malignant may be justified. He has used phrases like 'society of enmity' and 'forces of separation' which are at work under the umbrella of Necropolitics. Moreover, concepts like, "militarized spaces", the "world of undesirables", a "state of exception", "social death", a "state of injury", and a "death-world" are the focal points that would be used in parallel with the instances from primary texts. (Mbembe 3,38,67,75,92)

By 'society of enmity', Mbembe means that suspicion is bred in the society through Necropolitical practices where individuals are perceived as potential threats, even if they are not. He notes that the "contemporary era is… one…of struggle against an enemy" (42). *Earth and Ashes* and *The Collaborator* depicts such a kind of society where this concept is aptly applicable. Moreover, "forces of separation" are also identified in both texts which work as decisive agents for the disposability of human beings. In addition, "militarized spaces" are such spaces where there is constant surveillance and control over human movement, and "everything remains still" (3). Any suspicious move or the perception of such a possible move is dealt with harshly. Throughout the primary texts, it has been observed that such spaces are at work which disrupt the quotidian activities.

Another idea of the "world of undesirables" is also pivotal to the analysis of this study. It means such a world where population is neither wanted nor valued on a human standard and "whose bodies resemble piles of garbage" (37). The existence of such a population is often considered a burden that is constantly exterminated or suppressed. It is comprised of those individuals who are constantly posing resistance and hurdles in the face of Necropolitical practices. An incessant 'state of exception' is maintained where no rules or laws are applicable. It also 'justifies 'war against terror'' and 'right to cruelty' (38). Consequently, the violence-inflicting forces are not held liable for the atrocities. Overall, a 'death-world' is created where life is constantly vulnerable to death or where characters live in the face of death (92).

3.2.2 Learned Helplessness as a Conceptual Model

On the other hand, Learned Helplessness, rooted in the classical conditioning theory of response-stimuli, has been employed in its psychological aspect. The three major postulates of this theory: contingency, cognition, and behavior, have been undertaken to analyze the complex nature of the characters of the text. Moreover, the explanatory style has also been employed for understanding the detailed working of Learned Helplessness. Learned Helplessness is the concept propagated by American psychologist Martin Seligman in his book *Learned Helplessness*. it can be defined as 'when an individual expects that nothing she does matters, she will become helpless and thus fail to initiate any action' (Seligman 4). This means that if conscious effort and action do not bring the desired result, the person may not respond at all. This might also lead to undermining one's abilities to cope with a situation. Accordingly, Seligman et al. note that "when a person experienced uncontrollable events in one setting, he became passive and listless in that setting" (Seligman 101).

This theory is based on three essential components that are contingency, cognition, and behavior. Contingency, he states, is the situation where individuals perceive or imagine a situation that is likely to occur but lacks certainty. Similarly, in stage of contingency, the vulnerable individual discerns as if a threat awaits him in the future. As Seligman et al. notes:

> 'Contingency refers to the objective relationship between the person's action and the outcomes that he then experiences. The most important contingency here is uncontrollability: a random relationship between an individual's actions and outcomes. The opposite contingency, controllability, obviously occurs when the Individual's actions reliably produce outcomes' (Seligman 8).

The negative perception about the future makes him docile enough to make him unable to either face it with courage or try to change the way it may happen. This apparent uncontrollability puts him at risk of further difficulties where he starts perceiving himself as unable to take control of the events. Characters in the primary texts have been observed to be going through this stage.

Contingency leads to Cognition, where an individual compares the coming or present situation with those of the past and blames himself for lack of control over the course of events that other individuals may have the power to control. This results in a lack of a wise action to help his situation. As Seligman et al. notes:

Cognition refers to the way in which the person perceives, explains, and extrapolates the contingency. This process consists of several steps. First, the person must apprehend the contingency. His perception of it may be accurate, or he may see it as something it was not. So. for example, a controllable event may be perceived as uncontrollable, or vice versa. Next, the person explains what he has perceived. A failure might be explained as being caused by hard luck or stupidity. Third and finally, the person uses his perception and explanation to form an expectation about the future. If he experiences a failure that he believes was caused by his own stupidity, then he will expect to fail again when he finds himself in situations requiring intelligence (Seligman 8).

Learned Helplessness, being founded in psychoanalytic theory, works internally at certain cognitive patterns. As has been explored in the analysis of the characters in Chapter 4, the underlying patterns of learned helplessness are quite complex and may not always be similar to other instances chronologically or structurally. Moreover, 'uncontrollability also has effects on people's emotions, aggression, and Physiology' (138).

The succeeding phase is that of behavioral disturbances, which also helps in identifying the various imbalances in the characters of the selected novels. Behavioral disturbances may be observed in multiple forms and expressions. The effects of such conditions of helplessness may be cognitive retardation, low self-esteem, sadness, loss of aggression, and lack of response. As Seligman et. al state:

Behavior refers to the observable consequences of (non)contingency and the person's cognitions about it. Most typically, helplessness studies measure someone's passivity versus activity in a situation different from the one in which uncontrollability was first encountered. Does the individual give up and fail to initiate any actions that might allow her to control this situation? In addition, helplessness theory claims that other consequences may follow as well from the individual's expectation of future helplessness: cognitive retardation, low self-esteem, sadness, loss of aggression, immune changes, and physical illness (Seligman 8).

In addition, it has also been emphasized by Seligman et. al that "a pure case of helplessness…must have passive behavior" in the persons affected (9). Similarly, "to make matters worse, inescapably shocked subjects frequently fail to respond at all" (46).

To summarize, this theory explains the methodical functionality of how helplessness transforms through multiple stages and consequently leads to very unwanted

results. The inevitability of helplessness and various psychological dysfunctionalities in many cases links it with the effects of Necropolitics.

In a nutshell, Necropolitics and Learned helplessness have been applied to the texts to find their social and psychological implications and the relation and effects of these phenomena in the selected texts. Moreover, the triangulation of these two theories and the textual analysis help in foregrounding the required themes. Similarly, Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness are used as a microscope whereas textual analysis is the controlling nod.

3.3 Research Method

The method selected for the analysis of text in this research is Textual Analysis whereby sections from the selected texts have been closely analyzed. Belsey is of the view that "there cannot be a final signified" (Belsey in Griffin 167). It also suggests that the interpretation of the text depends on the perception of the reader. Since this research is qualitative in nature, and qualitative analysis is largely subjective, the understanding and perceptions of the reader play a significant role when textual analysis is brought to the text. Thus, it may be inferred that the interpretation of the text by the researcher determines the selection of possible meaning for the study.

According to Catherine Belsey, 'the material is by no means an empty space, a vacancy into which we pour whatever we like; instead, the text itself participates in the process of significations (168). This process includes taking into consideration a variety of elements of the text like words, phrases, textual context, and implied meanings. Moreover, she states that 'meaning is never a fixed essence inherent in the text but is constructed by the reader, the result of a 'circulation' between social formation, reader, and text' (qtd. in Belsey57,58). In its further explication, she says that though there are 'certain ranges of meaning' but the 'obvious' ones convey the meaning (Belsey 58).

Belsey, in *Critical Practice,* is of the opinion that researchers can, with the help of textual analysis, "seek not only the unity of the work but the multiplicity and diversity of its possible meanings, its incompleteness, the omission which it displays and above all its contradictions" (100). This research study, due to the complexity of its theoretical framework, employs textual analysis so as the answers to the research questions may be

substantiated with a variety of examples from the primary texts. As Belsey states that textual analysis is a prime method to decode the intended meanings by taking a keen look at the words, phrases, and passages (167). Initially, the reader may have questions regarding the ideologies, viewpoints and connections that exist in the text. There may be fluid approaches by the author regarding the issues presented in the text. So, she is of the view that a researcher "tries to find if something exists in its difference" (163). She further notes that the textual analysis looks at the social, racial, religious, and political issues that are usually challenged in a work (167). In this way, probing various aspects of the texts under analysis helps substantiate my argument.

To conclude, it would be instructive to say that this chapter clarifies the working of textual analysis as a method which is to delve deep into the text for critical understanding. In addition, this method is employed under the broader postulates of the selected theoretical framework which has been extracted from the Cameroonian author Achille Mbembe's *Necropolitics* and Martin Seligman's *Learned Helplessness.* These concepts are in accordance with each other as both have cause and effect relationship. Learned helplessness occurs as a consequence of necropolitical practices. In the words of Belsey, the overall nexus of the meaningfulness of this research has been generated by the 'circulation' between social formation, reader, and text" (57,58). Mbembe's 'death-worlds, society of enmity, world of undesirables, and state of exception' (38,67,92) have been merged carefully with the postulates of leaned helplessness that are 'contingency, cognition and behavior' (Seligman 8).

CHAPTER 4

AN INTERROGATION OF THE PRIMARY TEXTS

4.1Synoptic View

Focusing on the theme of this research, analysis has been carried out based on the research questions of this study. The two concepts employed in this research study have their implications in war-stricken areas where there is political anarchy, social unrest, and psychological stress as the texts aptly portray. Necropolitics has been employed to highlight the social and political control, surveillance and the consequent hurdles that have been produced in the shape of 'death-worlds, state of exception' and 'undesirability' (Mbembe 92,4,11). Moreover, it has also been explicated that a society of enmity has been created where 'military places' and 'forces of separation' are making characters suffer from 'the anxiety of annihilation' (3,1,2). Moreover, the maximal extermination of masses and their disposability have also been portrayed as characters in the texts are living life in face of death, which is one of the central propositions of Necropolitics. In addition, the interdependency of psyche and action and the diminution of response to Necropolitical practices have also been foregrounded. Besides, the contingency or conceived certainty of repetition of a mishap, resultant cognition of helplessness, and the inevitable disturbances in the sane behavioral pattern of the characters have also been dealt with in detail (Seligman, Peterson and Maier 8).

The tone of the novels exhibits a gloomy and somber feeling which emphasizes the theme of both the novels. The lack of any enthusiastic and lively activity and the placid nature of daily affairs highlight the scarcity of liveliness which is an effect of helplessness of characters to change their fate. There are many questions which they ask but do not get any answers to, if in case they get any answers, "more and more questions" arise (Waheed 126). These are the questions regarding their fate, their destiny, their life, their death, their deathly-life, and regarding the agency which has put them to harsh treatment without them knowing their mistakes. The narrator in *The Collaborator* has many questions in his mind which he sometimes asks and sometimes skips, because he is afraid of the attitude of the Indian army captain. "There were many questions that were still unanswered", this line exemplifies the argument that there is constant uncertainty regarding their situation, but nobody seems to have the authority or the will to satisfactorily answer those questions (Waheed 138). Mbembe has quiet aptly explained

this contrasting treatment of characters as "world of undesirables" (38). Theirs is a world that does not require rules or laws to be governed by; it is defined as barbaric and other, that need to be patronized.

4.2 Context of the Primary Texts

Fortunately, both the texts selected for this study are in geographically tumultuous terrain, and the political scenario in both texts is unstable which consequently make them prey to Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness. The characters in *The Collaborator* have been subjected to a long history of national suppression and political tyranny, whereas the characters in *Earth and Ashes* are long bandaging their wounds inflicted in war against USSR.

The analysis has been divided into two sections. The first section incorporates the analysis of The Collaborator, and the second section contains the interrogation of *Earth and Ashes.*

Section (I)

"We are all consigned to this hell"

4.3 Necropolitics and *The Collaborator*

4.3.1 Undesirability and Unstable Social Patterns

In *The Collaborator,* there are "bodies after bodies" portrayed as if the existence is shrinking on the whole population and they are being piled like heaps; one over the other, disrespectfully (15). The main motto of the army seems to be "catch and kill" whosoever appears as other or can be regarded as enemy (15). In words of Mbembe, the existence of other is a constant threat to oneself (72). Here the other does not appear to be someone neutral but anti-self. Such treatment signifies the unbridled nature of sovereignty that is being exercised on characters, who are stuck in between militants and army. And if characters take one's side, they fall prey to the wrath of the other. In both the novels, the setting is already deadly and suspicious gazes are roaming around in shadows of the day and darkness of the night. In *Earth and Ashes,* the Russian army has "destroyed the whole village" (18), whereas in *The Collaborator*, every now and then, there are "crackdowns or combing operations" (21). These instances signify the reckless exercise of sovereignty that Mbembe talks about and that holds a central place in the scope of necropolitics. Mbembe states that such "sovereignty consists of the will and the capacity to kill so as to live" (72). The life and death of enemy and one's own self are indirectly proportional; only one must live or a constant threat hover over both.

The disposability of human body is also a trait of necropolitical practices and human bodies are not treated as having any essence or value but are "meaningless corporealities" with no moral values (Mbembe 87). It has been highlighted in the instance that "they will just kick the corpses around and roll them over into the valley" (Waheed 20). As far as these bodies are deprived of any possible resistive action they are pushed around as something having no threat and value. In fact, death does not only signify a flight from this to the other world but an extinction of threat. These bodies are sometimes not in their complete form but are dismantled and ripped apart in horrible shapes as can be observed in this line, "entire arms missing, half-legs astride from their torsos" because of the use of heavy and powerful artillery (Waheed 10,11). These bodies also lay here and

there without receiving any burial and if there is any chance of human rights organization coming across them, they are dumped into "unmarked mass-graves" (Kaul 102).

4.3.2 Militarized Zones and Quotidian Effects

The segregation and compartmentalization of territory is also carried out by the army which helps them in targeting and focusing the areas which they consider to be lawless and ungovernable. This territory is deemed "no man's land", where law does not rule and any activity occurring in that place is justified (Waheed 1). This also signifies the fact that atrocities always take place there, probably because it can evade the criticism of media and human rights organizations. Such compartments are "regulated by the language of pure force, immediate presence, and frequent and direct action" (Mbembe 79). Any enemy killed in these compartments takes journey from nothingness to nothingness because as soon as they are killed, their IDs are collected, and they are ripped of their identities.

The source of income is either snatched or possessions are bought at cheap rates also. This signifies the economic blow to civilians who have become so vulnerable that they have no other option but to comply. The excerpt that we "had to sell every single living thing we ever owned to the army at dirty cheap rates", emphasizes the former argument (Waheed 14). In words of Mbembe "the systematic sabotage of the enemy's societal and urban infrastructure" makes the characters more vulnerable. (82). Source of income is one of the life support systems and taking it away means that the directions of their life is controlled and they are forced to fall in with the required stream. In addition, sometimes those who are killed does not even have a proper burial and becomes "relics of an unburied pain" (Mbembe 87). For example, it has been clearly stated in this line, "[w]retched human remains lie on the green grass like cracked toys" (Waheed 15). This also underscores the fact that human bodies are desecrated and treated in a cruel way. Not only this, but the army also impersonates the dead bodies of characters into foreign militants so they may delude human rights organization into trickery. This is highlighted in this line, "I can fucking make any maderchod look like an Afghan" (6). It also points out the fact that sometimes this war is disguised as war on terror, whereas it is a war of suppression.

4.3.3 State of Exception

The curfews and crackdowns are also a major source of annoyance so far as the presence of military posts and bases are concerned. There is always a fear of red alert being issued and free movement is disturbed. These "crackdowns" disrupt the domestic functions of daily lives and becomes a source of psychological burden and a constant state of social pain (Waheed 157). The characters do not have the ability to resist and protest these activities as has been uttered in this line, "who will know and object, leave alone protest" (11). This signifies that once a red alert has been issued there is very little chance to protest it, if anyone may. The character in the novel appears to have no potential to have any say in such affairs, though it may be their legal right also. These examples signify the control exercised over the lives of characters in the novel which is representation of the real scenario that takes place every day in Kashmir.

The high walled camps in the middle of civilian population are also a source of terror and dread. These are used for protection in case of emergency because such wars are conducted in "guerrilla" form and needs an operational center (23). The "human rights catastrophe" is sometimes regarded as anonymous and is slowly backgrounded because, in case of probing, fingers may be raised towards these camps (22). Sometimes this anonymity also leads civilians into taking up arms and joining militants for their purpose and taking revenge on powerful stakes involved. It has been portrayed in the novel that a civilian "become[s] a famous freedom fighter" in cases where his patience runs out (23). Mbembe calls such situation a "state of exception" (4).

Another reason of characters becoming militants is the humiliation of their families, their females, and the desecration of their homely borders. This has been quite explicitly stated in the novel that "boys wronged by the police… with raped sister and mothers at home" turns to militants for taking revenge on those who have disgraced their families (20). In such cases, those who take up arms have already accepted their death, because public humiliations and disgrace leads to a very heavy mental strain. A life in face of economic and political dejection may be worth living for people but a life with disgrace is not worth a second to any moral, dignified, and law-abiding citizen. These cases worsen the already anarchic social and political conditions which ultimately lead to more losses of lives and more use of force. The "dishonor…endured immediately raises the problem of shame and guilt" (148).

4.3.4 Death-world and Thanatophobia

In case of those characters who cannot be directly killed, they are detained to "stigmatized third place…prison" (Mbembe 34). The prisons serve the purpose of camps where these characters-cum-insurgents are horribly treated, and the law does not rule there. This can be observed in this line that "*your* brothers, *my* brothers" are transferred "to inhuman underground jails in India" (Waheed 27,28). It has been illustrated by Mbembe, though in relation to concentration camps, but there seems be less or no difference in such prisons and concentration camps. He states that the conditions that prevail in camps "can never be fully embraced by imagination" (Mbembe 78). Such prisons are considered a "state of exception" where every brutal act is justified because it is inflicted on so-called enemies and in a state of so-called war, while in fact these are innocent characters who were metamorphized into militants by the practices of necropolitics (Mbembe 67).

Life in these circumstances becomes too heavy to endure and characters often favor death over life, but death does not come so easily, and they know it. Such a life is considered an in-between life, or "death-in-life" and characters are considered "living dead" (Mbembe 75,92). This is a grim condition even to imagine let alone experience. It can be observed in this line, "[t]hey are making this a *jahannum*, we are all consigned to this hell". Above everything else, such a life makes the character lose all hope for life and he becomes melancholic and desolated, which in certain cases also leads to learned helplessness. Moreover, anything; territory or possessions of the enemy, is destructed if need be. For instance, the line "look how they killed that mountain", signifies that they are treating everything as an enemy that comes across as resistive (Waheed 38).

As exemplified previously, sometimes wars conducted for necropolitical purposes are not direct assault of army but are waged in unconventional ways to remain unidentified. Such wars are both easy and difficult to conduct because it does not require traditional heavy weaponry, but it need more intelligent soldiers who may have the skills and abilities to perform undercover operations. The targets of these wars always remain confused because they cannot identify the perpetrators and consequently do not know who to resist. "Waging a proxy war" signifies that it is inevitable for characters to become targets of such activities (Waheed 41). The impossibility of knowing the perpetrators makes them more vulnerable because every eye becomes suspicious. In such a condition, civilians try to keep away and avoid any contact with the army because it always proves

destructive in one way or the other. Neither their friendship nor their enmity is good in any way. It has been exemplified in the instance when a character who transports civilians-turned-militants to the other side of the border and exclaims that "…we don't mess with the Army, beta, never, …they just kill like that". The Army does not consider the vulnerability of characters who are sometimes forcefully made to do these things (Waheed 65).

4.3.5 Anxiety of Annihilation

The homogenous nature of militant organization sometimes creates difficulty in identifying who is foreign and who is not, but it is given no second thought. It can be noted in the line when the Indian Army officer is asked by the main character of the novel that how he differentiates between foreigners and nationals, he simply responds, "it doesn't matter, bhai! … look I *want* to kill these people, alright; it's my job" (Waheed 80). This signifies the supreme sovereignty practiced under the guise of war on terror. Though militants may be treated this way, but it is no argument to say that differentiating does not matter, because there have been many instances of innocent civilians being targeted and killed just because of suspicion. This is the horrific nature of war, or it can also be said that bullets do not have eyes to differentiate but those who pull the trigger are to be held responsible. Not every problem can be solved with the use of sheer force, and this should better be understood by the authorities now than before. The characters "are killed, not because of the errors they had committed but instead for yet-to-be committed errors" (Mbembe 25).

Sometimes, unknown innocent characters are shot dead just to report to higher command that activities are continued with full enthusiasm. This has been illustrated in the line "we shot him dead along with three other men. Just some random guys." This emphasizes the idea that atrocities are committed just "to make it to the papers" that army is not just sitting around but doing something; though immoral, base, and humiliating (Waheed 82). The ordinary soldiers do not do these things on their own but are ordered from higher tiers to "Show some result. Breakthrough. Success" (Waheed 83). This is what it has been called by the Indian Army captain in the novel. It also signifies that such war is often treated not as means but an end. This also involves the same treatment of all the people who come across as suspicious. The authorities sometimes undertake the task of "cleaning up" the area of infiltrators which often victimizes characters also. The

infrastructural damage is also done to the territory so they can be terrorized and stopped from doing anything that may lead to resistance. The novel also highlights where the "rickety shacks" of poor slum neighborhood is destroyed in a similar undertaking (Waheed 103). When the affected population of these slums raise any "voice of protest", they are treated in harsh ways and sometimes terminated. This has been reinstated by Mbembe as "systematic sabotage of the enemy's societal and urban infrastructure" to cripple their efforts (82).

It has also become very difficult for the main character of the novel to decide who are worse; the "unwary roadside protesters" who are treated as animals or the "unsung mujahids or would-be boy militants" who are shelled and torn apart to pieces in unknown jungles (Waheed 114). Their "internal, stable, and global" explanatory style for failures becomes a source of uncertainty and indecision and may lead to severe psychological burden and "depression" (Seligman, Peterson and Maier 200). It may also cause trauma and sometimes lead to suicide. The lack of any satisfactory result on both sides also reinforces the perceptibility of helplessness which may be said to be directly proportional to necropolitics. It also highlights that the exercise of necropolitics is to make characters stuck in between life and death, to make them like pendulum.

4.3.6 Social Stigma and Economic Strangulation

The boys who are caught either during these protests or those who had joined militants are interrogated for further information and are harshly treated and sometimes "sodomized" (Waheed 133). The houses are burned, and villages destroyed to terrorize the remaining population and stop them from joining militants. This treatment is solely done for the purpose of taking control of the area and disinfecting any soft corner among characters for militants. The "ashen town[s]" also emphasizes the perception of helplessness (Waheed 135). "Women" are also sometimes taken away during these "crackdowns" which in the oriental society is considered too base and shameful (Waheed 147). It is because feminine honor is considered too fragile and even when these women are released, they are, in most cases, subject to trauma and psychological issues. These women "not only pay" on men's behalf but marked as weakness of men's pride (Mbembe 154).

The curfews and crackdowns, sometimes, continue for months on end and families whose domestic life support system has already broken down suffer for food and

health. Families living in war-stricken areas does not have a constant reach to markets and bazaars, in case if they do, the vendors do not provide food for more than a week, because all need to be served. This signifies their vulnerability in case of prolonged curfews and crackdowns. It has been highlighted in the line that the villagers "have been in curfew for three months…and there is nothing to eat" (Waheed 158). This was said by the group of women who had come from a neighboring village to ask sarpanch for help. Though he bought them some necessary edibles from the shop, but it cannot go on like this forever. Mbembe has aptly described the condition under curfews that "soldiers patrol" the streets night and day and there is "a certain kind of madness" (Mbembe 91).

During these times, abduction of suspicious characters also takes place publicly, in front of their families. The is a very awful scene because seeing a loved one taken away forcefully is a dreadful situation. The line "that they hurled him into one of the gypsies…and screeched off", highlights military-abduction of one of the boys in the village (Waheed 163). Later, when he was returned another destruction struck the village because he was severely beaten. Though no proof of his relation to the militants had been provided but still he was defamed into being an informer. Showing the "etched black pits all over his pubic area" he asked the main character if he wanted "to see what they did behind" but all he could respond in shame was remain silent (Waheed 165). It cannot even be imagined what people go through in such conditions. After his return, the people in the village used to talk about the horrors of being abducted, and "prayed nobody would have to meet such a fate" (Waheed 166).

4.3.7 Systematic Violence

Mbembe has aptly stated that modern democracies have integrated forms of brutalities into their culture (17). The chaos has its own rule, one must go with it. Similarly, the curfews have its own demands and the characters, as portrayed, in the village had to act accordingly, else they were considered rebellious and treated harshly. This is signified in the instance when the mother of the main character asks him that "it is not very safe having your room lit up like that all night" (Waheed 166). Characters are forced to act according to the demands of the army and any deviation is dealt hardly. The problem in such indirect and proxy wars is that civilians do not even know if somebody is spying on them, as a character in the novel says, "people could be wandering around" (166). This highlights the continuity of the terror that prevails all the time. It is also the central goal to terrify characters to make them act accordingly and not dare oppose or

resist. The return of the abducted character also helps this terror spread because he has been made a "living martyr", and others are indirectly told to learn a lesson (167). "Terror and atrocities are justified by the desire to eradicate corruption…" (Mbembe 36).

To cover up their atrocities and make them appear logical and unbiased, the authorities claim that they are basically waging a "war on terror" (Mbembe 4). This has widely been propagated through print and electronic media but unfortunately it has lost credibility now and the agenda behind has been understood. The authorities often seem to deny that they are personally in "favor of curfews" and sometimes the logic provided is to implement the so-called rule of law and hush-away "external forces" (Waheed 205). These so-called external forces have never been identified and never been completely chased away. Their presence seems to be eternal and forever. As exemplified here, the public slogan for these wars is to "fix the problem of Kashmir" whereas, in reality, Kashmiris are being targeted and put to horrible conditions (Waheed 203). As Mbembe also states that those who perform necropolitical practices are of the opinion that "law cannot be protected by the law – only nonlaw can protect it." (Mbembe 33)

4.3.8 Othering and State of Injury

The whole plot of such wars proceeds because of fear and suspicion of the "other" or the civilians. Most of the times it is the perception of existence of "other" that is treated "as a mortal threat or absolute danger" to one's life and the elimination of his/her existence would strengthen one's "life potential and security" (Mbembe 83). These are the "imaginary dimensions characteristic of sovereignty" which persuade the perpetrators into performing necropolitics (Mbembe 72). This fear of the other has also been highlighted in the novel when the captain of the Indian army expresses his opinion regarding characters as "…you never know which one…might take out a fucking rocket launcher from his ass…" (Waheed 236). Moreover, the captain also says with the emphasis that they are not killing those characters without reason and army is not killing them but "they chose to die". The captain also considers whatever they are doing as "totally legit, [and] lawful" (Waheed 246). "Nobody even bears the slightest feeling of responsibility or justice towards this sort of life" (Mbembe 38).

The paradox in the activities and workings of the army is that even they consider their so-called job as legit. Still, they do not leave the bodies of those killed anywhere in open but instead try to gather them to their camp and keep them somewhere where they

cannot be discovered. What is the purpose of hiding them if they are right in their activities. The Indian army captain himself explains that he does not believe even in "mass graves" because if they are discovered they are "inviting scandal" (Waheed 260). This clearly explains the bigger picture of the design that has been made to suppress and terrorize characters into obeying and dropping the thoughts of resistance. In short, the irony is that the army always know the difference between "citizen's "error" and counterrevolutionary's "crime"" and treats in accordance with their self-made rules. It is also very ironical that they try "to attribute rational objectives to the very act of killing" (Mbembe 73,77).

4.3.9 Summary

In short, the novel quite aptly portrays the Necropolitical practices of the army and powerful political stakes. These stakeholders, Indian Army, and high command do not hesitate to try any means of suppression and oppression and justify their ways in the guise of so-called "war on terror" or solving the domestic political problem or cleansing the state of anti-national elements. Though these logics and reasons are long worn-out, they are still used in the mainstream media to deceive innocent civilians. The experiences of the characters in the novel highlight the atrocities committed by the Indian army in Kashmir. The opinion of the characters in the novel towards these authorities signifies how they are exercising their sovereignty and making characters obey them, forcefully. The lack of reason for inflicting atrocities and making characters suffer increase their helplessness also. Moreover, the effects of Necropolitics in form of social, political, and psychological disturbances have also been highlighted.

4.4 Learned helplessness and *The Collaborator*
4.4.1 Contingency of the Future

The perception of the weak or undisciplined position generates or intensifies the helplessness of the characters. The Indian army, as in contrast to the unorganized, weaponless masses, is at a much stronger position than are civilians. This idea is highlighted when the head of the village gets angry with boys taking militant's side. He says that they "just cannot fight the might" of the Indian army. The explanatory style here appears to be internal because the head of the village has identified their weaker position and vulnerability. He tries to avoid facing the problem because facing the problem, in his opinion can "bring nothing but disaster" (23). This can be related to the "vicarious

helplessness" aspect of learned helplessness, because the head of the village has seen others fail in their attempt to oppose or resist the army (Seligman et. al 112). Their helplessness is also identified by the imam of the masjid who says that they throw "us into jails if we protest" (Waheed 27). This signifies their explanatory style to be global which is central to causing helplessness.

Stuck between army and the militants, the characters do not know towards whom they might tilt or show an inclination because both sides use them for their own benefit and then leaves them in agony. This has been signified in the instance when militants had forced one of the boys by threatening to kill his family, he had no choice left but to join them. Moreover, noticing the weird ways of his son the head of the village asks his son that nothing is going to come out this protest and joining militant's business, because the army "beat up people very badly, they kill" (Waheed 34). This can be called to be "vicarious helplessness" because the father has learned from the experiences of the people who had joined militants and have been killed, consequently (Seligman et. al 112).

4.4.2 Uncontrollability and its Effects

The uncontrollability of events is directly related to the response-outcome independence, the more uncontrollability the more response-outcome independence. If response fails to bring about the desired results, then passivity produces, and it is a clear indicator of helplessness. The response-outcome independence can be noted in this line that characters in *The Collaborator* do not know what is "in store" for them (194). The perception, that whatever happens will happen regardless of one's effort, kills the desire to protest and leads to passivity and helplessness.

Moreover, being unable to know "what lay ahead" in the future for them, the unnamed main character blames his own self as being "foolish" for not comprehending his situation (130). He clearly says that he "didn't know" what is happening around him and how to make sense of it (146). This highlights his explanatory style and behavior, and both are indicators of the uncontrollability of the events. Things in the village were so murky that the father of the main character, the head of the village was "uncertain", even he was "not in control of things". Even more so, he thought it was the "beginning of end" (161). The sovereign power of the mighty Indian army has really made them helpless. The intensity of the uncontrollability of the event can further be noted when the characters in the novel has perceived the "inefficacy" of their actions "in face of inevitable disaster" (163). Handling and coping with the disappearance of the boys has

made all the villagers helpless and "even the sarpanch himself" did not know "what to say, what to make of this, what to do about it, what to do about *anything*" (164). These examples highlight the inefficacy of their actions and the uncontrollability of the events. Seligman has also stated in learned helplessness that uncontrollability leads to helplessness than reactance (Seligman, Peterson and Maier 123).

4.4.3 Passivity as Cognition

There are also certain instances where the main character explicates that he wants to flee the situation, but he knows it would not help. For instance, "it makes me want to run away, to disappear" shows that the characters are less interested in facing their problems than in dodging them (11). This is a proposition in the politics of learned helplessness which illustrates that passivity is chosen over activity in times of bad events. It has also been observed characters are more prone to flee than to face their suppressors, though not all. As has been propagated in the details of necropolitics, resistance and opposition are more likely to meet a horrible end, though it may be better than fleeing. The main character neither flees nor resists and perceives that the army know that he "did not have balls", because he himself thinks that they are "right" (14). This highlights his learned helplessness and propagates that he has accepted the helplessness of his condition. This also signifies his explanatory style which is pivotal in causing or combating helplessness. Regarding the helplessness of his condition to internal cause; that is to his own inability, intensifies his helplessness.

In another instance a character says, "I watched helplessly", this excerpt clearly depicts the helplessness of civilians as portrayed in the novel (84). This is quite true of the current situation also, because every now and then videos are leaked where civilians are put to extremely terrible actions. The character, Rahman, was witnessing the humiliation of his family and being beaten up himself by the militants but still he could not do anything. This is quite a deplorable and severe mental experience which leads to chronic depression, and psychological damage. It may also cause continuous passivity and stagnation in life and may lead to suicide sometimes. Seligman also notes that if a character "experiences a failure that he believes was caused by his own stupidity, then he will expect to fail again when he finds himself in situations requiring intelligence" (Seligman et. al 8).

4.4.4 Behavioral Imbalances

The causal ambiguity of the distressing event also plays a central part in producing helplessness. When the characters do not know what the causes of their condition are, explanatory style takes lead in considering different causes. Regarding the causes of their condition, "questions that [are] also unanswered" in *The Collaborator*, intensifies the helplessness of civilians (128). Moreover, questions regarding the disappearance of people in the novel are also unanswered and it has caused a condition of uncertainty among the villagers. The cognitive lack of civilians regarding their condition or the lack of logical reasons for their suffering has also caused helplessness. Nonetheless, the perception of loss of hold over his own village makes the head of the village vulnerable to both personal and group helplessness. It is highlighted when his own son says regarding him that "things seemed to be slipping from his hand, it was beyond his grasp" (161). The sudden transition is hard to be accepted to the mind, and this imbalance sometimes leads to melancholic episodes in mood or depression, if continued for a longer period. These are also the traits of a helpless person. Seligman et. al also states that "sometimes explanatory style is highly relevant to subsequent deficits, whereas other times it is completely irrelevant" (151).

4.4.4.1   Cognitive Disability

Before taking away someone, the characters in the text have observed that there is some nocturnal activity going on, noise of the vehicles had been heard. The head of the village, who was to take care of people, himself did not know "what to make of this, and what to do about this" (Waheed 164). His own people are suffering, and he cannot do anything to ease their problems. The inability to grasp the reasons and logic in one's suffering leads to uncontrollability which, consequently, "set[s] off the cognitive ability" of individuals to a greater extent. The uncontrollability of events leads to emotional and mental disturbance and its continuity eventually dissipates "reactance motivation", and the individual becomes helpless (Seligman et. al 122-135). The ineffectuality of individual's response "in the face of inevitable disaster" also intensifies the perception of helplessness in civilians. This also highlights that response-outcome independence is central to causing helplessness (Waheed 163).

The inactivity of characters does not only highlight their helplessness but they have also accepted the helplessness of their condition as inevtable. Their "mournful inactivity" in face of uncontrollable events also explicates that they have "given up" (Waheed 175, 9). The cognition of the idea that whatever they do can never ease their suffering is basically the result and effect of helplessness. The effects of cognition of their helplessness leads to expresion of helplessness in their behaviors. For intance, the thrill of protest "wear[s] off", and "defeated look" masks their faces and emotional imbalances, mental chaos and depression overcome the helpless individuals (177). They accepts that they "cannot refuse" the compliance required of them and must obey (175-181). Seligman has also stated in learned helplessness that uncontrollability leads to helplessness than reactance (123).

4.4.4.2   Diminishing Self-Esteem

In such situation the sole consolation characters could get is the sympathy of their fellowmen and a shoulder to cry over and lighten their heart. This has been highlighted in the novel when a boy is taken away and destruction struck the whole family. The father of the main character, being head of the village, must reach the concerned family to console them though he himself says that there is "not much that we can do". This signifies the personal helplessness of the head of the village. When the main character says that he wants to go too, his mother retorts him by saying "what will *you* do there, there's nothing you can do". These instances signify the group helplessness of the whole family who do not have anything in their jurisdiction to ease the pain of their people (Waheed 168-169).

Characters, who are suspected either for helping army or not cooperating with militants, are often stormed with sudden raids within their houses. They are not listened to even if innocent. Such an example can be noted when a house in suburbs of the village is raided by militants and even though Shaban chacha "cried, howled, and begged" them that he is innocent, they did not listen and cut his earlobes and nose and beat him up to death. Despite his cries that "please listen to me, please spare me, please forgive me", he was helpless and even his son could not do anything (183,4). Not even after some time could his son crack up any plan to protest because he knew that protest is death. The intensity of the pain in such situation is beyond imagination. The proposition of learned helplessness that uncontrollability leads to helplessness is also applicable here, because the whole family is going through an uncontrollable event (Seligman et. al 123).

4.4.5 Social Imbalances

4.4.5.1   Freedom Curtailed

The fact that characters cannot act or move according to their own will has been highlighted in *The Collaborator* when the dead body of Khadim Hussain is brought to the village. Gathered by the army and circled around the dead body, the characters "were not allowed to move" from their positions (196). Sometimes, the person, who perceives the inability to control the events occurring in his life, does not even attempt to do so and later attribute this to his lack of effort than lack of ability. This is said to be comparatively soothing for one's ego because he thinks he has not even tried so it is lack of effort. Moreover, this happens only at the initial stage of uncontrollability, when uncontrollable events continue for a longer period of time and characters experience persistant uncontrollability, this leads to helplessness and "motivation dissipates" (Seligman et.al 122). This is highlighted in the line when the main character says that he "did not quite have the courage" to see his tormentor in the face (197).

4.4.6 Psychological Imbalances

Experience with uncontrollability makes individuals vulnerable to many psychological issues and imbalances. For instance, the main character in *The Collaborator* is planning from the start to kill the Indian army captain but is stuck in indecision. This signifies that he is probably experiencing some mental hurdless, and asks himself question "why couldn't I kill him? Why?". This highlights his helplessness because he probably knows that his family even his whole village has to face the consequences which they are unable to face. Moreover, he has also percieved himself to be weak and he says it in clear words. He says regarding the captain that he probably "knows I am weak". These intances highlights the helplessness of his condition (249-260). Even though the government knows that there are illegal killings going on in the guise of suppressing the rebellious elements and civilians are also targeted wrongfully many times, but "no one [perpetrator] is ever punished". The broadcast of atrocities commited remains just news (268). Seligman et. al notes that "noncontingency between act and outcome during inescapable shock" will be true during other situation also (24).

Sometimes, initial or less experience with uncontrollable events may result into reactance. This is the first stage of helplessness. As has been stated, negative emotions such as anxiety and anger preceeds helplessness and depression, it has been stated that a

person's initial experience with uncontrollable event may cause reactance (qtd. In Seligman et. al 123). But later on , when he learns the non-contingency between response-outcome, he falls prey to depression and helplessness. This is highlighted in the novel when the houses in a nearest village in *The Collaborator* are ransacked and their women dishonored by the Indian soldiers. The boys of affected houses joins militants for taking revenge on the army. Though, initially the boys show reactance but later on most of them are helpless because they could not take revenge in the way they want the most. The sabotage of honour - manifested in women in eastern society, is the most cruel way of attacking anybody. The repurcussions of such acts often lead to more destruction, on way or the other, or, in the least, to psychological damages.

4.4.7 Summary

The ultimate consequence of Necropolitics leads to suppression and helplessness of the characters and maneuvering the sociopolitical directions of their society. In *The Collaborator*, the effects of Learned Helplessness can be seen in the character of the unnamed narrator and his father who are stuck in the geography of suffering and their lives are psychologically stagnated. Even though the whole population of their small village is fleeing the horrible treatment- though in vain, they neither can flee nor have the capability to fight. Moreover, by the portrayal of Learned Helplessness, it has become clear that the main characters in the novels suffer from distressful events and consequently become helpless. Moreover, as highlighted in the above analysis, the socio-political fabric of Kashmir and the psychological condition of characters have also been wounded severely. The helplessness of characters in the novel is manifest in the breaking of socio-political setup of the society. In addition, Necropolitical practices also, sometimes, lead to Learned Helplessness, depending on the cognitive abilities of the characters and the intensity of Necropolitics exercised. Similarly, the relation between Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness is also an uncertain phenomenon. For instance, sometimes the manifest helplessness of characters becomes the reason to put them to more Necropolitical practices, sometimes they are left alone. This depends upon the sex, age, cognitive abilities, and personality type etc.

Section (II)

"The dead are more fortunate than the living"

4.5 Necropolitics and *Earth and Ashes*
4.5.1 Life in Face of Death and its Politics

To start with, the operations of Necropolitics incorporates the idea "who is able to live and who must die" (Mbembe 66). This is illustrated in the line that "a group of government troublemakers came to village to enlist fighters for Russians" (Rahimi 11). This signifies Necropolitical idea that those who sides with resistant sections of the society; freedom fighters, are the targets whereas those who sides with government are the ones who have comparatively a high probability of being alive because opposition and resistance have been named synonymous with self-destruction in Necropolitics (Mbembe 89). Besides, this is also the case in the countries that these novels talk about. The characters, as portrayed in *Earth and Ashes*, are stuck in passivity because any move or action, that may lead to the improvement of their condition, is considered alarming and ultimately makes them vulnerable to maltreatment.

The main character of the novel is going through intense psychological uncertainty because his whole family has been killed in the bombings on the village and he has been "condemned to witness" it (Rahimi 11). Life has become harsher because he has not just lost all his loved ones, but he has got no shoulder left to cry over. The pain of being left alone to go through the absence of his family is more burdensome than death. In words of Mbembe, the status of "living dead" has been conferred upon him (Mbembe 92). He is himself exclaiming why "wasn't I killed" before reaching home to witness the death of my family (Rahimi 8). In such conditions, death seems to be a very easy and relieving phenomenon. Death is considered "a release from terror and bondage" (qtd. In Mbembe 91).

Necropolitics propagates that one's life is the death of the other and "each enemy killed makes the survivor feel more secure" (qtd. In Mbembe 88). The concept of war, as stated in Necropolitics, has also been quite similarly explicated in *Earth and Ashes* when the main character explicates that there is "either blood on your throat or on your hands" (Rahimi 13). Both these concepts emphasize each other in the sense that characters-as-Others are either killed or made to respond and killed in return. This idea of becoming

prey or a predator is also happening in the countries on which these novels are based. The characters in the text are to take one side, else they become target of both. The characters are put to dreadful treatment for the sake of suppressing them, and in case that does not work, they are "burned to death" (Rahimi 22). It only happens to make an example of those who chose to resist or who dare to rebel.

4.5.2 Death-World

The exertion of Necropolitics in *Earth and Ashes* is evident from the fact that the whole novella is set in the aftermath of the bombing of a village. The pivotal element of Necropolitics- 'death-world', can be observed as 'the whole village' has been 'reduced…to smoke and ashes' (Rahimi 7). Society is no more peaceful let alone a welfare society. This mass extermination of the civilian population has been reiterated in Necropolitics as 'whatever is not oneself' is considered as 'nothing' (Mbembe 2). The fear of other is considered a potential threat and its annihilation ensures survival of oneself. Moreover, those fortunate who outlives such atrocities wish to have been 'killed' because they are 'condemned to witness' life that is more horrible than death (Rahimi 11). The in-betweeness is what makes characters vulnerable to psychological and cognitive imbalances. He states that "death-worlds" have been created by the powerful stakes involved to torture and suppress the characters in the text. Moreover, there is a constant "state of injury" which humiliates the humanist essence of one's being, for being unable to safeguard one's self-respect and that of one's family. The permanent condition of "being in pain" ultimately gives birth to the thought that one's life is not in one's own hands and it is being controlled to the benefit of someone else (Mbembe 75-92). In another instance, the protagonist of the novel illustrates the happening of the drastic event of the bombing of the village in these words "I saw my own death…" (Rahimi 7). These words reinstate Mbembe's idea that wars in the modern era are waged to terrorize and control masses for economic and political gains. Though not stated directly in *Earth and Ashes*, the Russians waged war against Afghanistan for political and economic concerns. In such pursuits, the suffering of characters becomes inevitable, and it also becomes a liability to control and govern masses so as the ultimate end may be met.

As portrayed in *Earth and Ashes*, the lives of characters are at stake, and they are constantly put "between the living and the dead" situation (Mbembe 71). This can be observed in the instance where the protagonist of the novella says regarding his grandson that he feels as if he is 'talking to a stone' (Rahimi 12). This highlights the social and

psychological death of the characters. Furthermore, the characters are in a constant pain and agony which they have acknowledged but are unable to do anything about because "daily life is militarized" (Mbembe 82). There is constant surveillance and observation of day-to-day affairs to detect any doubtful activity and suppress it through violence and terror.

4.5.3 Forces of separation

The forces of separation are constantly at work throughout the novella. Both philosophically and practically, death is the agent that separates characters. The assurance that death separates characters into categories as "who is disposable and who is not" is identified based on the social and political impulses of the characters in the primary texts (Mbembe 80). For instance, the line "you are on one side of the river, Murad on the other", signifies that although death of the mentioned characters has not yet taken place, but it is the death of one of their family members (someone other than self) that has caused separation. The reference to the sea as a source of separation in the physical sense implies the separation of the essence of human collective trait of coexistence.

In addition, Necropolitics as a dividend between death and life also intensifies the feeling of being left and separated, as on the one hand one's dear ones dies and on the other hand one is condemned to bear the burden of their separation. As a character says, "the dead are more fortunate than the living" (Rahimi 11). This idea has also been propagated by Hegel as quoted in *Necropolitics* that "nothing is definitive lost in death" (qtd. In Mbembe 69). Death plays a paradoxical role in such instances both a liberating and inflicting pain and agony.

The forces of separation do not only work in between life and death or between the characters. It also permeates within a single character when the intensity of necropolitical practices separates body from its sanity. It has been highlighted in the text in the instance when a character says, 'come back to your senses'. This portrays the separation of senses from the body. This intermittent separation occurs throughout the novella.

4.5.4 Society of Enmity

The significant element of necropolitical practices is that it pollutes the overall aura of society as portrayed in Earth and Ashes. As a character say, 'The law of war is the law of sacrifice', which is obvious in its meaning that one either kill the enemy or gets killed (Rahimi 11). This has also been reiterated by Mbembe in *Necropolitics* when he states that the one's 'death goes hand in hand with Other's death' (Mbembe 89). One's life can only be ensured at the cost of the death of one's enemy because the existence of other is a constant threat to one's own life (72). A constant state of fear makes life always subjected to death. In such scenario characters live life in face of death.

Similarly, in such society life constantly remains a listless series of suffering, pain, and agony. The characters in the novella are all 'burning in the fires of Hell' (Rahimi 20). The protagonist's son, Murad, has flee his village because he fought with a neighbor and bled his head. But no sooner has he borne the punishment of one disaster than another befalls his family. He is ultimately affected by the bombing of the village as he lost half of his family members and a disabled child who might not hear anything in his life again. This also causes 'natal alienation and social death' (Mbembe 75).

4.5.5 Anxiety of Annihilation

The problem with necropolitical practices is that those who exercise necropolitics do not know the reason behind their actions. They are just ordered to kill such and such characters and destroy so and so area. Anxiety is experienced by those who are present in the field and implementing the orders. This is because it is human nature to have a look at one's action if one is doing the right thing. The higher authorities do not suffer such anxiety because they just have papers to sign not an enemy to kill. Similarly, anxiety is also on the end of those who are the subjects of such actions. As portrayed in the novella, the main character asks himself in a soliloquy, 'what it is you have done to deserve such a destiny' (Rahimi 9). Constantly addressing his own self also highlights that he is considering the reasons for his suffering in his own actions. This is a trait of the contingency in explanatory style as characters marks more internal reasons for their suffering.

Mbembe, in the introduction of *Necropolitics*, states that many characters 'are beset with dread, afraid of having been invaded and being on the verge of disappearing'

(2). It substantiates the above argument that being suspicious about the future makes life horrible. It also linked with the contingency stage of Learned helplessness where uncertainty regarding what lays ahead leads the character to use 'his perception and explanation to form an expectation about the future' (Seligman 8). As uncontrollability, whether perceived or actual, increases; passivity also increases which paves way to helplessness. In short, anxiety of annihilation makes the subject characters and perpetrators more and more perplex, and both try either to evade each other or be the first to annihilate the other.

4.5.6 State of Injury

According to Mbembe the systematic nature of Necropolitical practices are perpetrated by a constant 'state of injury' (Mbembe 75). This can be observed in *Earth and Ashes* when 'a group of government troublemakers' came to the village to 'enlist fighters' who would be employed to resist the occupying forces (Rahimi 9). Consequently, civilians are simultaneously at the mercy of both sides, but none ensures their safety. The continuity of such circumstances has many dreadful effects which, as Learned Helplessness propagates, lead to many psychological and behavioral imbalances. In addition, such a state of injury makes characters disable for the rest of their lives. For instance, the grandson of the protagonist has become 'deaf' due to the bombing of the village (Rahimi 3). Being a kid, he thinks that the bombing has taken the voices of the other characters rather his ability to hear. Moreover, he is perplexed because if characters have lost their voices why are they 'moving their mouths? (Rahimi 4)'

Moreover, the turning of necropolitics into learned helplessness can be noted in the instance when the main character in the novel is reprimanded by a security guard that 'you told it to me enough times' (Rahimi 2). This signifies the unburdening of mental stress of the main character because except sharing his pain with others, he has no other option, he cannot do anything about his condition. Even talking to others does not get a positive response, let alone his actions. He is not listened to, as is highlighted that 'you are unlikely to get a response' (Rahimi 2). This intensifies the central factor of helplessness that is response-outcome independence. Due to hallucinations, he has become 'seer of visions' and hears 'voice' in his head. These signify depression which is the effect of helplessness. The situation that the main character, Dastaguir, is going

through is because he has experienced a distressing event, which is meddling with his conscious and unconscious mind (2-5).

Life is enjoyable, or at least livable, so far death is not hovering upon it. That is to say that the essence of life lies in the fact that death is unpredictable which is why human beings have this perception as if they will never die. Though an illusion, this is also a source of hope which pushes human beings to struggle for a better future. But, as soon as death becomes apparently predictable, a sway of hopelessness engulfs life. Mbembe has also reiterated a similar idea quoting George Bataille. He states that 'life is defective only when death has taken it a hostage' (qtd. in Mbembe 69). This possible nearness of death sucks the bloom of life which becomes dreary and burdensome. In *Earth and Ashes,* this has been highlighted in the instance when the shopkeeper, Mirza Qadir says that 'the dead are more fortunate than the living' (Rahimi 12).

Additionally, 'terror is a necessary part' and at the heart of Necropolitical practices, as it is considered a vital source of subjugation of masses (Mbembe 73). Generating terror at mass level pacifies many opponents which lessens the strength of those who are to be disposed. For example, in *Earth and Ashes* the main character, terrorized by the bombing of the village, is unable to resist the Russian forces as 'they would have killed' him (Rahimi 14).

4.5.7 Meaningless Corporealities

Necropolitics' central proposition is the annihilation and killing of people at mass level (Mbembe 86). This has been illustrated in the novella when a whole 'village' is 'destroyed' through bombing (9). Problem with killing at mass level is that multiple characters die at place and the rest who somehow evades the incident remains in a state worse than death. For instance, the protagonist; Dastaguir, his son; Murad, and his grandson; Yassin, are the characters who have although been saved from death, but they are no more living a normal life. Mass extermination also does not differentiate between who is innocent and who is not but engulfs whosoever is present at the time and place of incident. The destruction of the village has also been occurred in the same manner. All characters are busy with their daily chores when suddenly the Russian army drops bombs at the village and many characters are caught unaware.

Additionally, Characters are treated as 'meaningless corporealities' that are to be disposed of (Mbembe 87). Soon after mass extermination the bodies of the dead

characters are plunged into mass graves and sometimes, if lay for a week or two, are burned to nothingness. This horrible treatment of the characters in the primary text is what substantiates the central argument of this thesis. The subjection of the family of the main character to necropolitical practices undermines his sense of self and diminishes his control over the events in his life.

The magnitude and enormity of such an act of mass extermination makes life just an act of mere survival of the body. The soul or essence of the characters of the text is no more there. As the protagonist goes like, 'you're nothing but a hollow shell' (21). This signifies the effects of necropolitical practices which leaves the characters in text mere dummies roaming around.

4.5.8 Social Imbalances and Undesirability

Besides, Necropolitics is so devastating in its operation that it disrupts the whole functioning of a society. This can be observed in the instance when a character, Mirza Qadir, states that 'what's on time in this country' (Rahimi 7). Necropolitical practices destabilizes the society down to its core without any exception. In case of case of *Earth and Ashes* as it is already happening in a third world country, its social repercussions are beyond the control poor characters. The protagonist is himself in a state of injury but also tries his best to reach his son who is somewhere else. He could not find a vehicle let alone safety and aid.

In addition, Sovereignty is exercised in its totality with no consideration for the weak or innocent. The bombing of the whole village indicates the undesirability of even those characters who were not even wanted to the assaulting forces of Russian army. Even then their sovereignty is regulated by the language of 'pure force, immediate presence, and frequent and direct action' (Mbembe 79). This also reinforces Necropolitical concept of state of exception wherein certain cases like the village bombing are carried out as an exceptional operation. In such situations every law and all human rights are suspended. 'Power…becomes their faith' which is used against anybody and everybody without any distinction (Rahimi 12). Similarly, sovereignty in Necropolitics means 'the material destruction of human bodies and population' (Mbembe 68).

Moreover, families are dismantled or torn apart during necropolitical practices as Mirza Qadir and his son have separated. Family as an institution or homeliness is no more

normal in this kind of situations. The wholeness and togetherness are destroyed for the sake of nefarious designs as has been portrayed in Earth and Ashes.

4.5.9 Summary

In short, as discussed, Necropolitics has very devastating effects both collectively and individually. The socio-political setup of society and psychological condition of the characters in the novel have been badly disrupted. The sovereignty exercised in Necropolitics is the central factor in causing a distressing or bad event. The death-world that is created in the aftermath of exercising absolute sovereignty shatters the hope of civilians in *Earth and Ashes.* Foreign army is the active agent behind the suffering of civilians. The inability and powerlessness in face of the ultimate sovereignty of the army worsens the mental state of the protagonist. In addition, he is also hallucinating and daydreaming because of the instability of his mental state. His mind is fluidly moving in time- to and fro, without any stable presence in present. These are the factor that signify that Necropolitics has resulted in helplessness. Moreover, the explanatory style that they employ, and their behavior also signifies that the distressing event has made them helpless, because it is beyond their control.

4.6 Learned helplessness and *Earth and Ashes*

4.6.1 Contingency of the Situation

As far learned helplessness is concerned, there are many instances in both novels that signify that the characters are going through a burdensome condition which they are unable to cope with or change accordingly. The propositions of the politics of Learned Helplessness illustrates that when characters as portrayed in the text show passivity, in a situation where they are required to show activity, it leads to Learned Helplessness (Seligman et. al 229). For instance, the excerpt that "[t]hese hardships are everyone's fate", signify that the characters in *Earth and Ashes* have accepted their circumstances as inevitable (Rahimi 13). This reinstates the proposition of Learned Helplessness that the perception of helplessness intensifies helplessness (Seligman et. al 147).

The continuity of grief and pain also reinforces helplessness. The "dagger of grief" has been stabbed into the heart of main character and he "bears great sorrow" (Rahimi 17, 16). Sometimes, he loses his senses and hallucinates because of the burdensome nature of the distressing event. He "wanted to run from everybody" because

"what could he do alone" (19, 20)? These examples from the novels also signify that necropolitics has caused sheer helplessness throughout the novel and the main character; Dastaguir, and his son; Murad are helpless to do anything. A single incident of grief and its effects may fade away, but it is the continuity that causes helplessness, and this continuity is the result of absolute sovereignty exercised in necropolitics. Everything around the main character is in flux and transition but he is stuck in time, "not moving". Being stuck in time helplessly is a maddening experience (21).

4.6.2 Explanatory Style as Cognition

The explanatory style: a factor that highlights helplessness, can also be noted to exemplify that necropolitics leads to helplessness. For instance, Dastaguir attributes external, global, and general causes to his suffering which makes him further vulnerable to helplessness. It can be noted in the line that "God isn't concerned with you", it shows that he accuses his fate and destiny for his suffering. In another instance he says that what has he done "to deserve such a destiny". It means that things which have caused his helplessness are out of his control. Furthermore, he thinks that he was "condemned to witness" those events, though he wishes he was "killed before" witnessing the destruction befallen his family. These examples also signify the helplessness of his condition due to necropolitics. He even says that "the dead are more fortunate than the living". The generalized explanatory style has also been highlighted in the instance when Dastaguir, the main character says that "[t]hese hardships are everyone's fate" (10-13).

The sorrow of his condition has made him to specify what his sorrow would turn into, because inner pain always takes outer form. His sorrow has not taken any form yet and he is more afraid of this than anything else. This signifies the explanatory style that characters adopt while assigning reason to their condition. The explanatory style here seems to be pessimistic because he is not hoping for his sorrow to turn into something creative or artistic instead, he appears to have the perception that it will turn into some dreadful phenomenon which may be dangerous for him and his son. Explanatory style plays a vital role both in causing and preventing helplessness, because the more pessimistic explanatory style the more susceptibility to helplessness and vice versa (Seligman et. al 178).

4.6.3 Behavioral and Psychological Disturbances

The behavioral disruptions can be seen on many levels and in many manifestations in the novella. Seligman et. al has differentiated personal helplessness from universal helplessness. He states that in personal helplessness the individual's self-esteem shatters and "if only" rumination occurs whereas in universal helplessness individual's self-esteem remains intact (Seligman et.al 147). This has been very clearly and aptly highlighted in *Earth and Ashes* when Dastaguir; the protagonist, regrets his stay in the village and not having left in time with Murad, his son. He says, "if only" he could have left the village then he would not have witnessed the destruction of his family and not be responsible for conveying this terrible news to his son (Rahimi 5). It can only be imagined from his words that he is going through hard time, and the horror of future; of informing his son, has put him in a nostalgic position. If only he could change past and be free.

The psychological burden has been directly mentioned in *Earth and Ashes* when the main character says that had he died in the bombing on his village, he would not have witnessed "the helplessness of his father". These are his own reflections about his conditions which signifies his behavior and response. The behavioral symptoms of helplessness in his son Murad have also been highlighted. In an instance he wanders "completely naked", "throw himself into flames" and gets burned. The revengeful Murad who would not let anybody get away with their crimes has become helpless. This time he "destroyed" himself, "sacrificed his soul". This helpless behavior of his son also reinforces the helplessness of his father, the main character, Dastaguir. He becomes "hopeless and forlorn" (27,28).

The perception of being alone is also an effect of Learned Helplessness because together they might muster up courage and fight but individually, they cannot do anything. This is emphasized in the novel when the main character says about his son; "what could he do alone?". Moreover, the anonymity or lack of reach to the oppressors also reinforces this because until one has not identified the perpetrator one cannot do anything. The main character also says this "on whom?" to take revenge (Rahimi 32). This is also related to explanatory style because explanatory style takes lead for identifying the causes of the event when "reality does not encumber it" (Seligman et. al 151). This signifies the entrenchment of the effects of Learned Helplessness to the cognitive depth of the individuals.

Finally, the behavioral and psychological effects of Learned helplessness can also be enhanced from the physical injuries inflicted in the distressing event. The child, Yassin, who has gone deaf due to bombing has made his granddad helpless "to make him understand" or even listen. Being unable to unburden his heart and talk to anybody he knows that his heart will "explode and destroy" him. This signifies the sheer mental stress and inability to lighten his condition, which signifies helplessness. The only thing he can do is wish that his "sorrow… wouldn't take shape at all", that is it would not turn into something more dreadful. This also signifies that necropolitics has led to utter helplessness and psychological uncertainty (8,9).

Moreover, bad events in life leads to depression and sadness but when this continues for a longer period than is deemed normal, it leads to learned helplessness (Seligman et. al 12,13). It is because any bad event may cause dejection, for instance "…the frailty of his son…the helplessness of his father", highlights the experiences of helplessness in plain and clear words (Rahimi 16). Both father and son are helpless, and both have accepted the helplessness of their condition which is a heavy psychological burden and may lead to trauma also. One of the effects of Learned helplessness is the perception in the futility of one's actions and the belief, that same situations are going to repeat themselves and evolve into future contingency.

4.6.4 Summary

These excerpts and examples from *Earth and Ashes* highlight the effects of Learned helplessness on individuals because it has been highlighted in the behavior and explanatory style of the characters. Moreover, it also showcases that necropolitics does indeed lead to helplessness. The socio-political setup has barely been talked about, but lack of proper transportation and communication highlights the condition of society as a whole. Moreover, the transformation of Necropolitics into Learned Helplessness is manifest whereas their reverse relation can be noted from a single event when the Russian army recruit soldiers from the indigenous population knowing they have no better option. Though not fueling Necropolitics directly, their helplessness is cruelly misused for supporting Necropolitical practices. This relation may also vary depending on the condition of the characters' personal capacities, social conditions, and severity of helplessness.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

As the introductory chapter of this research highlights, this has been noted that Mirza Waheed's *The Collaborator* and Atiq Rahimi's *Earth and Ashes* portray the exertion of necropolitics and learned helplessness. The central argument of this research in thesis statement is that the characters are mostly vulnerable to necropolitics and learned helplessness. Both Waheed and Rahimi aptly present the suffering of the characters in these two texts and allude to the effects in daily life of the characters and socio-political setting. The research questions that the previous chapter has answered are; 1) what are the effects of necropolitics and learned helplessness on characters' lives and socio-political functioning? 2) How does control over life and death leads to dejection, and whether both intensify each other or not? To answer these questions appropriately, the conceptual models have been extracted from Mbembe's *Necropolitics* and Seligman's *Learned Helplessness*. For instance, death-world, human disposability, strict surveillance, sheer violence and compartmentalization of territory, and fear and terror are some of the concepts of necropolitics that have been used in this research. Moreover, the elements of learned helplessness like non-contingency of response and outcome, cognition of helplessness, and expression of behavioral disturbances are also highlighted. Additionally, to substantiate the answers with textual instances and examples, the method of textual analysis, as stated by Catherine Belsey, has been adopted. In addition, the qualitative nature of this study has necessitated the interrogative and critical style of this study.

5.1 Findings

It has become clear from the previous chapter that the totality of the analysis of this research quite aptly shows that the people of Afghanistan and Kashmir are subjected to Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness as portrayed in the selected fiction. The oppressors, in case of both countries, are only concerned to make their ends meet without having any concern for the well-being of innocent civilians. Though the human rights laws are clearly being violated but political influence and military power of the oppressors cannot be tackled with by the hollow slogans of human rights organizations. It needs air-tight policies, so that no party however powerful may dodge it, and strict

application of those policies is pertinent to ensure a healthy life of innocent masses. In addition to this, international and regional non-governmental organization conducts massive research which can help law enforcement agencies to bring violators to the justice. In contrast, if not dealt properly, these pain-stricken masses may have long term effects on the whole humanity.

The militarization of daily life, as portrayed in both novels, has made life burdensome for civilians. The social functionality and domesticity of daily life has been halted for the individuals in the novels. It has disturbed the routine functioning of the daily affairs of the whole village. The characters in both texts cannot tell the right conduct from the wrong conduct. Surveillance is prevalent across every aspect of their lives. They are being watched for detecting suspicious activities. There are check posts here and there which has disturbed social mobility. Similarly, the characters in both texts are treated as meaningless corporealities. They are not considered to have any human value. Their treatment by the Indian and Soviet armies is very terrible. The armies view them as a collective threat that is to be eliminated as quickly as possible. The major characters are deemed undesirable, and they are valuable as far as they cooperate with the army. Their death is not mourned neither are they provided any respectful burial after death. Death is shaming to their humanist essence.

In addition, the state of exception has made all of them victims of necropolitics. The innocent is victimized with the guilty. The curfews act as a deterring agent which suspends the basic human rights. The right of free speech, and the right to defend themselves have been suspended. The characters are at the mercy of the armies. If they try to defend themselves against any threat, it leads to their death, as resistance in such situation is synonymous with death. Moreover, death world has engulfed all the characters without any consideration for the innocent characters. Such death world is impossible to escape. The anxiety of annihilation has inflicted a state of indecision on the character. They do not know what to do; to either escape death or prove themselves innocent. All the characters are treated to be others whose death assures the life of the perpetrators of necropolitical practices. The characters in both the novels are subject to psychological imbalances and social relations are hard to be maintained in face of chaos. The problem with such condition is that people are indecisive about how to lead their

lives and whether there is a way out or not. The indecision is also an effect of helplessness and too crushing for a normal individual to bear.

Moreover, the selected fiction highlights the effects of necropolitics on the characters in a more-than-real way because what cannot be explained in factual documentation can only be highlighted in fiction. These fictions are grounded in times when civilians were most vulnerable and when the oppressor were blindfolded by their excessive use of power. Inflicting pain is derogatory to the humanist essence of civilians but making them hang in-between life and death is very barbaric. Furthermore, helplessness is a sympathetic and final stage of human suffering. Such treatment has been compared to the life in concentration camps which are exempted from human rights boundaries (Mbembe 67).

Furthermore, the effects of learned helplessness on the characters have also been highlighted. For example, helplessness causes passivity of response in the characters. Those characters who realize that the cause of their suffering is beyond their control, they become passive. For instance, Mirza Qadir in *Earth and Ashes* and Shaban chacha in *The Collaborator* have sided from the conventional lifestyle and have become aloof because they have realized their inability to ease their suffering. Besides, helplessness has also caused the contingency of the future. The characters are in a constant state of uncertainty about their future. This also highlights the lack of control of the characters over their situation and the events in their life. Similarly, learned helplessness also causes cognitive disabilities in the characters who are then not able to judge the situation and act accordingly. Such disabilities force characters to assign their suffering to global and external causes which exempt them from taking any action as they do not consider the solution to be on their part. This is known as explanatory style. Moreover, learned helplessness causes behavioral imbalances like decreasing self-esteem, nostalgia, depression, guilt and cognitive disabilities.

Correspondingly, based on the attributional style apparently responsible for causation of an uncontrollable event, the generality of learned helplessness across situations and its consistency has been highlighted. It has been concluded that those individuals who attribute their failure of control over an event to external, unstable, and global factors are less vulnerable to learned helplessness in future. Whereas, in contrast, those individuals who attribute uncontrollability of an event to internal and specific

factors are more likely to exhibit helplessness in similar events coming ahead. In short, individuals who perceives uncontrollability to be their own inability are highly affected than those who think vice versa. This conditionality and severity of Learned Helplessness regarding both texts have been highlighted in the preceding chapter.

A very common element that highlights the Learned Helplessness of the characters in both novels and which is the outcome of being directly subject to Necropolitics is the rumination of "if only". The desire, of wishing "If" things had been different, highlights that individual has lost right to liberty. "If only" also signifies that the characters are experiencing a state of utter helplessness. It also indicates the loss of self-esteem which is considered an effect of helplessness.

To conclude the previous debate, the effects of Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness have been explained in detail in both texts; moreover, the necropolitics leads to the learned helplessness and vice versa. But the reverse relation may not always be as strong as the former. In both the novels Necropolitics does lead to helplessness and produces effects that can aptly be called the outcomes of Necropolitics. The characters in both novels have become helpless as they have accepted their inability to change their condition. The stable and internal explanatory style also reinforces the perception of helplessness. The social and political setup is also disturbed because the use of sheer force by one institution deteriorates the performance of other institutions also. The martial authority seems to be almighty in every affair of daily life. Moreover, it has been explicated by the above analysis that Necropolitics intensifies helplessness. But whether helplessness leads to necropolitics is highlighted in the instance when in *The Collaborator* the Indian army captain perceives that the main characters is helpless, he starts treating him more abusively and with disrespect. And in *Earth and Ashes*, the Russian army has identified that the afghan civilians cannot do anything about their boys being employed in the Russian army, so they fuel their necropolitical practices with Afghan youth.

The Socio-political and psychological use of the concepts of Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness in modern state politics have become evident. This discussion also highlighted various aspects of Necropolitics and Learned Helplessness which have been used for the theoretical underpinning of this research study. For instance, death-world, human disposability, strict surveillance, sheer violence and compartmentalization of

territory, and fear and terror are some of the concepts that have been used in this research. Moreover, the elements of learned helplessness like non-contingency of response and outcome, cognition of helplessness, and expression of behavioral disturbances are also highlighted. It has also become clear that social, political, and psychological condition of the characters in the novels have been disturbed by Necropolitical practices and Learned Helplessness. It can be noted from the previous chapter that there seems to be no social activities throughout both novels. It can be accepted that lively social activities are nonsensical to expect in such situations but even funerals are no more occurring publicly; or even not occurring at all. The line that "the fantasy of a still-functioning village" highlights that the idea of a functioning social setup has become just a fantasy (Waheed 4). Nonetheless, the political anarchy is, simultaneously, the reason and effect of necropolitics. It is because the political government seems to be in hands of the military authority. The governor who visits the village in the novel seems to be a puppet of the army more than a political figure in himself. Similarly, in *Earth and Ashes* no state machinery can be observed to lighten the difficulties of civilians. The domestic instability of the countries in the primary texts seems to be affecting the politics of both the countries. More than that, modern democracies are pushing hard on increasing violence for maintaining smooth running of the government. Politics, in times of Necropolitics, seems to be providing safer grounds for the infliction of atrocities. In short, the political and social setup of both the countries in the novels are disturbed and chaotic; the psychological condition of individuals has also been disturbed due effects of Learned Helplessness.

In short, this research study demonstrates that characters who are most vulnerable and have weak psychological makeup are more prone to the effects of necropolitics. Similarly, if, in addition the social and political setup is also disturbed then there are more chances that they become subject to necropolitical practices. Moreover, learned helplessness sprouts from the exertion of necropolitics. It also underscores that necropolitics and learned helplessness are directly related and both have severe effects both on the characters and socio-political setup. Similarly, necropolitics lead to learned helplessness based on uncontrollability of the event, contingency of future, and cognition and explanatory style of the characters. Lastly, both intensify each other as has been evident in case of the protagonist of *Earth and Ashes* and *The Collaborator*.

Recommendations

The synoptic view of this research highlights that there are some areas around this topic on which further research may be conducted. For instance, human rights abuses, extra judicial killings, vulnerability of children and women, media restrictions, unavailability of sustained infrastructure are some of the topics that may be explored by researchers in future. Moreover, the political and military polarization of the third world countries for intentionally destabilizing their economy also provides potential substance for research. In addition, these texts may also be explored from feminist perspective as both the primary texts provide enough instances of female suffering. Finally, the theoretical underpinning of this study has much wider use across multiple areas and is also relevant in the current age.

Similary, *The Sandbox* by David Zimmerman and *The Blind Man's Garden* by Nadeem Aslam are war fiction which can be researched through the lens of necropolitics and learned helplessness. These fictions can also be explored through pure psychoanalytical lens because of the trauma that is caused in the aftermath of war.

Based on the above recommendations, a variety of research may be conducted which would broaden the intellectual contours and scope of such studies. Moreover, the contemporary world needs more research on human suffering and afflictions than has been necessary in the past. Man's intellectual endeavor and efforts can only bear fruit if it eases his tensions.

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