

**NEGOTIATING ENVIRONMENTAL
CRIMINOLOGY AND MAINTAINING
ECOJUSTICE: AN ECOCRITICAL STUDY OF
UZMA ASLAM KHAN'S *THINNER THAN SKIN* AND
AMITAV GHOSH'S *RIVER OF SMOKE***

By

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MPhil English Literature



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Ecojustice: An Ecocritical Study of Uzma Aslam Khan's
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ABSTRACT

Title: Negotiating Environmental Criminology and Maintaining Ecojustice: An Ecocritical Study of Uzma Aslam Khan's *Thinner Than Skin* and Amitav Ghosh's *River of Smoke*

This thesis examines *River of Smoke* by Amitav Ghosh and *Thinner Than Skin* by Uzma Aslam Khan in relation to the fundamental ecocritical tenet that there is a connection between the mistreatment of indigenous peoples, their local wildlife, and the representation of nature. The goal of this study is to examine the texts for reflections on influential and individual behaviors that uphold and defend the persecution and marginalization of deprived human and animal communities. It also aims to discuss the liberation tactics/strategies that the chosen books offer for indigenous groups, nonhuman animals, and nature. This study was conducted from the premise that repressive conceptual frameworks and potential remedies are the fundamental ideas that privileged individuals, particularly governmental authorities, use to oppress and persecute other native humans, nonhumans, and nature. As a result, the application of these anthropocentric ideas and actions turns native people, nonhuman animals, and nature into simple tools and commodities for obtaining material rewards. The study demonstrates that, in addition to the oppression of local inhabitants, wildlife, and the environment that reflected in the chosen works, oppressive ideologies nurtured and sustained in two different cultures by influential and individual practices against the framework of anthropocentric ideology. Moreover, this study also explores the possible solutions to deal with oppressive anthropocentric mindset.

Key Words: *Anthropocentrism, Ecological Justice, Environment, Persecution*

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DEDICATION

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The current study examines how nature and local communities repressed and marginalized in the chosen works, and explore potential remedies for dealing with environmental harm in cultural contexts against the background of ecocriticism. The two internationally recognized authors whose works the researcher has chosen for the current study are Uzma Aslam Khan, a Pakistani American writer and Amitav Ghosh, an Indian writer. For the current study, the researcher selected Khan's *Thinner than Skin* and Ghosh's *River of Smoke* to identify the connections between the degradation and marginalization of nature and the preservation of environmental balance.

An interest in the seriousness of numerous ecological issues in South Asia led the researcher to decide to conduct research on contemporary Anglophone South Asian work of fiction from an ecocritical viewpoint. The thesis's selection of South Asia's anthropocentric role, institutional atrocities, and armed struggle as its immediate setting primarily driven by the absence of scholarly studies on the environmental study of the region in South Asian authors' English-language fiction. The dissertation also draws inspiration from the abundance and variety of the locations under study's beautiful scenery, endangered assets, and wildlife. It makes sense to choose a few sample novels that depict various facets of the region's environment for comprehending the fictional depiction of the complexities of the ecological catastrophe in South Asia. There have been numerous issues in South Asia because of very serious instability in politics, which have had terrible effects on the region's physical and social surroundings. The need to care for the material and biological ecosystem draws attention to ecocriticism, which offers intriguing perspectives into how the environment and human beings portrayed in literary writings. With an emphasis on how nature portrayed South Asian English novels published from the end of the 20th century, this research study attempts to adopt an ecocritical position.

The need to critically evaluate and recognize the role of South Asian writers in expressing their concerns about environmental problems and suggesting solutions for

these ecological challenges has also affected the choice of the topic and the novels. This study provides evidence of South Asia's ecosystem's deterioration, it might be considered literary engagement. In order to do this, I have chosen two contemporary South Asian books in English *River of Smoke* (2011) by Amitav Ghosh and *Thinner Than Skin* (2012) by Uzma Aslam Khan.

The chosen novels shed light on the environmental problems that exist in various parts of South Asia because of institutional and powerful conflicts as well as human activity. These authors' subject focus expands to the entire threatened mother earth due to environmental issues caused by enormous forces, industrial development, and human innovation. They discuss the current ecological catastrophe and its effects on humans, other living things, and the natural world. Their novels reflect qualitative facets of south Asian countries' environmental situation. Although their distinct governmental and socioeconomic circumstances, the unhappy need to fight opposing every type of environmental tyranny is present in these chosen books. To address environmental harm and preserve the environment, the researcher utilizes an interdisciplinary theoretical strategy and draws in many ways from ecocritical theory.

1.1 Postcolonial Ecocritical Theory

In the realm of literary criticism, ecocritical post-colonial research is a relatively recent field. The theory shows a connection within literature and the environment by combining the study of the post-colonial environment with literary works. Before the term "ecocriticism" ever used in the literary community, authors only ever used nature as a source of motivation and as an opportunity to develop and record their views. Following the Association of the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE)'s introduction of the word "ecocriticism" to the field of literary criticism in 1993, scholars have been analyzing texts to draw attention to ecological issues and investigate the ways in which literature may raise awareness and equilibrium in society.

In contrast, post-colonialism, which emerged as a reaction against colonization, examines the cultural and economic degradation of the indigenous people, the colonized, and their ancestral lands. The division between the two streams of thinking is evident; for over ten years, the trend of nature vs. culture has been prevalent. This division of

ideas has destroyed the idea that the environment is a combination of culture and nature, living things and nonliving things.

In order to address these two disparate fields' post-colonial and ecocriticism, post-colonial ecocritical studies examines the ecosystem as a whole, made up of people, animals, and the soil. It shifts the focus of critical thought to the interactions between native and foreign humans, as well as between humans and nonhuman animals.

Additionally, postcolonial ideas continue to be useful in making sure cultural differences are taken into consideration while developing bioregional models of adaptation and sustainability, and that the continuous fight for global environmental justice is implemented. The blatantly unequal allocation of natural resources, the forcible relocation of indigenous populations, and the systematic mistreatment of animals and indigenous communities by multinational corporate power are the hallmarks of this era. In their book *Postcolonial Ecocriticism*, Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin argue that since human civilization and “non-human species continues to worsen” (Huggan and Tiffin 5)”, it is unethical for these global and colonial powers to treat human society and “non-humans” dishonorably (Huggan and Tiffin 5). They characterize south Asian or colonized nations as “not human: the uncivilized, the animal and animalistic” (5). Their justification for this behavior of continued “invasion and colonization” is that “non-European lands and the people and animals as ‘spaces, empty’ (5) or vacant and perceive their norms and “cultures as primitive, less rational” (5).

In the selected multicultural texts, the researcher examines the relationship between post-colonial land and native community and their role in the establishment of the environment. She acknowledges the values, rights, and beliefs connected to land and nature in each culture, as well as the effects of human devaluation, by utilizing secondary sources on these selected texts. Additionally, this study draws attention to the issue in our understanding of tradition and popular culture and addresses it using chosen texts. As a result, using ecocritical scholarship in this thesis has allowed the researcher to expand her understanding of how post-colonial indigenous cultures use their land and how people interact with the environment. It has made it possible for her to analyze the texts from several angles, recognize the problematic interaction between humans and

nonhuman animals in the ecosystem, and provide practical solutions to preserve the nature's balance and harmony.

The current environmental catastrophe on a global scale has made ecocriticism one of the most significant academic disciplines today. Practitioners of environmental sciences have made significant progress over the last few decades. In terms of the humanities, such as literary studies, the moment has come for them to play a critical part in the common problem of constructing a world, which is environmentally sustainable. Ecocriticism, which William Rueckert had created for the first time in his essay *Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism* in 1978, refers to “the application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature”, (Rueckert 107). In addition, Cheryl Glotfelty defines ecocriticism in her book *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* as “the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment” (Glotfelty 18). In Glotfelty’s opinion ecocriticism is an “earth-centered approach” (Glotfelty 18) and it brings human attention towards the natural world and defines the relationship between them. In a similar way, Ken Hiltner argues in his book *Ecocriticism: The Essential Reader* that “Environmental critics explore how nature and the natural world are imagined through literary texts” by examining “a range of texts in order to understand how we have traditionally understood our relationship to the planet” (qtd. in Shahnour 2).

Aliya Shahnour in her research article “Sailing through the Environmental Warfare-an Ecological Journey towards the Heart of Amitav Ghosh’s Ibis Trilogy” supports the main areas of the present research, which are firstly, environmental harm and secondly environmental justice. She points out that environmental harm on a global scale is not new. Anthropocentric activities or the unfriendly nature of humanity with ecology has become a source of environmental harm. The ‘anthropocentric Epoch’ is a term for the most recent period in Earth’s history when human activity began to have a significant impact on the planet’s climate and Ecosystems. The environment altered profoundly due to human activity over many centuries, as Glotfelty agrees with this fact and declares that human beings are “part of the problem” (21) and changing South Asian landscapes and regional biodiversity.

According to Robert Douglas White, humans are responsible for reshaping “landscapes that pollutes air, water, and soil”, causing plant and animal species to dwindle, and altering “the contours of the atmosphere and the level of the seas” (White 46). The disruption of the ecological system includes everything from harming the environment to transporting plants and animals from the homeland to new regions of the globe. Furthermore, the introduction of new species, the rapid mortality of some species, natural dangers, or man-made causes could all disrupt the environmental balance. Global warming is another terrible manifestation of the anthropocentric attitudes toward the environment. It also contributes to air and water pollution, soil degradation, deforestation, and biodiversity loss.

The role of anthropocentrism has become a source of environmental danger. Rachel Carson’s book *Silent Spring* (1965) points out the role of humankind in destroying the environment. As it is mentioned in an article “Environmental Discourse: A Comparative Ecocritical Study of Pakistani and American Fiction in English” that Carson’s book is “a revolutionary text of the contemporary environmental movement that challenges the industry” (qtd. in Makhdoom and Yaqoob 2), which become the reason for disrupting the environment.

Furthermore, the socioeconomic behavior of humans and their technical changes in the society give birth to ecological issues. In the human industry, we are currently living in has one species, the human, acquired the power to change the natural world. For this alteration of natural world, man eliminate trees and plants in the name of development, modify how we use land, and continue to increase paved areas. This technical alteration has an impact on the soil ecology as well as the water balance. Due to these challenges, increased urbanization necessitates more water to feed the city's population and industry, which often necessitates the drilling of deeper and deeper wells or the transportation of water from even further away locations, resulting in increased human impacts not only on individual species, but also on entire ecosystems.

Technological advances have also harmed the close bond between humans and their surroundings. Literary academics have been obliged to reexamine the link between humans and their surroundings because of the shift from a life centered on nature to one

that is technical and commercial, as well as the ensuing ecological constraints. The idea of nature as only a background presence has changed. Shortages of resources and the integral part that humanity played in its emergence frequently highlighted. Humans and the environment have fought each other since the dawn of time.

It is challenging to distinguish between humankind and the natural world since they are closely entwined. Man's careless acts have a lasting negative impact on nature. The ecosystem works like a chain, with each link showing how the others' actions influence them. The environmental movement began to gain place in the last part of the 20th century in response to ideas that ecological damage has become a threat not just of the environment and animals but also to human well-being, nourishment, and living situations. An assessment of technological advancement along with its products, environmentalism is unmistakably modern and heavily dependent on technological advancements. The last period of the 20th century is without a doubt known for their technical bursting, but they also had a disastrous effect on the natural world, which made them a global disaster. Man is attempting to learn the mysteries of nature in the modern world with the help of technological advancement and by erecting enormous obstacles between humans and the natural world. Industrial development has changed the way people and the natural world interact. In the past, man considered himself an essential component of the nature, but in the present, due to his lust for assets, he has become a tool of business.

Monazza Makhdoom and Munazza Yaqoob points out in their article “The Landscape of Vertical Wilderness: Environmentalism and a Sense of Place in Uzma Aslam Khan’s Novel *Thinner than Skin*”, in Scott Slovic’s opinion, current Pakistani rhetoric reflects, “universal concerns about environmental destruction” (qtd. in Makhdoom and Yaqoob 1). Pakistan is in an outright state of unrest within the country, as violence disrupts human life, the country faces numerous environmental issues due to growing industrialization, urbanization, and overpopulation, and a variety of other social processes are at work, all of which contribute to ecological and human suffering.

These anthropocentric activities that are deadly for the environment call for ecological balance to make land an ideal place for humans and non-humans to live. Even if not ideal, the environment now demands for the ways that protect the environment from

this jeopardy. The excessive natural resources that were once inreplete have curtailed and depleted by human activities that pollute the environment. This incautious deterioration of the environment, if it persists, might make the existence of living beings on earth an antique phenomenon. The need of the hour is to devise plausible means to balance the environment to preserve the resources. The factors, which can balance the environment, must considered in order to save it from more harm.

There are many debates on this universal agenda of preserving the environment in response to anthropocentrism. Ecological balance, which gained its momentum in the 20th century as a corollary to globalization, refers to Dr. Doughlas Howard's concept of natural balance (1997) which aims at improvement of general health and well ness of People of all ages. In a book *Crimes Against Nature Environmental Criminology and Ecological Justice* (2008), Robert Doughlas White, places a strong emphasis on the principles of "ecological justice, species justice, and animal rights" (White 4). He further asserts the idea of environmental justice, which relates to the overall wellness of environment, which is made of distinct ecosystems, plant life, and wildlife. In addition to that, White offers some solutions to limit the damage done reduce crime fear, increase public safety, "protect specific environments" (White 193) and maintain ecological justice. Whiteencapsulates that "greater focus needs to be placed on the companies and individuals" (White 275) who commit the destruction. There is a need to save the ecosystem by taking some precautionary measures like collective decision-making, foresight, wisdom and eventually require the testing of current social and political norms and bounds, because it is necessary for our own survival as well as the survival of future generations and ecosystems because human well-being is intrinsically tied to respect for nature.

As a result, environmental balance or environmental protection has become a global hot topic now. It is a topic of international significance. Global warming is a curse that has befallen the entire world because of environmental imbalance and pollution. The globe is becoming a victim of environmental degradation and imbalance, and South Asian writers are similarly concerned with numerous issues, perspectives, and arguments in this era of heightened capitalism, globalization, and the war on terror. Consequently, South Asian Literature has evolved into a means of expressing concern for the

environment and its significance in human life and the universe. With global environmental degradation and crisis, a significant corpus of creative expression in fiction and theatre from all cultures has participated in fascinating dialogues to represent and explore issues such as environmental degradation and disaster. Uzma Aslam Khan and Amitav Ghosh are examples of South Asian writers who also issue a warning about the problem that equal indicators of global warming were glacial extension and decline in both the east and west. The chosen authors intend to investigate the process of human development that affects the ecological balance and scrutinize the necessity for a healthy, well-balanced environment. It is as though it is the universe's lifeblood.

1.2 Environmental Themes in the Works of Selected Writers

In her literary writing, Uzma Aslam Khan addresses a wide range of subjects, including feminism, the environment, and political unrest. She incorporates a larger cultural, social, and political context into her stories. She raises voice for woman and nature because human actions oppressed and marginalized the natural world and woman in the majority of her works. Her writings, especially her novels, address contemporary environmental challenges because she is an environmentalist. She worries about the potential exploitation and devastation of natural world and indigenous communities. Her writings take on a greater and wider range of viewpoints, including traditional, biological, religious, and social perspectives, which shows that she is sensitive to the environment and indicates potentially disastrous effects of human beings on ecology.

On the contrary, a South Asian country India, which occupied as a former colony of the British Empire. In the realm of literature, pre- and post-partition Indian literature in English has an important role. Arundhati Roy, Amitav Ghosh, and Salman Rushdie are a few prominent Indian authors who have achieved international renown for their works in English literature. The well-known Indian author and environmentalist Amitav Ghosh, his Ibis Trilogy is what made him famous as a writer. In addition to this work, he has published additional novels that cover a variety of topics, such as politics, the environment, women, and the lower classes. He expresses his opinion in an open and unreserved manner and is direct in his criticism of the authorities' anti-human actions. He highlights the suffering of India's native communities in his writings. He describes

the sufferings, and miseries that these indigenous communities have endured because of the eagerness of the powerful to build development projects.

Many cultural, social, and political concerns relating to the lower class, environmental/land mistreatment, the repercussions of globalization and social inequalities are addressed in his book *River of Smoke*. He expands his concern with different types of social crises and injustices like oppression of native people and ecological damage. Moreover, the outcomes of industrialization, domestic violence, and environmental contamination are his major concerns. The work has gained widespread recognition in literary circles because of the wide range of issues it covers. The investigation of the studies that have done on this book has no end. The critics and academics are still working hard to delve deeper into it. Not only this novel well known throughout the world, but also his other writings, which translated into other languages, frequently read.

As an environmental activist, Ghosh offers his entire support to justice movements that fight for environmental harm, such as exploitation of land for massive financial gain and road construction. Ghosh concentrates his writings on the environment, urbanization, industrialization, and feminism. This is why the researcher chose this piece of writing for the present research. Ghosh tackles concerns pertaining to social and environmental viewpoints that exploited and oppressed on economic basis, which is relevant to the works that the researcher has chosen for this study. The chosen texts will provide sufficient support and potential remedies for addressing the questions that the researcher raises in this study from the perspective of ecocriticism because this study connected to the destruction of the environment, the enslavement of native people, injustice with animals and the establishment of the natural environment.

1.3 Rationale for the Study

The works that have chosen for the present study come from two distinct authors with various cultural origins, and researcher has picked them from an ecocritical perspective. Amitav Ghosh's *River of Smoke* (2011) depicts Indian culture, societal and political background, while Uzma Aslam Khan's *Thinner than Skin* (2012) is set in northern areas of Pakistan. These two renowned authors have diverse cultural and social

origins, but there are certain similarities in the way they write and incorporate particular concerns and themes. Both authors highlight the issues that natural world and underrepresented human groups face by drawing on current political and critical movements and actively participating in these movements themselves. Additionally, both authors present some environmental sustainability ideas.

In *River of Smoke*, and *Thinner Than Skin* Ghosh and Khan draw attention to the struggle of local inhabitants who speak out against the government's criminal persecution and discrimination in order to preserve their natural environment. They struggle to protect their land from calamity and resist corporate encroachment on the natural resources that sustain them. Their battle is essentially a response to the state's intervention against them to put an end to their rebellion. These government acts disturb the local communities who suffer a lot because they are deprived from their homelands and natural riches. They strongly support social justice movements and emphasize the connectivity of the ecological web that binds life forms. The important and urgent topics that Ghosh and Khan discuss must be viewed through the prism of ecocritical ideology. These topics include the exploitation of land, the ensuring ruin of nature's beauty, and the killing of the local population. The argument of the researcher is that the scholarship on the works of these two authors has a strong emphasis on the relationship between humans and nature in relation to their exploitation and harm. In the context of ecocritical ideology, which the researcher discovers that the ecological problems of modern living, such as forest loss, urbanization, extinction of species, natural, and cultural conflicts, as well as the exploitation of local communities, injustice with animals and preservation of the natural world are the missing pieces that need to be taken into account. In the investigation of ecocritical conception, the environmental balance is just as crucial as environmental harm. Additionally, a cross-cultural ecocritical perspective is required to analyze the distinctions and similarities that the literature of many cultures offer.

1.4 Thesis Statement

Ecojustice offers one of the possible solutions to handle crimes waged against the environment by human beings. The essentiality for the ecological balance seems imperative in the context of south Asian countries where crimes against nature are

rampant under the one pretext or the other. In line with this context, there is a need to examine the selected works *Thinner than Skin* and *River of Smoke* with key focus on the exploitation and maintenance of the natural environment in northern areas of Pakistan and natural landscapes of India. Therefore, it is imperative to explore different signs such as setting, forests, water bodies, species, characters' association with the environment and the role of Anthropocene, technical advancement and tourism in disturbing the natural environment and analyze the literary texts (selected in my case) for tracing the remedial strategies which may help negotiate the ecological criminologies/crises.

1.5 Research Objectives

- To examine the anthropocentric involvement in the exploitation and abuse of environment in Uzma Aslam Khan's *Thinner than Skin* and Amitav Ghosh's *River of Smoke*.
- To analyze the criminal persecution of environment as reflected in the selected texts.
- To investigate the solutions the selected texts formulate to overcome ecological crises.

1.6 Research Questions

1. What is the role of anthropocentrism in destruction of South Asian ecology as reflected in Uzma Aslam Khan's *Thinner than Skin* and Amitav Ghosh's *River of Smoke*?
2. How do the selected texts represent the criminal persecution of environment?
3. How do the selected texts come up with strategies/ solutions for the maintenance of ecological balance?

1.7 Significance of the Study

The present study is significant as it goes beyond mere analysis of the literary works for causes and effects of the environmental degradation, exploitation, and oppression of nature/environment. It widens its analytical canvas and explores the

selected texts for the remedies/strategies, which these may offer for negotiating the harms caused by anthropocentric ideologies and the maintenance and sustenance of a healthy environment.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

This study focuses on the ecocritical analysis of the selected texts *Thinner than Skin* and *River of Smoke* in the backdrop of ecological harms done by the anthropocentric ideologies and practices, and the possible solutions which these texts offer to negotiate the environmental criminology.

1.9 Structure of the Study

The thesis is divided into six chapters. The first chapter discusses the history and development of ecocritical theory and makes connection to earlier studies in the field of ecocriticism. Furthermore, it presents how anthropocentric practices affect nature and local communities, who repressed and marginalized in the chosen works and cause environmental harm and then mentions how the selected novels suggest some possible solutions to tackle this environmental damage in cultural contexts against the background of ecocriticism. The Second chapter presents a review of literature, focusing on the development of ecocriticism and South Asian Literature. It also covers the previous research done on the selected authors and works, to identify the gap in research. Chapter Three presents the theoretical framework and application, concerning the analysis presented in Chapter Four and Five. The two analysis chapters address the research problem of the study and are divided to show first the tracing of environmentally criminal practices and its reasons; followed by delineating the representations of environmental justice as shown in the selected works. The last chapter Six presents the conclusion of the research, highlighting the categories of environmental criminology, recommendations by the researcher of guidelines to maintain ecologically just practices, and finally the scope of future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

South Asian literature in English language is evolving in ecocritical academics. In this respect south Asian writers took the lead and produce English literature regarding ecological issues. Sonia Irum in her dissertation “Exploring Environmental Concerns in Uzma Aslam Khan’s Fiction” quotes Indian environmentalist Shikha Kumari, who discusses Indian authors and states, “the concern for ecology and the threat that the continuous misuse of our environment poses on humanity has only recently caught the attention of the writers” (qtd. in Irum 47). There is an expanding body of writing by Indian writers, including Aravind Adiga, Indra Sinha, Arundhati Roy, and Amitav Ghosh, and others, that depicts environmental problems in the whole country and the area. The environmental trilogy of Ghosh the Ibis trilogy tells a tale of human mental destruction and destruction of the environment. *The God of Small Things* by Roy, published in 2017, is a critique of industrialization’s effects on the surrounding green area and an expression of respect for nature. *The White Tiger*, Adiga’s first book, published in 2008. It explores the interaction between socioeconomic conditions and technical development that leads to materialism and ecological damage in India. Sinha’s prize-winning novel *Animal’s People* (2007), depicts the catastrophic effects of dangerous chemicals manufactured by an American chemical industry on the residents of India, who live in slum regions.

In Pakistan, ecocriticism is relatively new to the academic scene in contrast to India, and it has even more recently entered Pakistani English environmental writing. Few writers in Pakistan address the topic of environmental consciousness in their works. Kamila Shamsi’s *Burnt Shadows* sheds light on devastation of land and birds due to the explosion of bomb. Amna Mufti’s novel *Paani Mar Raha Hai* highlights the crises of natural resources like crises of water. Additionally, Khan addresses the issue of the environment discusses religious conviction, faith, feminism, science, common sense, and intellect, her literature has the capacity to discuss perspective towards the natural world. Her perspective is noteworthy and deserving of discussion because of how she uses all these significant cultural elements. Uzma Aslam Khan's novel *Thinner than Skin* explores crucial environmental viewpoints on the massive deforestation in northern Pakistan and

indigenous resistance to the escalating violence. This crime is to blame for disturbing the peace of North's valley.

In addition to that, the researcher places her attention on Khan's fiction, to depict the life of displaced migrants, such as the Gujjar tribe, who represent the underclass. This is a unique component of the story, as the researcher discovers to sheds light on the environmental and psychological sufferings that these Pakistani society's lowest classes face while nestled deep in the "Karakorum's womb" (Khan 124). To handle this serious issue, in the recent decade there is a need of progressive increase in the number of Pakistani researchers, to work to maintain and preserve the society.

Though, Pakistan and India's crucial role in universal environmentalism are nevertheless prompted by urbanization, industrial development, a lack of ecological administration, and responsible government actions. Even though South Asian literature is filled with urbanized as well as natural environments. A very small number of English novels from Pakistan and India depict and build a narrative of a globalized, developed, and highly industrialized society, these South Asian countries in the control of a large-scale spread of deterioration, humiliation of the environment. The current research addresses the gap in the environmental field since environmental consciousness not instilled in Pakistani or Indian society. The selected novels by Khan and Ghosh analyze how challenges between human beings and the natural environment are being broken down. As a result, of interactions between human beings and non-human beings, which gives the researcher confidence to conduct more research on these works and put a discussion on awareness of the environment and preservation of environment in South Asian studies.

2.1 Past Research on Amitav Ghosh and *River of Smoke*

All scholars talk about the environmental harm, the researcher found a gap from all these books and articles that there are so many problems related to nature that have discussed in this chapter but none of these scholars discuss outcomes and after effects of the colonial misbehavior on native people and on their ancestral land. Moreover, this study explore the possible solutions to handle these problems and overcome all of the above stated environmental issues. She gives discussion on the forced displacement of local inhabitants, suffering of natives and changing of profession due to the cruelty of authorities.

She picks these missing elements from selected texts *Thinner Than skin* and *River of Smoke*.

Additionally, all the critics discuss poppy production become the reason of land destruction, the researcher picked up another side of the environmental issues caused by opium like the overproduction of poppies leads to the building of factories, which would worsen the health and environmental effects of the people's rural, rustic lifestyle,

Ravi Bhushan in his research article “Deconstructing Human Society: An Appreciation of Amitav Ghosh’s *Sea of Poppies*” focuses on Ghosh’s use of reality in the book to illustrate the mandatory poppy farming in India and calls him a “master storyteller” (Bhushan 2). He emphasizes on the brutality of British imperials, who during the nineteenth century exploited Indian factory employees and farmers. Bhushan focuses only on the brutality of British colonizers with local population. However, he ignores the cruelty of native traitors, who exploit their own masses for the greedy pockets. The researcher sheds light on this unique element in the current study.

Fazel Asadi Amjad and Peyman Amanolahi Baharvand trace the unfavorable effects of colonialism on indigenous subjects in one of their research essays “Detrimental Impacts of Poppy Monoculture on Indigenous Subjects, Plants, and Animals: An Ecocritical Reading of Amitav Ghosh’s *Sea of Poppies*” (2019). It is the reality that by turning enormous swaths of Indian land into mounds of poppies, the British made the provinces of Bihar, Malwa and Banaras the primary localities for opium growing. Though cruel colonizers were interested in marginalization of “wretched natives” (Amjad and Baharvand 7). Amjad and Baharvand center their discussion to reflect the enforced poppy cultivation that took place in India while it ruled by British invaders. They also try to represent colonization as an ecocidal endeavor. However, the disastrous practices that British conquerors imposed in India had a devastating impact on the native population and the environment. In fact, just colonizers are exploited and marginalized the natives “for imperial profit” (Amjad and Baharvand 9). They may be the most miserable people whose life have destroyed the most by the oppressive measures adopted by the British invaders. As a result, the British colonial power used their authority to rule over helpless indigenous through enslaving them on cargo ships.

In addition to that, Priyanka Maral, R. Sowmiyalatha, and M. Kalaiarasan continues further to highlight the suffering of local population especially native women in the above-mentioned article by Amjad and Baharvand. Amjad and Baharvand quote Maral, Sowmiyalatha, and Kalaiarasan in their article; they investigate the oppressive position of native women in Ghosh's first book of Ibis trilogy. In their opinion, the illiteracy of native women is completely unrelated to their marginalization. That is to say, despite of her degree or educational background, no women is safe to victimization. They also examine the miserable lives of the indigenous women, such as, "Sarju, Heeru, and Munniah who serve as enslaved laborers in a schooner, named Ibis" (qtd. in Amjad and Baharvand 6) and consider them "the powerless natives" (7), which transports opium between India and China. They describe Ghosh as an archaeologist who looks into the condition of aboriginal people who are repressed. They claim that Ghosh criticizes not just colonizers but also local agents such as Bhyro Singh who violate their nation and collaborate with invaders in the genocidal treatment of oppressed indigenous people. Bhyro Singh is referred by Sowmiyalatha and Kalaiarasan as the embodiment of traitors who used by colonizers to terrorize their poor brethren. All of them focus on miseries and sufferings of native women but ignore the sufferings of indigenous men and over all mistreatment of authorities with indigenous communities in the selected works. This is the unique element that researcher focus on in this research. The researcher draws attention to the physical abuse and torture inflicted on native workers by institutional sectors and their servants, as well as authorities' cruel control over native people by seizing their lands and convincing them to grow opium.

Nilanjan Bala in a 2017 study titled as "Theme of Wandering and Return in the Novels of Amitav Ghosh", examines the general concept of roaming and returning throughout Ghosh's writings. This essay aims to identify the characteristics of migrants that contribute to their identity formation, roaming, and returning to their native cultures. Ghosh tries to encourage the "bearer of the fearlessness" and evoke "freedom" (Bala 3) in them. The era in which we currently live is one in which there are frequent movements and big changes, with the immediate result in setting in which boundaries are less stable. A variety of cultures and communities has emerged because of migration. This mixing has sparked the development of mixed identities with many facets. The trip motif tied to Ghosh's main conceptual concerns in this setting. These overreaching conceptual concerns

not only give special emphasis to a significant amount of work that reflects on a core group of themes related to the topic of travelling and return, but also encourage readers to view history from the perspective of a novel.

Bandari Suvarna's essay "Man and Nature: Victimizing Each Other: An Ecocritical Analysis of Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*" (2017), is another piece of academic writing. In this essay, Suvarna examines the constant interdependence and baffling connection between Mankind and the Environment. The modern era is a staunch witness of an intriguing paradoxical relationship between humans and the natural world. Human beings and the environment are involved in a vicious cycle. Though it is the fact that somehow "man and modernization are two major contributors" (Suvarna 3-4) of the ecological destruction. The delicate yet complex relationship between humans and the environment however, well planned by numerous fictional works throughout the world and only a few of Indian works discuss this theme. One of those novels in which Ghosh sensitively depicts a structure of smart ecology with its vanishing flora and fauna with suppressed people who struggle to reclaim an environment from the entire strangeness of the biosphere.

"An eco-critical analysis of climate change and the unthinkable in Amitav Ghosh's fiction and non-fiction" (2018) by Suhasini Vincent, raises a voice against human greed that could wipe out the world. Vincent points out that human are physical agents that not only challenge and disrupt the face of planet and alter the environmental conditions, but also have an impact on modern beliefs, because crisis of climate become the reason of cultural crises. Vincent in this article discusses materialistic attitude of human beings that cause climate and cultural crises but do not share the remedies to solve these crises.

Ekta Bawa and Dr. Shaifali Arora in their research article "An Ecological Sailing towards Amitav Ghosh's Ibis Trilogy: A Historical Perspective" (2022) reflect "British misrule" (3) concerning opium growing, which is detrimental and renders the local landscape devoid of agricultural products. Additionally, compulsory opium production has wreaked havoc on both the environment and human existence, leaving the native communities with no choice but move to another region. Consequently, poppy farming becomes mandatory for local farmers. The researcher of the current study pays attention to

the deadly effects of poppy on entire local populace and their animals.

Binayak Roy in an article “Exploring the Orient from Within: Amitav Ghosh’s *River of Smoke*” based on the chosen novel *River of Smoke* show the Western imperialistic attitude and hegemonic position. In her essay, she exposes the colonial power’s cruelty to nature for petty self-interest, as well as the West’s subjugation politics and the East’s resistance efforts in an inclusivediachronic narrative of history that includes the unheroic wretched of the earth. They are “cloaking their greed” behind the “rubrics of free trade and internationalization of commerce” (Roy 7) aimed to expose the markets of China to the nasty opium trade, for this they call Indian people orientals, whose territory is used by imperials. They dispute over their personal profits that lead to industrial growth along with ecological and societal disaster. So, they trained the individual’s mind for this beneficial business that is profitable and constructive to the British government.

In her research essay based on the same novel, *River of Smoke*, Nesha Sabar describes the landscape of India, where excessive opium production necessitates the construction of factories, which would result in greater health and environmental harm to people's rural rustic lives, which they had been presiding over for centuries. It alludes to the aftereffects of “natural calamities” that ~~are~~ the area “around desolate and completely disorder” (Sabar 6). Opium is harmful to one's health and the environment since it emits a powerful magical haze that entranced Deeti on her wedding night. As she felt, she is drifting “away from this world into another that was brighter, better” (Ghosh 35) and more rewarding. In this research article, Sabar talks about the deadly effects of opium only on human health but ignores the land exploitation due to the opium. The researcher of this study sheds light on this issue and highlights the disastrous effects of opium on the natural world.

Similarly, Aliya Shahnoor in her research article titled as “Sailing through the Environmental Warfare- An Ecocritical journey towards the Heart of Amitav Ghosh’s *Ibis Trilogy*” (2018), analyzes the imperialistic attitude who planted the seeds of ecological calamity throughout the South Asian region. However, she states, “underneath their trade”, lies the thirst for obtaining illegal income and “usurping political power”, (Shahnoor 2). She wishes to reflect various aspects of history through the perspective of the downtrodden,

rather than the dominant and oppressive forces in society.

Another article “ecocriticism in Amitav Ghosh’s *River of Smoke*” (2019) by Priyanka Maral also represents ecological imperialism and addresses the ecological aspects of opium production in India during the British colonial period. It is about the opium traffic from Calcutta to Canton, China, and its harmful effects on not just humans but also on nature. People got illegal access to opium, which led to addiction, death, and exploitation of the land and people. She attempts to demonstrate the “mindset of destroying” the third world country's “ecology in the name of free trade” (Maral 4), which shows European hegemonic attitude towards third world countries.

In another research essay titled as "Eco Marxism in Amitav Ghosh's Ibis Trilogy" (2018), Ms. Lavanya and T.S. Vathanam explains Amitav Ghosh's novel *River of Smoke* from an Eco Marxist perspective, which deals with the tendency of capitalists to destroy nature and exploit the marginalized in the process of increasing their profit. Lavanya and Vathanam emphasize how the lifestyle of individuals who were dependent on the environment directly ruined by materialistic behavior of capitalists for profit. With the help of political influence, military power, and disciplined markets, the globe navigates an ecological disaster. As a result, to grow their trading economy, the British/Colonial people exploited native rights and rejected the bond between people and their land.

Sreelatha discusses the bond between people and nature in his research essay “Ecological Consciousness in the Novels of Amitav Ghosh” (2018). He notes that bond of humankind needs to interact with the natural environment constantly, because they maintain a close bond with it. To maintain their reliance on it, humans have altered the environment to suit their requirements. Natural disasters became a major issue on a global scale because of this. Sreelatha also highlights Ghosh’s writings a few other issues such as ecological problems, exile, and cultural upheaval, which become the reason of natural disturbance. *The Hungry Tide* and *River of Smoke* are two Ghosh’s novels that Sreelatha examines to draw attention to the theme of ecological and environmental disasters. Additionally, it demonstrates how humanity and the environment intertwined; using plant life, “rivers, mountains, and animals” (Sreelatha 6). These books discuss the destruction of the natural environment from the viewpoint of non-human beings such as “trees, rivers,

mountains, and animals” (Sreelatha 6). Therefore, maintaining environmental balance is today’s top priority. Sreelatha has more focus on the land exploitation but ignores the oppression of native population and exploited the local people’s way of life. The current study considers this aspect of suppression of local populace in Indian culture.

All the past research done on Amitav Ghosh reflect how the local landscape affected and oppressed by British colonizers. The past research on Ghosh’s novel *River of Smoke* discusses how industrial growth lead to environmental damage. The critics discuss the unending developmental growth and criticizes modern development schemes that cause devastation and imbalance of environment and ruining the entire biosphere and South Asian countries’ ecology to satisfy their greed to make profit. All these critics focus on the environmental damage due to developmental expansion, but they ignore the next step of these ecological crises, which done by human beings. Without thinking and considering the terrible consequences, they alter natural surroundings into barren land, huge buildings, roads, and training camps etc. The discussion chapters of the current study describe the next step in controlling this environmental damage and further suggest the possible solutions, which the selected text reflects to develop a balanced and healthy environment. It discusses eco-centric perspective that will enable individuals to reflect deeply on the catastrophe and identify a remedy for universal well-being and ecological balance.

2.2 Past Research on Uzma Aslam Khan and *Thinner Than Skin*

Sanobar Hussaini sees the novel *Thinner than Skin* through different angles. In her research article “Environmental Consciousness in Uzma Aslam Khan’s Novels *Trespassing* and *Thinner than Skin*” (2018), she criticizes the development of increasingly urbanized cultures, where “deleterious impact” (Hussaini 1) of metropolitan living has a negative impact on both human society and the environment and become the reason of environmental damage. She tries to analyze how rising levels of capitalism, trade, business practices, and industrialization have changed and redesigned Pakistani cultural norms, which has caused a suffering of locals in urban centers. Various components of pollution discussed in this article, including pollution in the air, contamination of water, and contamination of land. The increased use of marine resources expands cities’ growth and commercial trade, which highlights the differences in how people have evolved over time

in the areas of “environment, ethnicity” (Hussaini 1), and gender roles.

Faiqa Rashid in her research article “Image Making of Pakistan in Fiction After 9/11: Critical Discourse Analysis of *Thinner than Skin* by Uzma Aslam Khan” (2018) discusses hegemonic attitude of developed country like America and reveals several layers of reality relating to secret power controls of this country over third-world countries. They consider third world countries’ culture and its places as “conflict torn and full of sorrow in overall a dismal picture” (Khan 10). She declares in her research essay that Third-world countries, such as Pakistan, had no choice but to accept the role allocated to them by the United States in the fight against terrorism, despite the severe repercussions. Rashid stresses “on the hegemonic roles and discursive power” (7) of America on South Asian countries such as Pakistan. The article examines how rising antagonism has affected the state of peace in Pakistan.

As defined by Faiqa Rashid, the influence of views on speech in administrative and socio-cultural attitude in Pakistani community. From her vantage point, the communication formed by several ideologies, both governmental and sociological. Through the civilized speech of the West, as presented by an outsider in the book *Thinner than Skin*, the research has acquired various dimensions. The author Uzma Aslam Khan did not see Pakistan as a place where modern and conventional concepts coexisted in social implementation. The West (America) has portrayed as the most advanced, most educated, empathetic, and evolved, while Pakistan, a progressing nation, has been associated with the rhetoric of the vulnerable, impoverished, impolite, and uneducated. In this research project, which was conducted against the backdrop of the war on counterterrorism and Western misconceptions about Pakistan and Pakistani women, it was revealed that America held a powerful position in global politics and sociological foundations whereas Pakistan held a weaker one. Pakistan also comes seen as a male-dominated, traditional nation where women held little importance. Rashid thinks that Khan has portrayed this type of Pakistani women in a way that parallels the Western idea of the dominant West and the lower, barbarian east (which in Khan’s novel is Pakistan). America’s two principal concerns are the fight against extremism and the miserable state of Pakistani women.

Through the civilized language of the Westerners, which given in the novel by an outsider, this investigation has placed the picture of Pakistan to the forefront. Although Khan has been successful in capturing the confused state of Pakistan in the conflict on fear, as it also depicted in various newspapers, the woman portrayed in the novel does not reflect the contemporary sophisticated and well-educated woman of Pakistan. As a result, the novel revealed Pakistan's place in global affairs while also combining Khan's fictional universe with the real world of the military, especially considering recent community developments.

Another essay "The Landscape of Vertical Wilderness: Environmentalism and a Sense of Place in Uzma Aslam Khan's Novel *Thinner Than Skin*" Monazza Makhdoom and Munazza Yaqoob counts the environmental sensitivity through the Himalayan landscape and social injustice against natural environment and its population. Through the depiction of mal development, human manipulation of nature and tremendous oppression of the lower classes, the article focusses on America's hegemonic roles and discursive dominance, which demands an "obnoxious picture of Pakistan" (Khan 12). The author analyses the link between society and non-human nature in the Himalayan and Karakorum regions, including the world's most gigantic glaciers and stunning landscapes characterized as "vertical wilderness" (Makhdoom and Yaqoob 1) and investigates a feeling of place rife with regional, local and external challenges that obstruct the local landscape and environment on a regular basis.

Muhammad Shoaib, Sobia Mubarak and Shahzeb Khan examine the novel from a capitalist perspective, they discuss materialistic nature of capitalists in one of their research projects titled "Towards Ecopedagogy: A Fiction-based Approach to the Teaching and Learning of the Environment" (2020). According to the authors of this article, humankind's interaction with the physical and living environment is deteriorating under the present capitalist and neoliberal economic systems. They state that capitalists are depleting natural resources for their personal gains and forget that "nothing is comparable to the rich satisfaction" (Shoaib, Mubarak and Khan 4) of thick forest, grazing cattle in the fields and availability of pure water. Similarly, it confirmed in Rob White's book *Crimes against Nature Environmental Criminology and Ecological Justice* that "forests be exploited for their commercial potential" (White 12) as well as marks the decline and degeneration of

human society and culture. It tells us a story about human greed and the desire to manipulate nature for profit.

The novel *Thinner than Skin* appeals Asfandyar Shah, Sajjad Ahmad, and Umar Sajjad in their essay “L’écriture feminine: A Study of Uzma Aslam Khan’s novel *Thinner than Skin*” (2021) from a female perspective focusing on the sensitivity of female characters. The female body parts not only add sensuousness to the story and make it more feminine. They describe that novel gives strength and power to women and encourage them to accomplish independent “position in society” (Shah, Ahmad, and Sajjad 4). Since the novel comes from a female author, it has grounded all the feminine aspects in the novel profoundly. This research essay gives voice and strength to American woman Farhana, who looks courageous, but it does not pay attention to thorough investigation of native female characters. The researcher has discovered that this article does not take notice of native female characters like Maryam’s daughter Kiran, who drowns in the lake and faces tragic death due to the immature and careless behavior of Farhana and her lover Nadir. The researcher explains this gap in this research project.

In an article “Ethnocentrism in *Thinner Than Skin* by Uzma Aslam Khan: A Postcolonial Perspective” (2021), Muhammad Ilyas Mehmood, Muhammad Imran Shahid and Sajid Abbas investigate the ethnocentric attitude of West towards the East and affect people in the East, notably Muslims and Pakistanis. They consider themselves as superior and a civilized nation, and they only care about demeaning Pakistan and portraying its people as primitive, uncivilized, and dangerous to them. However, Mahmood, Shahid and Abbas claim that the desire for “the dark side of the Pakistan to justify” (5) their authority and supremacy is evidence of the ethnocentric and stereotyped mentality of the Western world. Furthermore, their unfair and biased mindset do not accept the natural beauty of Northern areas like mountains, valleys, and glaciers that is why they demand “dirt and misery” (Khan 11) of Pakistan.

Mahmood, Shahid and Abbas in the same research article “Ethnocentrism in *Thinner Than Skin* by Uzma Aslam Khan: A Postcolonial perspective” quote Razestha Sethna. Sethna praises Khan for accurately portraying a place of spectacular natural beauty and claims that Khan steers the mountains “beauties of the glaciers, rivers, and valleys”

(Mahmood, Shahid, and Abbas 3) with the talent of an experienced investor. She described *Thinner Than Skin* as a story about feelings of pain as well as affection as the writer tries to portray how families collapse without warnings and people are molded by their surroundings. Sethna acclaims that the female characters in Khan's novel *Thinner Than Skin* are ferociously clever, sensual, brave, and not to be stamped on. The protagonist's search for pleasure, which is stolen away from them for reasons that are not immediately apparent and reasonable in the novel *Thinner Than Skin*, which is written in extraordinary, all-encompassing writing and explores race, identity, and doubt.

In their research paper, "Ethnocentrism in *Thinner Than Skin* by Uzma Aslam Khan: A Postcolonial Perspective" (2021), Mahmood, Shahid and Abbas cite Andrew Tolle, who defines Khan's book *Thinner Than Skin* to readers, especially westerners, as a documentary that not only highlights the Pakistan's northern area's beauty but also dispels presumptions. In their opinion, Khan interacts with Western readers by offering a visitor's viewpoint on Pakistan with a Pakistani society's viewpoint on foreign tourists. Everyone in the novel *Thinner Than Skin* is "representing a sense of dissatisfaction" and the novel also emphasizes many typical cultural and spiritual stereotypes, as well as the "uncertain situations" (qtd. in Mahmood, Shahid, and Abbas 3) of northern culture. Even though, Islamic extremists frequently invoke Syed Ahmad's martyrdom to recruit Gujjars, who disapprove of the Pakistani government's allegiance to American and Chinese business because it causes "tensions on the Northern Border of Pakistan" (qtd. in Mahmood, Shahid, and Abbas 2-3).

Hafiza Muarifa, Masood Mirza, Tazanfal Tehseem, Tarim Masood, Naima Tassadiq admire northern beauty in their essay "Appraising Environmental Beauty of Northern Areas of Pakistan through Rhetoric Expressions in Uzma Aslam Khan's *Thinner Than Skin*: An Eco linguistic Perspective" (2022). They advise tourists to take in the natural beauty of Pakistan's northern regions since they embraced by magnificence and have a healing impact on developing strong bonds between people and their motherland. Muarifa, Mirza, Tehseem, Masood and Tassadiq thus look at Uzma Aslam Khan's use of rhetorical language and her main characters Maryam, Farhana and Nadir, and their mindsets, qualification, and participation with the natural world. This research article has limitations because it only tries to highlight the appealing nature of Northern locations through

appraising designs, excluding the other parts of Pakistan and the hospitality of its residents. Yet, the research is important because it aims to recognize Pakistan's natural beauty and focuses on its hospitality and "positive attitude" (Muarifa, Mirza, Tehseem, Masood and Tassadiq 1) of native people to fill a gap. This study sheds light on the kind nature of local people, who welcome the tourists and provide food and shelter to them as Nadir adore their hospitality by saying they love to "bake bread for us" (Khan 115).

In a research essay "Tracing the Margins: An Eco-spatial Study of Khan's *Thinner Than Skin*" (2022) Ali Usman Saleem, Zunaira Iftikhar Azeem and Safana Hashmat examine the chosen work *Thinner Than Skin* through a "Eco-spatial perspective" (1) to learn more about the environmental and socioeconomic situation in Pakistan's northern regions. Due to "unstable spatial production" (1) and regional unfair treatment, they focus on social division and environmental disparities in Pakistan's northern regions. Furthermore, they demonstrate that "in increasingly urbanizing societies", governmental authorities "plan and design the expansion and development of space" (Saleem, Azeem, and Hashmat 10), with discrimination and unfairness, in accordance with their own political and social pursuits. As a result, spatial other people, urban strangers, and cultural and environmental disparities are produced. To pursue capitalist goals, humans must reconsider how we relate to the environment and how we use space. Authorities disturb the beauty of Northern areas for "spatial production in which spaces are planned" (10) according to the city planners.

Therefore, critics discuss different elements in Khan's novel *Thinner Than Skin* such as the hegemonic position of first world countries on South Asian countries like Pakistan. Furthermore, they describe the growth of urbanization and industrialization into the natural setting, reveal the negative impact of this progress on natural environment, and place their attention to some oppressed groups of the South Asian cultures specifically Pakistan. In addition to this, they place their attention to the troubles of western characters including Nadir and Farhana. However, in most of these articles, critics highlight the maltreatment of land and people but neither pay attention to the displacement of native groups nor the troubles of these people, which they face after migration from their ancestral land. Particularly, they face marginalization and persecution from institutional authorities, the researcher discusses these missing elements in the following study, which is the gap of

this research study that most of the critics ignore in their research essays. This study goes a step forward and investigates the selected works for the exploration of the potential remedies to overcome environmental destruction.

2.3 Research Gap

In this chapter, the researcher reviews some of the literary works that are currently available on ecocriticism, environmental damage, and the cause of destruction, the justification for ecological harm in a social and traditional context. This review of the literature gives the backdrop and foundation for the researcher's analysis of the primary texts in the upcoming chapters. Additionally, the researcher has addressing key issues connected to her topic in this section of thesis, specifically environmental harm, the causes of ecological harm, the suppression of indigenous communities, and finally explored the possible solutions to handle the aforementioned ecological issues. The researcher critically examines the exploitation of nature committed by human beings, in Northern Valleys of Pakistan and the landscape of India in *Thinner than Skin* (2011) and *River of Smoke* (2012) under the framework of ecojustice, as the selected novels have not been explored through this lens previously. The current study endeavors to analyze the chosen works for the exploration of the possible solutions to overcome the environmental damage.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is qualitative in nature with a significant emphasis on discussion rather than predetermined interpretations and primarily based on the textual analysis of the selected novels *Thinner Than Skin* and *River of Smoke*. Textual analysis is all about making sense of the text. In this study textual analysis as a research method is guided by Catherine Belsey. Hence, the selected works by using the methodology of textual analysis is aiming at providing solutions to the factors that lead to environmental degradation. This study employing *Thinner Than Skin* by Uzma Aslam Khan and *River of Smoke* by Amitav Ghosh as selected works intends to highlight different factors that lead to environmental degradation and aims at offering possible solutions. In the textual analysis, the researcher intends to follow three steps. Firstly, the researcher will read the text carefully and highlight the relevant content to understand language and symbols, which presents in texts to gain information and make sense of the text thus it provides new information and needs the active participation of reader into it as Catherine Belsey says, “it reveals something new” (Belsey 163). Furthermore, the content will be interpreted and get some concrete meaning or message out of it because according to Belsey “there is no such thing as pure reading because interpretation always requires extra-textual knowledge” (163). This can be done by viewing the process of interpretation as the impact of a relation between a reader and a text. This study is theory based thus it is qualitative in nature and falls under interpretive paradigm.

The goal of this research is to offer an eco-critical assessment of the non-human environment's importance and presence in South Asian fiction in English literature and vice versa. It draws attention to analyze the environmental issues that gives rise to ecological and human suffering in the texts and will concentrate on solutions to overcome environmental degradation and importance of eco-balancing, often known as environmental balance.

By analyzing the selected works *Thinner than Skin* by Uzma Aslam Khan and *River of Smoke* by Amitav Ghosh, the study first highlights the environmental harm/criminology

committed by human beings and then the possible solutions the selected works suggest in the context of northern areas of Pakistan and natural landscapes of India. The selected texts analyzed within the theoretical framework of environmental criminology and ecological justice propounded by Robert Douglas White and Reed. F. Noss, with a key focus of environmental degradation and preservation of the environment. Moreover, it deals with brief insight into the method and theoretical viewpoint related to the understanding of persecution and sustainability surrounded in environmental criminology and ecological justice.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

Environmental criminology focuses on concerns relating to environmental harm caused by anthropocentric activities. This study will explore the remedies/strategies, which may offer for negotiating the harms caused by anthropocentric ideologies. As Rob White argues in his book *Crime Against Nature Environmental Criminology and Ecological Justice* (2008) “the well-being of planet Earth is indeed imperiled” (White 5) by Anthropocene and technical advancement. So "there is a need for action, both in an academic and a practical manner" (White 2) to resolve this persistent stumblingblock as R. F Noss claims in his article *The Spectrum of Wildness and Rewilding: Justice for All* “political or practical” decisions are the foundation of “land protection” (Noss 175). Hence, precautions must take to protect the environment, people and nonhuman creatures from potential harm. To bring about major reform in this field, a combination of legal practice, active management, academic research, environmental action, and concerned individuals will be required.

The current study will look at ways to counteract the harm that is occurring to the biosphere, species in general, and humans in particular, in a scientifically measurable way, to reduce crime fear, increase public safety, and maintain ecological justice. The main area of the present study resides on three different approaches: firstly, on notions of “environmental harm”, secondly, “environmental justice” (White 4) or “ecological health” (Noss 169), and finally “species justice or animal rights” (White 4). They emphasize the importance of responding to environmental harms, regardless of their precisetyp, origins, or dynamics. However, the ideal way to achieve this will always be a point of contention.

Firstly, the present study discusses the environmental criminology and uncovers the anthropocentric involvement that is causing havoc on the modern world's ecosystem and imperils all living things as well as the environment. As White claims, that humanity's impact on the biosphere in the twenty-first century is unprecedented in human history, concluding, and “environmental issues” that “transformed into environmental problems”, designed by “nature-human” relationship (White 4). Similarly, R. F Noss is also concerned about “a human-altered landscape” (Noss 170) and managed grassland, which humans destroyed for the name of development. Indeed, humans are the main participants of environmental change in the modern era, as they are responsible for much of the damage of ecological systems, as White iterates individuals and groups from a wide range of backgrounds and socioeconomic situations perpetrate environmental crime. However, human beings as a group modify their immediate environments for their personal gains because who have the power to inflict the most damage.

Furthermore, technical advancement, transnational businesses and other huge commercial organizations destroy the entire biosphere “in the course of building freeways” (White 11) and disturb nature for their personal perspectives. However, industries are involved in disturbing the environment as White claims, “disposing of waste” (White 131) lead to environmental crises like it “pollutes air, water, and soil” (White 46). These entities' actions are constrained by a political-economic environment that is inherently criminal. These are systemic incentives to cause environmental damage. So, human actions and their productions are responsible for reshaping landscapes, polluting air and soil, which become the reason for plant and animal species to dwindle and altering “the contours of the atmosphere and the level of the seas” (White 46).

Thirdly, the current study provides an illustration of the adverse effects of expanding urbanization on communities and human habitats. Hence, the rise of urbanization is one of the main reasons in diminishing the ecology and natural resources as it destroys the managed forests, grassland and cut down the “protected trees” (White 240) to modernize and expand the “road networks” (Noss 170).

Fourthly, humiliation of “native species” (Noss 176) is involved in degradation of the marine environment and mistreatment of animals as they kill the innocent species and

use their bones for nourishment of their private farms and gardens as White confirms that to provide “feed for the farmed fish”, so many “fish are killed” (White 242). The waste of farmed fish is thrown into the ocean, which becomes the reason for polluting the marine environment and growth of fungus.

For ecological balance, we need to address some core issues rather than being constrained by the legal-illegal division. We must highlight the prior importance of urgency connected with ecological sustainability to achieve ecological balance. Firstly, White believes that collective decision-making is essential rather than over-reliance on technical competence and subjugated to government edict. It is a practical approach to delivering justice and entails evaluating 'damage' in a variety of circumstances and guises, regardless of legal status or current institutional legitimacy. In his concluding chapter, White proclaims, the greatest “way to respond to crime is to prevent it before it occurs” (White 234). Moreover, foresight and wisdom “political or pragmatic judgments” (Noss 175) are required, and eventually require the testing of current social and political norms and bounds, to alter current activities for a fair and clean future.

Secondly, a wide range of actions and awareness of “environmental law enforcement” will be required the most when “environmental harm grows” (White 181). As government, give orders to viceroys of every province to take some serious steps against criminals like if criminals do not follow the law, put them into jail, and take over their properties. Therefore, White and Noss propose some general methods that can help in overcoming ecological chaos such as planning strategically, regulation in its various guises and involving a myriad of mechanisms is the general method used to control environmentally destructive activities and to limit the damage done. Likewise, Noss also detects the “political or pragmatic judgments” (Noss 175) and national legal mechanisms can “minimize environmental harm” (White 193) from human interference and restore the ecology. He further demands ecological health through managed environment and the natural landscapes with “minimal human interference” (Noss 170) because we cannot stay very long without these locations. However, Self-regulation has risen to the top of the list of favored current strategies among governments and businesses alike. Indeed, for the greater good, humanity must safeguard and preserve specific environments and species.

Thirdly, there is a need to acquire specific forms of expertise in areas such as concerned “individual humans” (Noss 179), likewise White points out “investigation, detection, evidence gathering, enforcement, public advocacy, and policy development, especially for environmental regulators” (White 278) are required to change the future. More effort is undoubtedly required in determining the position of experts in relation to certain stakes. In the same way, Noss further talks about some requirements to protect the ecology such as the maintenance of the ecology, and fertility of land depends on “removal of expanded roads, re-establishment of ancient drainage patterns, and other missing ecosystem components and restoration of native vegetation” (Noss 175).

Fourthly, we can achieve environmental balance by “dwindling the human population” and urbanization in the natural areas because in the end, it is “the only mean to bring justice for all species” (Noss 179). Therefore, to prevent possible environment harms perpetrated by the presence of humans in these areas, rules and regulations are required (e.g., securing the native species by providing protected areas, “wetland areas to lay their eggs and raise their young” (Noss 170). They would deteriorate to extinction in the absence of safe natural settings. Likewise, according to White healthy environment is possible by “burying human waste and clearing rubbish out of the locations” (White 236). Moreover, the sound of automobiles and airplanes fade the chirping of birds and whistling of leaves. By overwhelming the growing urbanization, human innovations and technology, we can enjoy the “brooks babbling, wind blowing through the trees, bird and bug songs (Noss 167).

Consequently, it is our moral responsibility to overcome natural disturbance and restore the ecology because most of us require frequent interaction with nature because its protection would result in a healthy environment, as Noss believes that we should “do more to restore overall biodiversity” (173). A healthy environment is necessary for our own survival as well as the survival of future generations and ecosystems because “respect for nature is intrinsic to the well-being of humans” (White 47).

3.2 Key Concepts of the Theory

The researcher selected two theorists Robert Douglas White and Reed. F. Noss for the current study and focused on their contribution and enrollment in environmental balance. In this research study, the researcher used two main concepts “environmental

harm” (White 4) and “environmental justice” (White 4) or “ecological health” (Noss 169) from White’s book *Crime Against Nature Environmental Criminology and Ecological Justice* (2008) and Noss’ article *The Spectrum of Wildness and Rewilding: Justice for All*.

She highlights key concepts of the theory and study which explain the reasons of ecological disturbance like disgrace of managed grassland and humiliation of “protected trees” (White 240) and “native species” (Noss 176).

Moreover, she discussed different steps that theorists provide to solve the above-mentioned ecological issues and maintain ecological health. They argued that if we need healthy and balanced environment we have to minimize “human interference” (Noss 170) and “to restore overall biodiversity” (Noss 173) we require “political or practical” (Noss 175) decisions which are foundation of “environmental justice” (White 4).

This study addresses particular problems related to the causes and remedies for environmental damage. These particular acts against nature include a wide range of crimes against nonhuman animals, the natural world, and humans. Additionally, there is a need of an increasing awareness of the interdependence of social and environmental issues, to the point where issues like impoverishment, sickness, the rights of indigenous peoples, the exploitation of nonhuman animals, financial crimes, state corruption, and other issues frequently seen as being inseparably connected.

This study also deals with wide goals such as in the sense of applying and producing conceptual understandings of damage, exploitation, enforcement of laws, political and pragmatic decision-making, concerned expertise, and social control that are pertinent for a criminological approach to environmental challenges. Furthermore, the necessity of multidisciplinary techniques requiring collaboration between various experts and academic specialties is acknowledged in the investigation of environmental harm.

3.3 Framework of the Study

The main concern of the present study is to look at the anthropocentric ideologies and practices, which have become the reason for environmental disturbance in Uzma Aslam Khan's *Thinner Than Skin* and Amitav Ghosh's *River of Smoke*. It gathers information from the above stated novels and conducts a thorough examination of

their settings, scenes, and characters. It examines ecological issues, the interaction between humans and nature, and the role played by anthropocentrism in fostering ecological violence by upsetting the balance of nature. The aim of the study is to show the role of Anthropocene in disturbing the natural environment and highlights the anthropocentric practices, which become the reason to persecute the natural world and analyze the texts by tracing possible solutions, which may help mitigate environmental harm.

The analysis chapters, therefore, focus on the different ecological threats posed by the Anthropocene and provides potential solutions to overcome the environmental harm and maintain ecological justice. Rob White and R. F Noss, theorists of this study also emphasize that three different approaches are the core focus "environmental harm, environmental justice, and species justice or animal rights" (White 4, Noss 169).

The analysis conducted on two levels. The first section of the analysis focusses on exploitation and will focus on these ecological problems, such as the anthropocentric control of the environment, they play in influencing the world around them cause immeasurable harm. Additionally, the researcher discusses the abuse of animals, urbanization, and deforestation.

The second section of the analysis focusses on some possible strategies, which the selected novels offer including individual and institutional role in protecting the nature, adopt possible methods for survival without harming the wildlife. Moreover, the chosen works forewarned against land exploitation and values land ethics. This section of the study respects and recover natural resources, including land, water, forest, and biological variety.

The last chapter or conclusion section of this study emphasizes that it may not be possible to stop the advancement and exploitation of natural resources, it is undoubtedly possible to proclaim their right to exist. However, this study found that it is only by discarding excessive anthropocentrism and embracing land ethics, man can save the land and prevent ecocide. Therefore, humans must change their perspective from being the oppressors of the land community to being basic members and residents of it in order to protect the environment and its creatures.

CHAPTER 4

TRACING ENVIRONMENTAL CRIMINOLOGY

This chapter focuses on the analysis of the selected novels, *Thinner than Skin* and *River of Smoke*, published in 2011 and 2012 respectively, that reflect the natural surroundings and native subjects in settings that are compatible with the ecocritical ideology. The unfair treatment of nature, the environment and native people as shown by Uzma Aslam Khan and Amitav Ghosh appears to be distinctly but intricately linked due to their marginalized and subordinated presentations of cultural contexts, supported by the ecocritical ideology. Khan and Ghosh, also happen to be subconscious supporters of environmental balance, offer this connection plenty of space in their works.

4.1 Anthropocentric Ideology

It is a fact that human, being in a position at the center of the ecosystem have become the leading cause for the degradation of the natural surroundings, and this section of the analysis focuses on the harm that the Anthropocene has done to the environment by dealing with stark examples of destroying the natural world. The chosen works *Thinner than Skin* and *River of Smoke*, depict many types of environmental toxicity, poisonous consciousness, human insecurity, and they bring up specific environmental issues like animal and species injustice as well as deforestation. In *Thinner than Skin* by Uzma Aslam Khan, the author highlights a middle-class family at risk from harmful environmental exposure in a rural and pastoral setting. For example, Khan mourns over the free grazing as she states, "free grazing lands are turned to state farms" (Khan 214). Free grazing is no longer an option, and residents now charged a high price to graze their sheep and goats on their own property. Robert Douglas White "investigate environmental harm; therefore, we need to first explore core concepts and overreaching perspectives relating to the relationship between humans and nature" (White 4-5). However, it is clear that the native people have suffered from severe poverty and starvation. There is no place for these farmers to voice their disagreement to this injustice, even though their complaints and disputes are inevitable. Many farmers are compelled to leave their communities in search of better employment, but many still struggle with poverty and hunger.

In Amitav Ghosh's Ibis trilogy, ecology is given a prominent role. Ghosh has concerned for the environment found in practically all of his literary works, particularly in the Ibis trilogy. Ghosh relishes the opportunity to depict the opium battle on a vast scale in a realistic manner. The Opium War was one of the most significant events in India's imperial history. Amitav Ghosh's combination of fiction and history is one of his distinctive techniques. In his fiction *The River of Smoke*, Amitav Ghosh expresses his deep concern for the environment. It is about the opium traffic from Calcutta to Canton, China, and its harmful impact on people and the environment, which is destroying the environment. The events leading up to the Opium War's outbreak (1839-42) covered in the book *River of Smoke*. China's limited demand for European goods causes an influx of silver from Britain and the opium trade as a result. The English used free trade as a pretext to profit from the opium trade. As evidenced by the commissioner's open letter to Queen Victoria, it was once an affluent class indulgence but subsequently developed into an addiction that killed people and exploited the land and its inhabitants. It is paradoxical that despite discussing the free commerce of opium in China, the British outlawed the drug in their own nation due to its negative effects. The British fought a war because of growing pressure from the Chinese government. Bahram Modi kills himself because he lost money-submitting opium. Not only he disregard the harmful effects of opium, but he also abandons his religious convictions in order to get money.

Ghosh tries to argue that man's petty greed and self-interest are to blame for the destruction of nature. European colonial powers, particularly the British East India Company, arrived to Southeast Asia to trade. However, beneath their commerce was the desire to make illegal profits and usurp political power. It claims that the human race has conducted a massive uncontrolled experiment on the world. The imperial power planted the seeds of ecological disaster throughout the region, and in his novel *The River of Smoke*, Amitav Ghosh meticulously conveys environmental unrest and the subject of environmental degradation. The opium trade was used by the British administration to ruin the Indian economy. Their desire for an opium seeds "rose day by day like a haunting beast, converting the entire territory of North India into a colorless and joyless place" (Ghosh 1). As a result, in order to grow their trading economy, the British/Colonial authorities exploited human rights and rejected the bond between people and their land.

It is important to both acknowledge and challenge anthropocentric control of the environment, for the role humans play in influencing the world around them cause immeasurable harm. This freedom is something that Ghosh in his novel *River of Smoke* highlights on multiple occasions, for example, the character of British naturalist Fitcher Penrose, whom Ghosh called a “plant hunter”. Fitcher is interested to hunt China’s most precious plant golden Camellia. China is a location, which is “nation gifted with plants” (Ghosh 95), where botanists from all over the world can find a wide range of flora due to the abundance of plant species and golden camellias; the botanists required this unique plant by using images of them. White similarly claims in his book *Crimes against Nature: Environmental Criminology and Ecological Justice* that “humans are the primary agents who cause most of the harm to ecological systems” (4) and his point becomes stronger when Noss further emphasizes on the requirement of wilderness that should be “largely free of human control” (169).

Fitcher Penrose, a botanist, is one of those characters in Ghosh’s text whose actions are putting "the natural environment and all living species at risk" (qtd. in Makhdoom and Yaqoob 4) because by collecting Chinese plants for European trade, the native ecological system is being put out of balance. This illustrates how human greed and exploitation of nature has a tangible negative environmental impact. Fitcher's main goal is to find the golden Camellia, a rare plant with therapeutic benefit, and bring it to Britain's Kew Garden, one of the world's greatest botanical gardens. Yet his motivation is not altruistic, he wants to gain fame, honor, and wealth because of his many trips to Canton in search of rare and valuable plants and his success in obtaining and bringing those plants to Britain. He harvests China's rare natural riches and market them successfully to the west. The plants he picks for the Chinese aficionados in the trade include Mexican orange, “antirrhinums, lobelias and georginas” (Ghosh 77) from Mexico and “Gaultheria shallon, a plant both ornamental and medicinal” (Ghosh 77) from the American Northwest. Through the sale of various flora species, he earns a huge profit. He gets a large profit through the sale of seeds, cuttings, saplings, and horticulture equipment. He makes an organization, Penrose and Sons Nursery in Falmouth, Cornwall, which is known for its illegal Chinese consignments and selling of plants. Numerous "varieties of plumbago, flowering quince, and winter sweet has gained enormous popularity in the British Isles" (Ghosh 35) are the imported plants.

He just intends to trade plants in order to earn from this venture.

By generating revenue from the sale of native plants and animals, this form of environmental exploitation exposes the terrible actions of humans who harm the environment for their own selfish gain. Pramod Kumar in his article "Significance of Nature and Ecocriticism in Indian Fiction in English Literature" similarly points out the "villainy and greed" (Kumar 4) of humans against nature through the depiction of human manipulation of natural world and exploitation of the lower classes. With their actions they disturb the whole surroundings as ecology is currently described as the relationships between organisms and their surroundings, including humans, animals, and plants. Because of how dependent they are on one another in this relationship, every disruption in one causes a disruption in the other.

Moreover, Penrose presented as an ecological imperialist who is so preoccupied with his goal of profiting from plants that he invents anything to make his job simpler. He is so dedicated to his mission that he disregards other living things in order to advance himself as Fitcher introduce himself "I'm Frederick Penrose- they call me Fitcher. I mean 'ee no harm" (Ghosh 42), but his actions deny his words, and he becomes the reason of harm for rare flora and fauna of progressing countries. He traps the birds, kills them, removes the fat, and then places the fat in a separate container for decomposition. When he proposes rewards for bird capture, his act reveals his greed and selfishness. There would be a frantic scramble among the sailors, and they would immediately dive at the birds to capture them since Fitcher promises big rewards for capturing them. It happens whenever an exhausted auk or gull came down to the brig to rest. The bird's remains are not even free he uses it for plant's nourishment. As the bird's body adds to the compost barrels that hang from the Redruth's stern, every component of the bird utilizes. He uses fish bones and meat bones when creating compost. He disregards the significance of a small fish's life out of self-indulgence and self-aggrandizement. It is the cruel nature of Fitcher, who disturb the sea animals for his own profit, Fitcher's savage attitude reflects in bad treatment with plants and innocent animals, for him that are like meat products, or any other commodity that might sold for a money in the open market. To catch fish in great quantities, two or three fishing lines are continuously trailing behind the brig. He composts the fish's head, bones, and tail, for his garden plants. Additionally, a great deal of little fish he takes

and buries intact in potting soil.

Another character in *River of Smoke*, a British botanist named James Cuninghame, during his visit to China found that the Chinese were adept at portraying plants, trees, and flowers in a realistic manner. They created dry gardens because it was difficult to ship live specimens from China to Europe at the time. Instead, they gathered seeds and further form of "collection, the painted garden", (Ghosh 122), and "painted images of plant life being shipped along with real botanical loot" (254). The time will show that we can only view photographs of the plants today and that they once lived on the earth, but we can already see how they are vanishing. Similar information about the entire extinction of the *Camellia Sinesis*, a rich botanical variety from China, mentioned in the book *River of Smoke*. Humans are destroying the plants and trees for their everyday needs, which is a land genocide that is taking place in front of their eyes and in their immediate surroundings. The British are able to loot China's diverse flora and are successful in doing so. They are actively involved in killing and destroying the local flora, animals, cultures, and populations of people. They are responsible for hunting the China's Holy Grail the Golden Camellia, a rare flower thought to be able to cure consumption and "accounting for an enormous proportion of the world's trade and one-tenth of England's revenues" (Ghosh 101).

The British have a double standard because they are ruining the ecology of South Asian countries while also maintaining the world's largest botanical garden to protect endangered species imported from third-world countries and wreaking havoc on their flora and wildlife. However, the destruction of the environment caused by the sale of native species of animals and plants exposes the horrific demands made by Westerners (human beings) and disproves their claim to be on a "civilizing mission". The current study reveals the cruel nature of Anthropocene who are not interested in botany, for those plants are "no different from doorknobs, or sausages, or any other object that could be sold for a price on the market" (Ghosh 81). They are simply trespassers out to exploit the land for their own profit. They want "so much money to be made, there is sure to be a lot of corruption" (Ghosh 228).

The chosen works display a group of individuals who systematically damage the natural world in an ecocidal manner. Their anthropocentric rule cruelly disregards all of nature, as well as non-human entities like land and water, as well as women, children, local residents, minorities, convicts, and the mentally ill. Their expanding economic desire disturb natural land like different characters including Mr. Lancelot Dent, Mr. John Slade, Mr. Jardine, Burnham, Captain Elliot, and other foreign opium merchants, refuse to heed China's sincere request to stop the inflow of opium.

The discussion highlights human's greedy nature and self-interest is the main cause of environmental harm. Since the beginning of time, we have abused nature in the name of progress, destroyed the environment, and planted the seeds of ecological calamity throughout it. Ghosh points out this cruel nature of man towards natural environment, since the production of food crops, which are essential for the survival of the local population, but poppy farming disturbs this agricultural cycle and is adversely affected and destroyed the land and the fertility of the ground. In earlier period, the harvest season used to be a joyful period when resources for restoring their homes and guaranteeing food security were available. These people currently experience the cultivation of opium as a devastating blow:

“in the old days, the fields would be heavy with wheat in the winter, and after the spring harvest, the straw would be used to repair the damage of the year before” (Ghosh 29).

Now the trend changed the season of food crops transformed

“with the sahibs forcing everyone to grow poppy, no one had thatch to spare-it had to be bought at the market, from people lived in faraway villages, and the expense was such that people putt off their repairs as long as they possibly could” (Ghosh 29).

Therefore, poppy farming becomes required for the local farmers. In this sense, the land is becoming less fertile since it is a "deadly poison" (Ghosh 432) that kills countless people while depleting the resources of the land. As a result, there has been a significant change in the production process – from food crop to cash crop. Therefore, these folks must thus endure the misery that causes debt and migration. As a result, daily shortages of necessities

have an impact on the community's environment and residents' quality of life. However, environmental degradation and exploitation caused by humans are clearly visible. These damages include land degradation, a lack of water, and a decline in soil fertility. Thus, anthropocentrism deprives native people of their rights to their own land, and nature and human exploitation rend, break, and scar their relationship with their environment.

In *River of Smoke*, one of the main characters Deeti regrets the harm done to the environment. She remembers the happy times she had as a youngster when it was soothing simply to gaze at the scenery along the Ganges River's side. She is no longer able to enjoy the varied flora of her youth when the earth covered in rich foliage. She becomes irritated due to the absence of vegetation in her surroundings: "where were the vegetables, the grains?". Deeti is surprised due to the lack of greenery and feels "except for the foliage of a few mango and jackfruit trees, nowhere was there anything green to relieve the eye," and argues "everyone's land was in hock to the agents of the opium factory" (Ghosh 129). Undoubtedly, this is "a work of man, a botanical Babel" (Ghosh 36) that modifies the landscape and make it contaminated and unclear. Monazza Makhdoom and Munazza Yaqoob similarly points out in their article "Environmental Discourse: A Comparative Ecocritical Study of Pakistani and American Fiction in English" the lack of clean atmosphere is clearly felt in this impure and such a dirty "environment interspersed with fumes of smoke and drugs" (3).

Human's mistreatment of the environment continues through the oppression of the local land (and people) by the authorities' demands that farmers grow poppies in large amounts. In order to feed their voracious opium appetite, the British exploit the natives, not to mention how growing poppies on such a large scale violates the land. The development of cash crops, most notably opium, the drug whose sale provided the empire with enormous revenues, pushed the agricultural production to shift from the production of staple wheat, pulses, and other food staples. This new farming style disturbs and disrupts the traditional agricultural cycles, which covered a sizable portion of India. This harmed sustainable methods of land use severely and irrevocably, subjugated and uprooted their peoples, replaced their agriculture with cash crops that led to addiction and death, and did all of this with the force of the gun while masking it with rhetoric about civilization and divine purpose.

4.2 Poppy Production as an Agent of Environmental Harm

Ghosh is successful in illustrating the environmental issues caused by opium through the narrative vignettes. The story reveals how opium manages to surge into peoples' lives and cause chaos, with a focus on the daily lives of farmers. Speaking more specifically about the harm to the environment, poppy production and its impact on the biosphere and people is serious. Ghosh uses ecological damage to describe the entire pain that Deeti experiences. The discharge of the potent magical smoke that entranced Deeti on her wedding night is harmful to human health and the physical environment. She feels like she is "slipping away from this world into another that was brighter, better, more fulfilling" (Ghosh 35). The overproduction of poppies leads to the building of factories, which would worsen the health and environmental effects of the people's rural, rustic lifestyle, which they have taken great pride in for centuries. Even the dust that releases from the opium factory poses a major health risk, like residents who live nearby sneeze.

The same issue also affects the animals. Kalua's ox starts to sniff as it reaches the factory where Deeti and her daughter are working. However, anglers have developed a unique method for getting many fish. Baburao claims that without being choked, no life form can survive on this river. Due to the smoke, the opium pollution has affected the entire river to such a great level. Without considering the possibility of revival, they are harming other creatures. Ghosh ironically describes the commanders and troops who are supposed to protect them are all lost in the haze. Ghosh very aptly states that "there cannot be a greater evil than this" (123) and declares it "a plague from which no one can escape" (476). He illustrates that even river protectors become lost in the sea of smoke. He expertly depicts the effects of this lethal substance on both humanity and non-human beings. Every living and non-living thing nearby have been affected by the smoke in some way, and this has resulted in an overall ecocide.

Moreover, the Ganga River near the opium factory littered with shattered ceramic gharas (pitcher), the round-bottomed containers used to transport raw opium to the factory, which is another terrible act by humans to harm the environment. The opium contained in the crockery made it simple to catch fish. This section of the riverbank is unique because hundreds of broken earthenware gharas strengthen the ghats around the Carcana. The bank

is constantly “crowded with fishermen” because to the prevalent misconception that “fish were more easily caught after they had nibbled at the shards”, (Ghosh 92). The opium factories are massive and are sprouting up like mushrooms close to the bank of the Holy River Ganga due to discharge of trash in it. Ghosh urges and expresses care about the divine Ganga. He draws attention to the reality that it has also fallen prey to contamination as because of the cruel discharge of opium manufacturing waste into it. From an ecological perspective, Ghosh primarily concentrates on natural life forms, including both human and creatures other than humans, but also on aquatic organisms since water bodies historically used as trash dumping grounds. Opium factories have easy access to the river to let the waste material out, polluting the river, as Kalua discovers when he arrives at Ghazipur in the afternoon. Bahram, a Mumbai-based opium businessperson, cast a sad glance at the Pearl River, where they had often travelled, but which now contaminated due to the Creek Opium Factory that had built nearby. Every factory contributes to the deposition of diluted and decomposed elements that have direct access to rivers, polluting the river and the people who live nearby, which has a significant impact on their health and sanitation.

Likewise, Ghosh points out the similar issue in the *Ibis Trilogy's* first novel, which is *Sea of Poppies* where we have background of Deeti and Kabutri, who have observed the foul odor that has permeated beyond the factory's boundaries and discharge factory's waste in the river. Therefore, it is obvious that the emission of various gases has a significant impact on the environment in places where the use of technology and communication is quite widespread. As Bahram in *River of Smoke*, peering out of the window and points out, man's celebration and innovation in disturbing the environment

“with a display of fireworks; rockets were arcing upward, each seeming to travel on two planes simultaneously through the sky, and over the misted mirror of the lake's surface” (Ghosh 363).

It is certain that these gas emissions have harmful impact on the environment, as Bahram, a business-oriented person, also believed that air pollution would result in a variety of issues for the entire human species.

River of Smoke highlights the increasing effects of man's innovation and industrial development in the form of environmental degradation and the decline and degeneration

of human society and culture. It depicts abuse of nature by humans as the cause of environmental catastrophes, which is the focus of the current study. Ghosh points out these activities like open sewers and tidal streams, factories, and Nullah are responsible for extensive environmental damage. It is one of the main channels for garbage in the city. According to White, if the waste produced by factories are the “industrial effluents [dumped] into water catchments and river systems, then it is not only humans who are affected” (White 19) but all the living creatures this process disturbs either its humans or animals. And as the international traders Mr. Jarden and Mr. Innes in *River of Smoke*, who resides in the raucous, free-spirited creek factory in Fanqui-town notice, the tides at this location frequently dumped the remains of dogs and piglets in the trash-filled muck. The flies are constantly swarming, and the smell of vomit is intolerable when you see them. The installation of the opium enterprises pollutes the Pearl River in addition to damaging the land and people with their trash. The degraded garbage and diluted materials get direct access to the river. This shows the pollution's terrible negative consequences on locals' health and sanitation. This type of human behavior disrupts the entire ecosystem since it does not spare even the woods, which are responsible for producing the oxygen that humans breathe. Ecosystems destroyed, and groundwater, air, and soil used as sewers to dispose of industrial garbage – and this contamination of the river water has consequences for the more social aspect of the human world as well. For example, the Ganga River which transported sewage created by opium production downstream, is used by the local peoples to purify themselves of unclean objects in addition to worshiping it as holy water. But now the actions and decisions of human beings have made the holy water unpleasant as White proclaims that “human practices that destroy, re-channel or pollute existing freshwater systems” (White 19) – both literally and figuratively. Ghosh laments the current state of the River Ganga because it now used for the cremation of "carcasses of dogs and piglets which creates flies' buzzing, creating a vomit" (Ghosh 318) and is the source of an offensive odor as well as the repository of various chemical effluents that further pollute the river.

In *Thinner than Skin*, Khan compares the condition of green valley with disturbed valley. She draws attention to environmental degradation by describing the beautiful imagery and greenery of the Northern Valley, which have altered now, in the old days the

valley, was beautiful and clean but now it is polluted and unclean. She draws a distinction between the lovely, vibrantly green Valley and the dirty, troubled valley. She picks up the natural imagery to expose the polluted atmosphere of Northern Valley as well as to describe the beauty or amazing ambiance of the area and terrain. She contrasts the older and later conditions of the valley by illustrating the Northern Valley. The Valley, which was beautiful and charming when Kiran was a youngster, is now hideous and revolting. Environmental contamination is destroying its appeal and impact. Later, when Kiran was an adult, she returned to the valley, but it had changed and no longer inspired her, as Irfan describes it: "A lake so clear and bright, but hideous underneath" (Khan 138). Consequently, this is due to the pollution that the local industries and residents have produced. This serves to demonstrate how industrialization harms the environment. It is now responsible for eco-disturbance. Through this, the researcher is concentrated on the negative consequences on the environment caused by humanity's unreasonable behavior and response. For optimal growth, progress, sustainability, and wealth, the globe needs an environmentally friendly environment.

4.3 Exploitation of Animals: Injustices against Birds and Fish

Exploitation of species is a further issue that highlighted in this study. Anthropocentric practices also affect animals in addition to the environment. Humans frequently engage in excessive hunting of animals for their meat, bones, skin, and fur. The Redruth's flock of chickens serves as a powerful illustration of how humans treat other species unfairly by killing them for no other reason than taste or flavor. Ghosh rightly states, "for the table, every part of it put to use, including the feathers and bones, which were cut up into tiny bites" (Ghosh 92). Likewise, Ghafoor informs Maryam in *Thinner than Skin* of the brutality of "people of the steppe", they enjoy

"the head of a sheep and divided it between the families. Ears went to the children, eyes to those who would not see, tongue to those who would not speak" (Khan 214).

Rob White agrees with this behavior of "humans to exploit nonhuman animals as commodities to be eaten, displayed, hunted, and dissected for their benefit" (White 21). Additionally, Ghosh highlights that Chinese people cook and eat fins of shark and nest of

birds, which are both pricey luxury items for them. It is the priciest cuisine in China, and they were referred to it as yan wo. According to the character Serang Ali, Chinese people adore “stuffed animals” (Ghosh 424) like fried frog, grilled chicken, and soup of sparrows and turtle. These foods make animals more helpless.

Speaking more about the terrible attitude of humans, who pose to the aquatic creatures "when a breathing porpoise is found entangled in the sea-net, instead of releasing it, Penrose slaughters it and makes use of its fat" (Ghosh 98). As humans displace species and limit species richness, their actions endanger wildlife. The utilization of animal parts is also widespread in China, as Zadig Bey revealed to Robin Chinnery, who said that paintbrushes produced there formed from the hair of various beasts. Similar to this, Fitcher killed various species of marine, sea and land birds and crushed their bones with hammers before using them as fertilizer to feed his garden. Paulette cannot imagine that bones of animals can use

“in this way, but Fitcher assured her that this was a common practice in London where butchers made good money by selling the byproducts of their trade to farmers- not just bones, but also hair and horns” (Ghosh 92).

Furthermore, Serang Ali described the cruel actions of people when they sell the nest of an endangered bird in China for 80 troy pounds of gold and the villagers demolish the nest for financial gain. It demonstrates how the overexploitation of any species can cause its demise and how a wild environment destroyed when there are not many different species there to maintain it.

4.4 Human Intrusion in Environment: Industrialization and Urbanization

Urbanization is another damaging step of humans, which affects the greater regional habitats, and human activities are responsible for this environmental damage. Cutting forests to build infrastructure for the growing population and to produce resources to manage other urban areas is the worst enemy of natural resources. The greenery and well-spaced jungle have changed into huge buildings and roads. According to the perspective of Ghosh, the Mauritius forest

“where once there had been orderly, well-spaced trees and broad, picturesque vistas, there was now a wild and tangled muddle of greenery” (36).

This vanishing greenery and “wild places” according to Noss are “damaged to varying degrees by humans” (167). Fitcher, the main character of the narrative is surprised to see the mountain with its desolate appearance and declare it “a work of man, a botanical Babel” (Ghosh 36). He is surprised and laments the loss of the forest's beauty, saying that "there seems nothing beyond but jungle that lacks beauty in it and shortage of plants”, (Ghosh 36-37). All of the damage linked to the mechanical entry of people. It becomes obvious that humans kill and disregard their environment in the reckless pursuit of advancement, endangering their own survival in this process. To embrace urbanization and “alienation from nature...and extensive loss of wild lands is a great social injustice” (Noss 168).

In the same vein, Khan’s novel *Thinner than Skin* describes the loss of the natural resources that once provided daily "sustenance to the inhabitants” (Khan 124) as well as the loss of the beauty and glory of the Northern territories, which have degraded into a desolate and "parched" environment (Khan 101). It demonstrates the trend of increasing urbanization, city life, and its negative effects on local communities. Human’s cruel mindset has destroyed the trees and nests of defenseless birds. This expanding industrialization and urbanization is responsible for harming human homes and communities as well as deteriorating natural surroundings and resources.

Pakistan, which is currently experiencing several environmental problems because of expanding industrialization, urbanization, and overpopulation, is the sixth most populous country in the world. Urbanization is a result of population growth, unemployment, and stress on agricultural lands. Although urbanization disrupts this way of life as in Pakistan, air pollution, urbanization, and population growth are all accelerating at an alarmingly high rate, which is causing a decline in environmental quality. Due to widespread migration from other rural areas, the cities are overcrowded and mostly made of concrete with little in the way of flora. The rapid urbanization of Pakistan has negative effects on the urban environment's quick degeneration as well as the poor people's squalid living conditions. All sorts of pollutants, including smoke, noise, smog, dirt, dust, and heat released into the city. Vehicles, slum areas, open gutters, rubbish and trash piles, industrial

waste, and chemical smoke are the main contributors to this pollution. There is a severe lack of resources like electricity and water shortage. As a result, Pakistan suffers from a variety of environmental issues, such as a polluted water supply, a lack of basic infrastructure, deforestation, and the discharge of dangerous chemicals created by humans into the soil. Therefore, the metropolitan areas as shown in the chosen novel *Thinner Than Skin* illustrates the increasing effects of industrial development in the form of destruction of the natural landscape and signify the downfall and degeneration of human society and culture. Monazza Makhdoom and Munazza Yaqoob point out in their research article “The Landscape of Vertical Wilderness: Environmentalism and a Sense of Place in Uzma Aslam Khan’s Novel *Thinner Than Skin*” that human beings are “constantly thwart the local landscape and its ecosystem” (1). They used forest areas for their personal conveniences and felled countless trees for the construction of buildings, bridges, and train tracks. The present debate demonstrates that the environment and regional cultures in Pakistan’s northern regions are in danger of having negative effects.

Economic uncertainty also considered as the cause of social and ecological imbalance and ecological degradation, the interaction between people and the land suffers in an era of environmental instability and sociopolitical upheaval in Pakistan. Additionally, the country’s ecology and people are both at risk due to poor infrastructure, insufficient economic resources, and a lack of government management to protect both private and public spaces from environmental contamination, a complete lack of waste management services, and insufficient political supervision to address these issues. White refers to this environmental deregulation and “the casual force for environmental degradation is ultimately human” (White 46). A gradual infiltration of environmental fallout into modern Pakistani society in the form of different pollutants, contaminating diseases of the “water, land, and body, mental and psychological” illness works best in marginalized communities that framed as “potential risks” (7) in Monazza Yaqoob and Munazza Makhdoom’s article “Environmental Discourse: A Comparative Ecocritical Study of Pakistani and American Fiction in English”. Hence, Pakistan’s urban filth and deterioration reflected in the environmental rhetoric about the country reflected in Khan’s work. For instance, these anthropocentric actions are causing the Northern regions natives’ way of life to be burdensome and lifeless. Unless the valley served as nothing more than a training camp for

them, they had no interest in the local surroundings. This study discusses its loss, including the loss of magnificence and purity due to forces' attacks. It continues to highlight incidents involving drone attacks, military training facilities and automobiles, terrorist organizations, and bombings in the valleys in addition to lovely descriptions of enormous glaciers, swift-moving rivers, the snow-capped mountains of Nanga Parbat, and valley myths. However, armed and terrorist organizations have endangered traditional lifestyles founded in ancient times and ecological balance as well as the beauty of the valleys. It provides information on the militants who have vowed to wage a holy war against "Sunnis in the valley" (Khan 254) as well as the police and armed forces that are looking for all these terrorists. The forests and valleys are of minimal significance to any of these organizations other than for erecting training camps.

Acts like "bomb blast, suicide bombs" (Khan 92) have harmed the grandeur of the northern regions and destroyed the majesty of the valley. As a result, this place now poses difficulties for immigrants returning to their home country. They feel "their world is black and white" (Khan 299) when they return to their home regions. The local population has been marginalized and displaced as a result of environmental aggression and social injustice, and man whom Khan referred to as "bad ones in every flock" (247) who is responsible for the entire situation. Drone attacks cause devastation in the Northern Valley, and the sky appears to be pale and "completely lost" (Khan 296). It has an impact on Northern Valley's current peace situation. This human interruption affects the local communities whose lives have been "taken over" (Khan 299) by these organizations and who have noticed a decline in the valley's sense of tranquilly. Thus, it draws attention to the unfortunate condition of the northern areas as Sanober Hussaini in one of her articles "Environmental Consciousness in Uzma Aslam Khan's Novels *Trespassing* and *Thinner Than Skin*" states "the tragic condition of the northern landscapes of Pakistan on account of increasing militant encroachments" (7). It is further crucial to remember that military operations and technical penetration disrupt the natural environment. The local population does not welcome the influx of foreigners, who are the cause of devastation and mistrust, and they "want the tourists to leave" (Khan 70). People in small villages are mirroring the reaction against American meddling in emerging economies to seize the abundant resources of these indigenous areas.

However, another character, Ghafoor, who contests the romantic, rural, indigenous nature of Maryam, is able to demonstrate complexity, confusion, and disturbed cognition. The two characters' care deeply for one another, yet Maryam's commitment to nonhuman habitats stands in sharp contrast to Ghafoor's detachment from nonhuman environments, as he engages in harmful actions like a bombing campaign. On the other hand, Maryam has an affection for natural surroundings. She loses Ghafoor as he is involved in illegal activities, who the villagers mainly refer him as "Fareebi: the fraud" (Khan 139). Fareebi (cheater) is the Urdu word for cheater. He is determined to have ruined various areas in the valley while engaging in illegal activity.

Moreover, human innovations also pose threats to the extinction of rare flora and animals. Due to this disgusting human behavior, birds are also disturbed. In the Northern valley, they are uncomfortable due to the unpleasant noise of airplanes and jets. These unethical activities disturb the serenity of the valley, and the birds are not able to fly because of the procession or training "they simply sat, the nightingales and the doves", and wait "for the planes to stop their din", (Khan 121). The airplanes, military weapons, and dron attacks and fighter jets are active in their military parades and harm the area's healthy atmosphere or beauty. For them nature vanishes as a symbol of sustenance and a code of spiritual restoration. Noss is also disturbed from this unethical behavior of humans because according to Noss "they are not interested in protecting smaller, more modified wild areas that serve as critical habitat for wild species" (169).

In a similar manner, Uzma Aslam Khan compares the residents of the Indus Valley to turtles in her another novel *Trespassing*, who are unable to live their natural lives due to fear of the coastline's lights and the encroaching human population. The displacement of the native people, who drive from their ancestral way of life and cut off from their territory and source of subsistence, reflects in the trajectory of the turtle. Consequently, the torturing of the sea turtle and the destruction of its eggs serve as allegories for the massive corporations that misuse earth's resources and uproot underprivileged indigenous populations. They have overstepped the bounds of commerce and control the sea and sea creatures like fish, and even the native people's lives by their technical progress. Therefore, the Kaghan valley, which is the most prominent region of Pakistan, has undergone considerable changes because of the influx of foreigners, city inhabitants, and outsiders.

The debate that follows is concerned with the ecological risks as Joni Adamson states in her work *Environmental Justice* that anthropocentric practice “puts the natural environment and all living species at risk” (quoted in Makhdoom and Yaqoob 4). This exposes the cruel and unpleasant act of authorities exploiting the residents of Northern Valley. They consistently disrupt the environment and local surroundings. The text draws attention to the condition of oppressed groups like shepherds in Pakistan's north who endure tremendous marginalization and oppression by authoritative people. Pastoral joy and way of life are incidental to these civilizations, as is the economy that surrounds them, making it susceptible to environmental deterioration processes. Their survival is weak and based on insignificant resources of the northern valleys and meadows throughout the region of Himalaya. The use of the mountain ranges by herdsmen and shepherds, who depend on the agricultural grazing of sheep and goats, their survival, is in danger.

However, humans are coping with a great deal of cultural loss and sorrow under new pressures and face a serious risk of traditional and cultural alienation due to fast changing economic, ecological, and political situations in the past and present. This study highlights that shepherds in mountain valleys are living in the worst possible circumstances and regarded as strangers by the authorities. Their socioeconomic situation is on the verge of catastrophe. Before the British Raj, the Rajas and princes ruled over the hilly areas, this area did not control access to grazing lands and woods that used for hunting and fishing. As one of the lead character, Maryam’s mother explains the situation that British colonial administration imposes this legacy of land exploitation on local inhabitants. She explains her daughter that “the British colonized your lands and instituted a forest policy for their greedy pockets!” (Khan 221), deprive the native communities from free grazing and “the herders were caught between the government and the militants” (Khan 226).

4.5 Role of Institutions in Harming Animals

Governmental authorities are also involved in abuse of animals like goats and sheep; they gulp local landscape and convert them into private farms. As Uzma Aslam Khan States, "free grazing lands are turned to state farms" (214), so they replace the local sheep with Australian sheep to line their selfish pocket. Free grazing is no longer an option, and residents charge a high price to graze their sheep and goats on their own property.

Moreover, Sanober Hussini in her article “Environmental Consciousness in Uzma Aslam Khan’s Novels *Trespassing* and *Thinner Than Skin*” similarly points out that using intimidation tactics against tribal members, the government enforced: “fines on pasture lands that have been the traditional grazing grounds of tribal and in the practices of intimidation employed by forestry inspectors to exploit the tribal” (Hussini 6).

Additionally, the herders were punished by giving "four thousand rupees, as well as a weekly supply of milk, curd, butter, and ghee for an indefinite period of time" (Khan 185). They occupied people’s property and "instituted a forest policy for their greedy pockets!" (221). By imposing high fees on grazing and tree cutting, they are able to generate a sizable amount of income at the expense of thousands of people who depend on access to natural resources for their existence and advancement. Another character Ghafoor then complains the injustice done to his people, saying, “look what they do to us here, killing our sheep, fencing the land, looting our forests” (219). Maryam’s mother expresses her grief about her land “everyone is welcome but us”, (219).

However, the native people have suffered from severe poverty and starvation because of their source of income. There is no place for these farmers to voice their disagreement to this injustice, even though their complaints and disputes are inevitable. Many farmers are compelled to leave their communities in search of better employment, but many still struggle with poverty and hunger. This research sheds light on the physical and ecological traumas that Pakistani society's lower classes, who are firmly embedded in the “Karakorum's womb”, (194) must endure. The unpleasant behavior of the government continues with natives of Northern Valley. The new government policy that replaced the native thin sheep that are accustomed to living on the hills of Himalayan meadows with Australian sheep has caused yet another setback for the Gujjar tribe of nomads. The government's sheep exchange scheme puts the locals in danger, and the Chitral valley witnessed the extinction of a good horse breed. Horse breeds like the Nukra, Kaliani, Yarknad and Bharsi, that arrived in the Fergana valley centuries ago were now “extinct” (Khan 207) and would never be seen again. R. F Noss raises his voice in favor of these unique breeds, who need proper nests and wilds, which should be “free from direct human disturbance” because it is obvious that “without secure wildness, they would decline to extinction” (Noss 170). Likewise, Khan further highlights that sheep and goats are highly

symbolic to the mountain communities. These animals used as a source of food, protein, milk, butter, and meat, but they also represent life and fertility in the animist worldview. The native sheep, according to Maryam, "yielded twenty kg of meat and two kg of wool as compared to the foreign Australian sheep that yielded twice the amount that native sheep provided" (Khan 190) they implement this Programme in order to make a significant profit. Despite the expense, they were first satisfied with the sheep, but the government is restricting their ability to roam the countryside and graze their sheep in their own lands. In addition, this was the way to killing the native sheep and forced the indigenous community to buy Australian sheep. However, these Australian goats are not as robust as the local sheep. In Pakistan, the government make and support developmental Programmes and try to implement these policies and programs, such as deregulation and privatization, under neo-liberal administrations that are wreaking havoc on the general populace in the name of efficiency, stabilization, and productivity.

In the same manner, Armed forces and businesspersons are acting unethically by colonizing other species rather than assisting the local economy. Indigenous rulers and authorities abuse the indigenous communities and undermine decent ways of life. According to Maryam's mother: "It was the Angrez who invented the whole business", (Khan 251) to generate the handsome profit and "bound the herders forcing them to pay a grazing fee and tree cutting fee. Before the Angrez, they had been free to graze and chop. And the sedentary folk had been friendly" (Khan 251). The inhabitants still perceive Angrez (the Urdu name for Englishmen) as colonizers, and any governing body acting in this manner is representative of the British colonizers.

Thinner Than Skin alludes to a past incident of mistreatment of native Pakistani inhabitants and their ancestral lands. Government, militants and the criminals, all robbing both the land and the livestock of the local populations while the government artificially breeds animals for profit. While Maryam respects nature like family, the government uses it without any harmony or cooperation. The researcher analyses the oppressive drive of economic progress in which just immediate financial gain is the prevailing value. The forced relocation from the highlands to the lowlands displaces people and affects wildlife. To pillage the ecosystem is the advanced decline, in other terms. In a similar manner, unethical development initiatives have allegedly impeded the natural advancement of

civilization. The current study places human beings at the center for environmental damage and the depletion of natural resources, which deals with stark examples of the decreasing of natural resources. The local populace severely impacted by tree cutting and habitat loss. The timber mafia causes significant destruction in this area. The illegally powerful groups "tore down the old trees and poisoned the Gujjar dogs and fenced off the lands" (Khan 195) pose a threat to the local populations that resist. Local communities experience natural imbalance due to the exploitation of natural resources for development purposes, such as building more highways. The North of Pakistan is experiencing a dire resource shortage.

Ghosh also highlights this issue of authorities who involved in damaging their own farmer's livestock and fertile land by imposing poppy cultivation on them. It is mandatory for everyone to grow opium seed and sell it to the authorities on cheap prices for trade. After some time, local lands, looks like "shortage of plants" (Ghosh 36-37) and food crops. Deeti becomes irritated due to the absence of vegetation in her surroundings:

"where were the vegetables, the grains?". She is surprised due to the lack of greenery and argues "everyone's land was in hock to the agents of the opium factory" (Ghosh 129).

The researcher attributes a variety of variables for this intricacy, with the government playing a major role in addition to the grazing cycles as an important user of the mountain resources. If their sheep find grazing on terrain that is no longer accessible to these free people of the valleys, the forest department punishes them. The sheep and cattle falsely blame for the degradation of the soil by the forest ministry. These herders cannot provide their flock with enough grass during the harsh winters since they are dependent on their animals. Not because of the livestock, but rather because of the "land which was easily destroyed in the floods", because "it had no trees" (Khan 212) so the fields in the valleys are starting to degrade. This land destruction is serious and for the future sustainability local inhabitants demand from the government, the public, and commercial organizations to take more serious action in light of this situation. The highlands' local communities and herders maintain abhorrent living conditions that imperil both their present circumstances and their ability to maintain them in the future.

4.6 Deforestation

In this study, deforestation and biodiversity loss also examined as two crucial indicators of environmental violence. This study explores crucial environmental views on the widespread deforestation in northern areas of Pakistan and local resistance to the escalating violence. The destruction of the ecology by “Fareebi” (cheater) (Khan 174) is the cause of this environmental persecution in the valley. This study demonstrates the degradation of Northern Valley's most intriguing locale, for example after 50 years for each tree these mature trees cut and use in the name of developmental projects like “road-building” (Noss 172). Similarly, Khan mentions,

“the people of this valley must wait fifty years for each pine, deodar, and fir to reach maturity. Only after maturity could each be cut” (Khan 217).

Reserved Forests were established by the Forest Department fifty years ago, and these departments collaborated with contractors to cut the “protected trees” (White 240) and store wood for export. Monazza Makhdoom and Munazza Yaqoob in their article “Environmental Discourse: A Comparative Ecocritical Study of Pakistani and American Fiction in English” significantly contributes to modern man's increasing desire for separation from the “natural environment and an attachment on the contrary to the unnatural world of technologies and emissions” (5). The timber mafia's systematic clearing of forests and corrupt forest authorities' participation in the crime are major contributors to the progressive increase in the pace of deforestation in the northern valleys. The forest inspector is directly involved in the crime who “did not allow the timber mafia to fell the trees near his home, only those further away” (Khan 206).

On the one hand, deforestation in the Himalayan valleys has negative economic repercussions, while on the other, the loss of forest reduces water retention, which increases soil erosion and causes flooding in low-lying areas. The two main protagonists in the story, Ghafoor and Maryam, reflect on the depressing situation of this valley's declining environment and the circumstances of the herders. Maryam is busy to “pick her beloved juniper tree to rest on, the one whose leaves she smoked, whose bark she burned, whose berries she roasted” (Khan 228). This study shows these state-oriented commercial strategies pose a threat to inhabitants' way of life and the environment they inhabit.

4.7 Conclusion

This section of the Analysis brings attention to human violations of nature and ecosystems, and reflects a society of city inhabitants, landowners, and dislocated minorities. It illustrates the basic tension between nature and culture by showing the nurturing, delicate presence of Mother Nature on the one hand, and the soothing warmth of the land betrayed and repressed by human violence, on the other. It brings out specific environmental problems like deforestation and injustice to certain species. It addresses ecological crises, such as deforestation and open sewage systems, and concerns environmental degradation. It draws attention to the inadequate sanitation that is the cause of different viral infections, environmentally contaminated and poisonous surroundings. In the selected works, *Thinner Than Skin* and *River of Smoke*, both Khan and Ghosh describe risk scenarios that emphasizes deforestation and the devastation of both environment and humankind as well as the results of the anthropocentric actions. Although anthropocentric ideologies are contaminating and polluting the local environment, which is a sign of accelerating environmental deterioration, they also seem to be the cause of potential risks to both the living things and the nonliving atmosphere at the same time. Both Khan and Ghosh's novels depict how human intervention and widespread commercial activity produced poisonous rendering the environment unsafe for human habitation. The state has granted permits to foreign businesses to operate their industries without any provisions for the indigenous population. This human activity and global company severely affect region's residents, and push them out of the valley, and into the plains where they considered intruders. Thus, South Asian writers are leading a struggle against rubbish, dirt, and contamination, which they thoroughly portray as hazardous, by looking at numerous tropes of pollution and technical hazards.

CHAPTER 5

REPRESENTATIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

This chapter traces the remedies and solutions, which may help negotiate the environmental harm. It values human contribution in the maintenance of the natural world and raises our understanding of the importance of maintaining the natural environment and all of its inhabitants in order to create a healthy atmosphere. White summarizes his discussion by emphasizing on three different elements for environmental sustainability and healthy environment “protection of biodiversity...protecting endangered species and ensuring human happiness” (23). Noss similarly talks about preservation of “big wilderness and wide-ranging, species” (169). According to him, wildness covers “land, water, and species diversity” (169).

5.1 Preserving Nature: Other Side of the Picture

There are some major characters in Ghosh’s *River of Smoke* and Khan’s *Thinner Than Skin* like Kiran, Maryam, Nadir, Paulette Lambert, Robin Chinery, Mr. Chan or Ah Fay, Commissioner Lin, Pierre Lambert, and Charles King, who are all involved in protecting the natural environment. Paulette Lambert, a French botanist’s daughter, in the narrative portrayed as being tremendously in touch with nature. She is as nature’s child, in Ghosh’s opinion for her “the love of Nature had been a kind of religion”, (75). Pierre Lambert, her father, proudly affirms that he raised her amid the serene innocence of the botanical gardens. He has always made her worship nature and has served as her mentor, guide, and teacher. He adamantly insists that the earth and the trees have always been her vision and scriptures, respectively. She brought up to celebrate kindness, justice, freedom, and the natural state of liberty. A naturalist believes that nature is his god and is always in harmony with it. According to White human beings matter a lot “within the environmental justice framework”, (White 17) and future generations need “central role of humans” (White 20) in “bringing back wildness” (Noss 171) and maintenance of natural surroundings.

Paulette enjoys being a part of nature and finds fulfilment and calm in the woodlands and mountains. She likes to explore the forests and mountains. According to

Ghosh, Paulette considers nature her religion. She worships nature, and respects nature as “a form of spiritual striving” (75). Nature is exceptional and unrepentant in its existence. It is a religion for Pantheists because they see God in Nature's dismantling of strong powers that sometimes sweep away unnoticed. Preaching voluminous lectures on nature has no negative connotations. Once someone respects them highly, they protect themselves from masculine forces. When we look at nature's beauty, we forget about the present and transported to an idealized world where we become mesmerized by the land's beauty and the equality principle. It treats everyone equally and extends an open invitation to its bosom without displaying any prejudice or a soft spot for any other phenomena. Paulette clearly embodies nature and enjoys natural freedom, as evidenced by the way she behaves and thinks. Her job is to collect rare species of animals, especially the chameleon, which is also a medicinal plant that present in China. She travels to that extent only because she loves the beauty of nature and believes she is carrying out her late father's final wish.

Moreover, the father of Paulette emphasizes the value of botany to her daughter. The fascination with nature is a type of religious striving for her. He tries

“to comprehend the inner vitality of each species, and human beings could transcend the mundane world and its artificial divisions” (Ghosh 78-79).

He is in one with nature and has no trouble accepting it as his deity, as pantheism holds that there is a god in nature or the cosmos. Paulette's conception of nature is same with idea of pantheism that nature is God. Botanist and naturalist Paulette developed a close bond with many different plants, "especially to the Oregon grape which had proved exceptionally vigor” (Ghosh 471). She notices the agony of departure; when these plants transferred to another ship to travel to Canton, “like a parent at the time of parting, she doubted that her children would be properly looked after” (Ghosh 471).

Mr. Chan is another character, after Paulette and her father, who devotes his life to protecting and preserving his nation's natural flora. He also enjoys the outdoor plantation. He avows with pride, “Plant cases are as precious to him as life itself”, (Ghosh 445). When the weather gets hot, he makes small houses over them with his own minimal clothing. When his flowers attack by storms and extreme weather, he protects them with his body. He waters them during the day and sleeps next to them at night. Similarly, Robin Chinnery

also gives a thoughtful and fruitful response to all of these efforts and challenges. He is against the practice of cultivating plants on ships. He wishes these poor incarcerated plants should be free. He emphasizes that plants have a right to freedom in their natural environment. He argues “your poor plants should be given a holiday from their life aboard the Redruth” (Ghosh 438).

Likewise, two more characters from Khan’s *Thinner Than Skin* are revealed who are also involved in environmental activism Wesley, Nadir's American acquaintance, and Farhana, a German-American-Pakistani friend. They play an important role in the plot since Farhana needs to travel between the Ultar and Batura mountains to research icecaps in Northern areas of Pakistan. When Farhana tells Nadir that Wesley dropped out of medical school to work for the natural world while holding a book related to environment in both of her hands, this concern is once more apparent. Finding out about Farhana's love of nature and the scenery of Pakistan makes Nadir pleased. He states Farhana had a deep love for mountains. Farhana was the one who informed Nadir “Pakistan has more glaciers” compared to any other country besides the Polar Regions, “I've seen them!” (Khan 36). However, this text also emphasizes the nomadic' belief that a strong community relies on people who have a thorough awareness of the environment. Women have chosen for the ice mating process based on their talent and capacity to collaborate as well as their “knowledge of yak milk, butter, fertilizer, and, of course, wool” (Khan 39). In addition, men with specific knowledge of fuel wood, horticulture, travelling, and livestock who make the prosperous and sustainable life possible. They are able to live and maintain a life that requires no compromise with the things that provide those things - whether it is the land, plants, or wildlife.

Through all of the above-mentioned characters, there is hope that human beings can learn, there is hope that people can change the ecological disturbance. Practicing ecological justice is possible and doable but it is a limited practice not generalize and we need to make this practice generalize.

5.2 Role of Institutions in Preserving the Environment

In *River of Smoke*, government took numerous steps to control the opium trade and its imports after understanding the economic, social, and resource losses brought on by

opium. One of the authoritative characters in the novel, the Emperor finally chose Lin Zexu as High Commissioner after numerous attempts to stop or regulate the opium trade failed. Lin Zexu is an expert in opium trafficking. Lin came in Canton, the principal port for international trade. He plans to employ all available means to make the opium release. He sends a string of letters to the members of the General Chamber of Commerce in Canton advising them against trading in opium. As per his order, all foreign dealers must hand up the opium that keeps it aboard their ships. In addition, guarantees were required from the traders, promising that they would not ever again smuggle opium into China. Lin halted the British traders at their factory and cut off food supply when the British refused to stop the trade. The fact that Commissioner Lin rejected this environmental catastrophe demonstrates his opposition to this kind of ecological carnage. He is a nature-loving human being. He vehemently rejects opium trafficking. He believes in fairness for the environment.

The term environmental justice refers to the conceptual links and unofficial ties between social justice and environmental issues. He has compassion for both the common people and the empire. British Superintendent of Trade Charles Elliot came in Canton to address the issue. However, he also imprisoned in the company for refusing to make concessions to Lin Zexu. Lin strictly ordered that "if no opium was surrendered by tomorrow morning, he would carry out his threat and they would lose their heads" (Ghosh 416). Hence, at the Bocca Tigris, opium from almost 20,000 chests dumped into the ocean after dissolving in water, lime, and salt. R. F Noss, agrees with Ghosh and states land preservation based on "political or pragmatic judgments" (Noss 175). As a result, the Chinese government bans the import of opium from its neighbors and deems it a "deadly poison" (Ghosh 432), which results in the death of both humans and other non-human living forms.

When the time comes for Commissioner Lin to start the process of destroying the confiscated opium, his eco-critical worries are evident. He tries to suggest to the local people that "this time opium is indeed prohibited" (Ghosh 375) and cannot be traded because everyone is aware of its damage. While destroying the opium, Lin is extremely careful to protect the surrounding environment, including the air, water, and all aquatic and terrestrial species. He makes careful to take every precaution to lessen the opium's toxic

effects, even when he dumps it in water trenches. Firstly, he opened the opium chests and then opium balls are broken up, mixed with lime and salt, and then dumped into the water-filled pits. He is a strong proponent of environmental justice in addition to being a deep ecologist. Even though he makes every attempt to lessen its deadly effects, he pauses for a moment to release this poison into the water because he is aware that it will endanger aquatic life. This demonstrates the Commissioner's awareness of the interdependence of all living and other life forms.

Moreover, governmental authorities adopt a variety of actions to preserve the nation including destroying the opium trade. In the nation's capital, the government put a stop to the opium dealers issue "hookum-nama" (Ghosh 277). According to that, Hookum-nama viceroys of every province would give orders to seal all the shops and ships who openly sell and exporting the opium and put all the sellers/criminals into jail and "impose a ban on the traders" (Ghosh 351). They ordered the police to take serious actions against them and gave severe punishment to the criminals and try "to eradicate the evil by the very roots" (Ghosh 277). Following that, Hookum-nama government strictly and clearly demands that Viceroy and Administrators of every province ensure that their citizens follow instructions. They also needed to direct their citizens and military personnel to find out all treasonous merchants involved in the opium trade and must be detained and hauled before courts. For example, the Viceroy Captain Elliot, who has the authority to "expel the British-owned boats from the river" (Ghosh 333) and he tries to remove the evil from the origins. Nobody is "allowed to slip through the net of the law"; (Ghosh 278) and if they will not obey the law and engage in other illegal activities "of that sort, then they will be punished by a new law, and further their sons and grandsons will not be allowed to appear at the examinations" (Ghosh 278). Vico received a notification from the city and requests "all foreign factories to seal up their rear entrances" (Ghosh 335). City administrators warn the foreign factories and merchants if they will never stop selling opium and will not obey the command "their property shall be confiscated by the government" (Ghosh 399). Lin warns them if "this matter cannot be resolved by you immediately", (Ghosh 400) he would issue a death warrant. Then do not claim that you did not given a sufficient warning in a timely manner.

Another institutional action discussed in *River of Smoke* is to reduce the export of opium and protect ecology; some people sincerely want to put a stop to the Opium curse. For example, King Charles requests the surrender of all supplies of opium, including the thousands of crates that are floating offshore in ships, to “save the minds of people” (Ghosh 337) and protect the environment. He sends the squad “of warships to seize the native smuggling boats and drive out the loitering foreign ships” (Ghosh 340). He is superior to the admirals, the commanders, and all other authorities, more like a viceroy than a governor is. Because the emperor specifically assigns him the task of stopping the opium trade and selects him in the expectation that he would put an end to this massacre. The emperor reportedly during the presentation

“with tears in his eyes, that after his death he would not be able to face his father and grandfather if opium smoking had not been eradicated from the land” (Ghosh 339).

Moreover, King Charles further reveals himself a person who supports ordinary people. He emphatically shows his environmental concern by reducing the harmful effects of opium and by adopting sensible and ethical procedures. For example, he makes an extremely moving appeal to the current and future generations to empathize with human beings while encouraging the drug lords to give up their drugs. Captain Elliott encourages Charles King’s this effort and suggests them “to surrender all the opium that is currently stored on your ships” (Ghosh 445). He cautions them to remember that while anything that destroyed can be repaired and recovered, lost human lives cannot brought back to life.

Khan also reveals the authoritative role in preserving the natural surroundings in guise of forest inspector, who stop cutting of trees for greenery and medicinal advantage. People cure disease from the leaves and rhizomes of trees like one of the character Kiran cured her serious cough by inhaling the fresh scent of filly. She also used “pistachio bark” (256) tissues to relieve the coughs of all of her kids. Moreover, one of the protagonist Maryam enters into the valley’s rich forest, a valley of fairies, baked and roasted dry fruits. She picks from the farm some vegetables and fruits, which wrapped in golden fluff with a touch of rose-colored. Additionally, there are some other trees like Bhenri, Diar, and Chalai provide shelter in addition to curing diseases like serious cough, cancer by

utilizing their roots and petals.

One more step of institutions to make an effort to provide their local inhabitants a healthy and financially strong life. Government provide plots to local farmers for grazing vegetables. They tried to be farmers by purchasing “small plots of land” (Khan 187). They moved along with their livestock with the intention of remaining in the Kaghan Valley during the summer. They prefer to cultivate “maize, potatoes, and beans” (134), before going back to the lowlands and consider it a peaceful and satisfied life.

In addition to above discussion, the present debate is largely concerned with the movements for ecological justice. It outlines several other remedies and strategies to stop ecological harm and establish a sustainable ecosystem. For example, in China people without harming the animals use their waste as manure. One of the lead character Fitcher in the novel tries to incorporate these successful Chinese gardening techniques into his Kew Garden, which is new to him. He makes manure out of coffee grounds, leaves of tea, rice and bits of broken biscuits, everything but human excreta. Fitcher is used to all the urine of human and animal as being “manure” (Ghosh 93) in Britain. He is unfamiliar with many “Chinese horticulture” (Ghosh 93) and gardening techniques, and he uses this technique to nourish his Kew Garden. Fitcher claimed that he has introduced “Chinese gardening method that he had popularized in Britain with great profit to himself:” (Ghosh 93).

5.3 Respecting Nature: Towards Ecological Justice

Ghosh appreciates the beauty of natural landscape and shows how people and nature interact. He praises the city of Canton, which is a bouquet of fragrant flowers in full bloom. Ghosh through the character of Fitcher describes Canton in a beautiful way as a home for flowers and plants and considers it a sea of plants as Fitcher declares it a “whole city bursts into bloom” (Ghosh 97) where flowers are in full bloom practically everywhere. They are hanging from balconies, atop old walls, the rooftops of boats, and even the tops of the carts that ply the streets. The plants and trees are radiant with blossom in the spring, and their fragrance makes the air beautiful and scented. Even in the melancholy tones of autumn, flowers look majestically. Spectacular flowering plants serve as the pavilions' guardians. A delicious, heavy aroma is coming from the dense clusters of blossoms. A

legendary artist and painter Robin Chinnery praises the Canton flowers, in the opinion of Robin Chinnery, flowers of Canton are everlasting and will continue to blossom forever. He laments the fact that our nation cursed with opium enslavement as payment. It is a painful truth that this nation has swallowed so much evil from the world while also producing so much beauty.

It is also important to recognize Khan's perspective that the Pakistani landscape is a paradise of beauty, abundant in trees and vegetation. The depiction of glaciers in such a mysterious manner that the observer appears to be both part of and see through those gorgeous glaciers. In addition, these mountains are essential to these people's way of life. Those who not only experience beauty daily but also relish it in all of its forms are blessed. The Northern Valley's residents require freeing up the "mountains" (Khan 239) and "glacier" (245) for shelter, sustenance and for drinking pure water and they are satisfied that all two are present here. As Farhana says, "we're not just here to take photographs" (Khan 236) and move on, but rather to recognize these folks as welcoming, committed, and kind to foreigners. There is no distinction between nature and culture in the cultural and historical production of nature, where nature is a cultural artefact. Therefore, while locals toil to maintain and preserve the environment, tourists admire it.

The ability and effort of human beings to respect the natural world and survive without endangering nature and animals is another step to discuss. As cooking is Asha Didi's primary love, her Canton kitchen has been successful in delivering "Achha comestibles" (Ghosh 289) (eatables) like achars, daals and other masals in a foreign country. People adore vegetarian food, which is why Canton Kitchen has been so popular. For example, Deeti and other indentured laborers continue follow a vegetarian diet after moving to Mauritius. When Deeti runs out of food, she enters the forest to get bananas. Likewise, Bahram was eating spring vegetable pakoras while "sitting at the breakfast table" (Ghosh 373). It demonstrates that nature has sufficient resources to meet human food needs without causing any animal suffering. It serves as a reminder that people can live comfortably as long as they do not significantly alter the natural world. It demonstrates how environmentally conscious people are.

In a similar manner, *Thinner Than Skin* shows how man can live a peaceful life without harming the natural balance. Once someone believes they are interacting with nature in harmony, like the characters of Farhana and Nadir and their friends, it proves that they can live a healthy life without harming the animals and birds. Instead of meat and chicken, they arrange lavish food like fruit salad, “honey-dipped pears” (Khan133), sandwiches, beans, roasted potatoes, almonds, fruits etc. for their dining table. They enjoy vegetarian food without killing and hunting innocent birds and sea creatures. Everything tasted authentic there. Kiran's family is similar in that they enjoy the “milk but not even taste the flesh of the animals” (Khan 165). White similarly points out, “humans should not, in any way, interfere with animals” (White 25). Maryam continues by entering the jungle, stopping at area covered in “roasted pistachios” (Khan 260), and returning with some fruits and vegetables including “peach,” (Khan 254) which is wrapped in golden fluff with a touch of reddish “from a sedentary farmer” (253-254). Maryam purchases “the peach from a fruit seller, in exchange for butter” (254). Natural and pure things like milk, butter, fruits, and vegetables are blessings of God in a valley. Maryam, her kids, and other people lead their lives in close connection with other people, animals, the weather, and the moods of the valley. In contrast to artificial life, they are enjoying the life without artificiality like gadgets. The lack of technological devices and the related artificial pleasures characterizes these nomadic' way of life.

Khan also highlights the generosity of nomads, which is another draw and appreciation of natural surroundings. The fact that these nomads feed the tourists to the best of their abilities, as Nadir notes, "she'd baked the bread for us", (Khan 115) and offered vegetables like potatoes and pear is also lovely to record. It demonstrates a natural reaction to the friendliness of nomads. As Kiran's mother, who was not just attractive in the same way as the natural world is, but also kind and friendly. Additionally, it stated that these individuals get up early for prayers and to see the sunrise beyond Malika Parbat that otherwise covered with stars and specks of cloud in the blue sky. In accordance with their moral need to reconsider their relationship with nature and the environment, these individuals are in this passage as impassioned observers who perceive beauty as a large linked totality.

5.4 Living with/among Nature: Ensuring sur(re)vival of Environment

Through the selected novel, *Thinner Than Skin* this study highlights Pakistan as a safe sanctuary for foreigners and tourists while also highlighting the country's natural beauty and wholesome atmosphere. In addition, it respects beauty and values the beauty of the plains, glaciers, highlands, and valleys in contrast to the violent invasion approach towards these places that has led to ecological problems. Through the dynamic depiction of rivers, winds, and hills, it discusses the beauty of nature. In the novel the lead character Farhana shows her passion in natural beauty, including lakes, rivers, glaciers, high mountain ranges, and bright skies, praises the cleanliness of the location that unites people and nature. She feels good when she is outside and enjoys fresh air, which is “pure and simple” (Khan 245). Mountains and glaciers, whether native or foreign, are abundant in the north are haven for people, as they not only enhance the beauty of these regions but also provide them with safety. The enchanting and glitzy Fairy Meadows serves as the Nanga Parbat Mountain range's grand entrance. This vibrant location has mountain ranges in the background, making it one of the most gorgeous destinations for travelers to explore. The same point declares Nadir; when asked what attracted him there, he replies that it is both trade and freedom, trade in the sense of taking images to sell and freedom in the sense of appreciating beauty.

In the paragraph previously mentioned, the appreciation of beautiful setting of the Northern Areas is continue with appealing lakes, enormous mountains, majestic pine trees, abundant fruit orchards with fresh cherry, woods, lovely rivers, and fascinating glaciers. These locations are awash in mesmerizing splendor. These regions exhibit a rich traditional culture and norms, and the nomadic people who live there are kind, courteous, and environmentally conscious. One of the concepts that people in this world value is beauty. This study further highlights a description of hills covered in dark green trees and snow in summers to highlight the beauty of the landscape. Additionally, Khan captures the beauty with the aid of the main character Maryam, who observes things carefully while going along the lake's banks and thinking back to a time when "the air was cool and clean" (Khan 239) and she adds “the water was unpolluted here” (Khan 217). There appears to be an ongoing relationship between nomadic people and these regions; in addition to appreciation

of the lake's presence, they also find everlasting joy and calm in the Himalayan region, the river Kunhar, and the beautiful greenery that surrounds them.

In a certain way, this study stresses on respect for nature through the depiction of natural features of Northern areas of Pakistan. Two main characters of the novel are Farhana, an American woman, and her Pakistani lover Nadir are interested in visiting Northern region of Pakistan. Maryam, a native character of northern regions also expresses her opinion on the north breeze and it affects the surrounding natural items. In the beginning, there is a breeze, which “began to ring with bells as faint yet bright as stars” (Khan 5), conveying the hint of season with this description, is wind in the beginning. Similar to this, guests like Nadir and Farhana find comfort in the whistling of seabirds wobbling in the wind. Because Kaghan is full of lush grasslands and Nadir is aware that Farhana is engaged in greenery, he encourages her to see this area as well. He hopes that Farhana will adore and appreciate the woodlands of Kaghan valley. He goes on to say that, she draws to lavish vegetation. It emphasizes the beauty of Himalayan Mountains as ice caps and melting glaciers that portray the distinctive splendor of Northern peaks. Including the northwest queen of the mountains, Monazza Mkahdoom and Munazza Yaqoob in their research article “The Landscape of Vertical Wilderness: Environmentalism and a Sense of Place in Uzma Aslam Khan’s *Thinner Than Skin*” praise “Malka Parbat”, and “banks of Lake Saiful Maluk, resulting from the snow-melted ice are symbolic of unmatched wild beauty on earth” (5).

Over the course of the text, it becomes clear that the protagonists of the novel Maryam and Nadir ensure and adore the beauty and comfort of the northern valley. They find serenity in natural surroundings. Their varied backgrounds and particular concern for nature put the plot in motion. Nadir enjoys his stroll and finds solace in the muck. He sinks to his face in the mud because he feels safe in the natural setting of the northern valley, he feels, “but it was mud, not air. I was safe.” (Khan 269-270). The text claims that the image of Malika Parbat was being appreciated and disrupted “by a stream of exhausted pilgrims and a dozen boats” (Khan 63) throughout the ongoing process of adoration. Here, boating and lakeside relaxation is popular. When the glaciers melt and the light comes on people enjoy and “they roll over”, (Khan 277). Nadir's remark that Queen's twin hills waved like triangle, encircling the people in blessings serves as a further illustration of the area's

beauty. This establishes perception as a mutual activity of all the sense modalities, as in the situation of admiring the mountain in front of visitors and contrasting it to the visitors, or occasionally as a meditative process, as in the case of taking a lake full of blessings pouring on its visitors.

Moreover, the story takes on a fantastical picture of a prince seeking beauty of northern regions. Nadir Sheikh, a nature photographer who reacts similarly to his surroundings. When he views the Kaghan Valley's magnificence, he overcomes it with wonder. He serves his introduction through this sentence it was a scenery, he shined in, or longed to. The focus of the narrative is Nadir's gorgeous journey to a region tucked away in the hills. Nadir is walking toward the river while deeply absorbing a mid-summer coolness. The cleanliness of the region and the kind of pleasure he craves for is by inhaling in such a setting, which is why he finds it enjoyable, he enjoys "walked along the shores of the lake", (Khan 4). In a valley shaded and adorned by travelers, he enjoys running alongside the river. He feels energized as he jogs alongside the river. He wants tranquilly, which he discovers while strolling along the River Kunhar's clear waters, also known as the "Nain sukh, that which soothes the eye" (14) in a local tradition. He can regain focus and feel calm and renewed as a result. Nadir thus strikes as a figure who is weary of the world, would return to nature.

Nature eases Nadir's worries as he walks when he starts to feel weary in the heart. He values his evening wanders because missing "those walks would mean losing normalcy" (Khan 92). He turned off his cellphone and the computer while seeming frightened and furious "I went for a walk" (Khan 94). When he goes near the shepherds' tents at the bottom of a hill, he is at one point highly disturbed but feels as ease back home (in Pakistan) and he is now fully at rest. He loves to live a simple, rural, and pure life. He feels the voice of flowing water and observes, "the dogs scratch themselves. I heard goat bells and buffalo bells" (Khan 110) that was as heartfelt "as a call to prayer" (Khan 110). His mind is as pure as the wind, and he is at ease as he hears the call for prayer, azaan, coming from the hillsides. According to Nadir, the country has a soul, and the glaciers and waterways in the Kaghan Valley remind him of a buffalo. He is the embodiment of nature's manifestations. The environment is as much a living thing to Nadir as any other animal or human is. This understood as eliminating any type of prejudice against the environment,

the earth, and the nonhuman element of the biosphere alongside animals and themselves. This equating of a valley with a living, moving being is significant because it eliminates distinctions or borders between the biosphere's alive and inanimate components.

Like Nadir, another lead character of the novel *Maryam*, who learns from nature and communes with its spirits in her own unique ways, Maryam is a Gujjar woman from the traditional indigenous tribe. She embodies the biophilic ideal. In Maryam's case, the seas, breezes, hills, and plants give her the opportunity to live a happy, purposeful life. Maryam is acquainted with the natural environment and looks for comfort and reassurance in natural surroundings. She spends her days surrounded by flies, flying among dazzling “stars” (Khan 5), pulling the night about “her shoulders like a shawl,” (Khan 5-6) walking “along the shores of the lake”, (Khan 4) and mountain peaks. She engages in shamanic rituals to increase her connection to the natural environment and its manifestations. She views herself as an integral part of nature; she cares for it and receives care in exchange. She has a strong and ethereal connection to the nature due to her indigenous, mystic personality; she involves with the roots in the soil and receives affinity for the local flora and wildlife. She observes conversing with the biotic community of the area and noticing the ecosystem's communications. The Virgin Mary, who reveres as a saint in both Islam and Christianity, reflects in the name Maryam as a woman who represents love and harmony. Maryam's character exhibits a similar level of composure as she deals with the loss of her little daughter, Kiran. Old-fashioned ideals and ideas reflect in Maryam's personality.

Maryam's character demonstrates that every natural element possesses a divine energy, and a strong tie occurs between the soul of nature and the human intellect that results in total serenity and tranquility. She engages in her native rites because they give her a peculiar sense of harmony and calm in nature. She is in contact with who she truly is. Due to her belief in the therapeutic potential of nature and the religious instruction to be nice to nature and live a spiritual life, these life events demonstrate that she is both intellectually and physically active. Maryam emerges as an illustration of a biophilic being who coexists peacefully with both humans and nonhumans. It is crucial to remember that her sense of interconnectedness serves as the foundation of community life and connects her to the natural world. Despite her terrible poverty, she has a wealth of ties with people

and the natural world. Her strong friendship with nature soothes her heart. She demands a place and atmosphere where nobody harms nature like to cut down the trees and harm the animals. She wishes for a place where animals will allow grazing freely and “will never stop wandering” (Khan 129).

The Northern part of Pakistan can be called a magical place, but it is also studded with military checkpoints and large construction equipment that is constructing bridges and highways. Notably, it appears as if Chinese constructions have ruined the ecology. Currently, some areas of the region resemble a military area. The natural wonders, which include numerous stunning, undeveloped beaches, mountains, and glaciers, feel that human intervention and industrial growth will overtake this natural beauty soon. The bulk of the population nevertheless maintains its traditional way of life, tries to protect the area's natural beauty despite all these industrial intrusions.

Moreover, this area is a well-known tourist destination worldwide. Through the roaming tales of Kaghan, the story cleverly links Pakistan's history and culture. According to Nadir, the picturesque village of Naran and the Kaghan Valley are both like a rich “alpine forest” (Khan 30) and nobody would want to lose the beautiful greenery in this ravishingly wet and dark valley. When Farhana starts inquiries about the northern region of Pakistan, Nadir replies, “It's - isolated. Isolating. Cleansing” (Khan 54). The region is isolated because it is distant from “human-altered landscape” (Noss 170) and Pakistan's urban areas because getting there is challenging due to poor roads and inclement weather. He uses the terms “isolated” (Khan 54) and ‘cleaning’ interchangeably to describe a place that is free of human interference or less bothered by human interference, as well as “isolating” (Khan 54) to imply that it has the potential to possess people and transport them temporarily away from the outside world. Nadir's perception shows a lovely Pakistan that is free of human interference, peaceful and pure. He gets tranquility in this lovely region. The land is to be a haven of harmony and serenity for future generations. It requires individuals to modify their attitudes towards one another, the perception of humans as a whole, and eventually their perception towards the natural environment.

Maryam's family buy small plots of land from the state and starts growing nuts like pistachio trees after giving up the free grazing rights and plans to “defensible space” (White

6). Her family observe that power buildings ruin lands for great profit and make it harder for locals to survive by placing strict financial restrictions on them grazing animals in the jungles and replacing their native sheep with Australian sheep, means ending their livelihood and their ability to survive. They make the decision to switch their profession to live entirely on raising cattle was turning into a pain, especially all the vanishing native species and the constraints on grazing in a decreasing forest. So, they tried to be farmers by purchasing “small plots of land” (Khan 187). They moved along with their animals to the upper Kaghan Valley with the intention of remaining there during the summer. They prefer to cultivate “maize, potatoes, and beans” (134), before going back to the lowlands and consider it a peaceful and satisfied life. However, in White’s opinion humans should avoid the land exploitation and try to preserve “these environments from particular kinds of damaging human encroachment” (White 31) and he “sees nature as a social construct” (33) and declares man is the main participant who can construct and restore the natural surroundings. In Noss’ opinion without this natural world, man cannot “survive long” (Noss 169) so he wishes for “wilderness recovery” (Noss 171).

In addition to respecting nature, love for animals is another part of this discussion. Khan highlights that animals are dear to Maryam, and she adores them without condition. She assigns those animals human names so she can feel more connected to them. She appreciates their close relationship and friendship. Native American tribes and nonhuman elements like lakes, hills, forests, birds, and nonhuman species like goats, sheep, horses, and cows perceive as suffering on the margins. The text brings them into the center from the edges. It aims to highlight the existence of many colleagues in the nonhuman community through this investigation and respects White’s notion that “any harm to animals is bad” (White 25) and healthy biosphere is required the most. It focuses the attention on the many species besides people, including "horse," sheep", "buffaloes," “goats” (Khan 1), a stunning "hummingbird" (Khan 35), "Kingfisher" (Khan 89,129), “owl” (Khan 7) , "lizard" (Khan 20), “seagulls and the swifts” (Khan 34), “sheep dogs” (Khan 65). The sky was filled with “eagles and hawks” (Khan 140), and “doves” (Khan 145), and "butterfly" (Khan 148). More details of the natural environment are revealed as the story goes on, including daylight, "lakes” (Khan 1) “mist” (Khan 2)"rivers and streams," "sky”, (Khan 2) "water's depths," (Khan 3) "river," (Khan 9) and "cactus... Joshua

trees... purple clouds" (Khan 10), shadows of the woods, "clouds" (Khan 13), circular mountains, spreading dense "forests of deodar and pine" (Khan 19)," sunshine "cliffs and cypresses" (Khan 34), and the violet blossoms with the sparkling white covers and "glaciers" (Khan 37) are just a few of the images in this work. Nadir also adores semi-nomadic communities that establish "their summer homes on the lake's shores" (Khan 62). They bring their livestock like horses, sheep, and hunting dogs. Around the stream and on the hillsides to the north of it, Nadir saw few more sheep.

Moreover, respect for all species is thus an important discussion that Ghosh discusses in his work *River of Smoke*. Through the persona of Baboo Nob Kissin, it seeks to highlight an animal lover. He rides the ship bringing opium to Canton with Mr. Burham. He is a follower of Lord Krishna, and when the city of Canton is deserted and the residents depart, he claims that they are "suffering from heat strokes and sun-rashes" (Ghosh 508) in the other land. He did not sleep until temporary bamboo shelter-covering cattle enclosure built. His behavior shows human beings should respect animals and let them free from their brutality and cruel nature.

5.5 Therapeutic Effect of Nature

Nature proven to be a calming and therapeutic influence on people and facilitates life for locals. Khan appreciates northern valley's medicinal importance, which is renowned for its beauty "a valley of fairies and princes and roasted pistachios and flying horses" (Khan 260). It also goes by the name Heaven on Earth, makes Queen Nur Jehan pleased, and calmed her infected eyes. The Mughal queen Noor Jehan stopped long ago on the river's banks before this curves to join the Jhelum on her trip to Kashmir. She made the decision to clean her face by dipping her fingers in the river because she had an eye infection. The clean water healed her infected eyes. Since then, the river refers as "Nain Sukh that soothes the eye" (Khan 14). Meanwhile, Ghafoor collected in both of his hands the clear distilled water of the rushing river. He ran his fingers across his eyes and "his eyes were soothed as loving as Queen Nur Jehan's" in the past and "gargled", (Khan 217) he performed this action because the ground water was clean there.

Additionally, Kiran inhaled while burying her face in the fillies and shaking several trees from various locations. In the same way, she cured her serious cough by inhaling the

fresh scent of filly. She also used “pistachio bark” (256) tissues to relieve the coughs of all of her kids. Likewise, Maryam cooks the herbs and kakwa leaves and let the “water cool when Kiran complained of a toothache”, (254). Later, with her discomfort gradually lessening, Kiran would drink it at one time.

Hence, the Himalayan Mountains give its visitors a calming impact and comfort. Both residents and tourists alike admire the beauty of these mountains and lakes as Irfan describes a lake, which is pure and dazzling and its pure water soothes the infected people. Additionally, there are some trees like Bhentri, Diar, and Chalai provide shelter in addition to curing diseases like serious cough, cancer by utilizing their roots and petals.

In relation to that, Ghosh also declares that indigenous people respect nature as a form of medicine as well. According to Deeti's mother, farmers preserve a little amount of their opium for their family to utilize in the cure of specific diseases, particularly in comparison certain plants' rhizomes and leaves can heal everything from cancer to gonorrhoea to insomnia. Like Fitcher who also explains to Paulette why most of the people like botanists are in search of plant camellia worldwide. He clarifies the advantages of Camellia plant “that can turn white hairs into black, restore the suppleness of aged joints”, (Ghosh 124) and continues to serve as a treatment for incurable disease of lungs, it cures the older bones' pain and sharp the memories.

5.6 Conclusion

This section of the analysis advances the efforts of the study to respect and recover natural resources, including soil, water, air, land, forest, and biological variety. The texts under discussion have specifically forewarned against land exploitation and values land ethics. They emphasize that it may not be possible to stop the modification, manipulation, and exploitation of natural resources, it is undoubtedly possible to proclaim their right to exist. However, by embracing practices and policies that focused on land ethics, man can save the land and prevent ecocide. Therefore, humans must change their perspective from being the oppressors of the land community to being basic members and residents of it in order to protect the environment and its creatures. According to Ghosh, humans should pose the special attributes of nature as he argues, “human beings apprehend the vital energies that constitute the Spirit of the Earth” (75). This human behavior strengthens

White's belief that "resource depletion itself is a bad thing" (White 37). This section highlights the need for people to respect one another as well as the entire land community, which includes the waters, soils, plant life, and animals.

By analyzing *River of Smoke* by Amitav Ghosh and *Thinner Than Skin* by Uzma Aslam Khan it becomes clear those human beings are strongly related to the environmental damage. This study shows anthropocentric greed and unlawful occupancy against nature and its people and nonhumans leading to environmental damage as well as a number of ecological injustices. It focuses on the idea that humans are an integral part of nature, and that fostering human liberty and self-awareness is an important step in resolving the environmental catastrophe. Hence, the main concern of this study is that natural surroundings and all living creatures, either humans or non-humans, must be free from human exploitation and maltreatment. Additionally, there is a need to preserve nature because it is our moral responsibility to protect the natural world.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate how two well-known authors from distinct backgrounds, Amitav Ghosh and Uzma Aslam Khan, incorporated ecocritical ideas into their writings. The chosen South Asian works *River of Smoke* by Amitav Ghosh and *Thinner Than Skin* by Uzma Aslam Khan were examined in a similar mode under the heading of textual analysis as a research method to see how these works report the issues that relate to nature, oppressed native communities, and wildlife in their cultures. The analysis focused on the problems and investigated some potential solutions that nature, suppressed groups, and non-humans face in the two distinct cultures and described in the works chosen for analysis. The researcher found it simple to observe that all the research questions have satisfactorily addressed and the research objectives have achieved after a thorough interpretation of the core texts under examination. In the analysis chapters 4 and 5, the researcher highlighted several similarities and differences that these selected books provided. In this section, are described the research study's results regarding the mistreatment of native peoples, animals, and nature, as well as the cultural repercussions of this persecution and subordination.

This chapter focuses on the several ecocritical issues presented through these texts, as well as discuss relevant solutions to handle those issues and the possible remedies are enough to tackle the above-mentioned environmental issues at individual and institutional level. Firstly, it highlights the exploitation of land, threat to animal freedom, the role of institutions in turning fertile land into cash crop and exploitation of natural region's beauty of Pakistan and India. Indeed, this study showed that crises of the natural environment attributed in large part to anthropocentric behaviors; it also discussed the persecution of society's marginalized groups. Secondly, it suggests solutions that is also the last part of the research goals as a way to come up with some strategies for the maintenance of environmental balance in a just manner.

6.1 Categorizing Environmental Criminology

The current study highlighted how the inequalities in the South Asian world and its

natural environment have caused by human beings' anthropocentric mindset and his logical thinking for personal profits has been a major issue for the last few years of 21st century. This human behavior is the main area of the following research, which reflects in research questions of the present study, that draw attention to anthropocentric role and his criminal acts in destruction of the ecology of South Asian countries like India and Pakistan. It revealed various environmental issues, which afflict Asian countries environmental change. This study highlighted different ecological problems in South Asia such as landscape alteration, industrial growth, and technological advancement, the impending demise of various birds, native animal, and plants, loss of natural resources, deforestation, and declining reserves of food, eco-sickness, and land exploitation. However, this study revealed how human behavior and practices, technical development, and economic and industrial expansion have contributed to environmental degradation. The inquiry of this research has centered on the exploitation of native flora and fauna in chosen works by Ghosh and Khan, as well as oppression of nature. The researcher has mostly focused on the solutions that are enough to get rid of this role that these restrictive conceptual frameworks perform in the dominance of these oppressed groups in two distinct cultures.

Moreover, the destruction of the environment and its effects on nature and the life of humans and its existence are two of the most important worldwide issues that we are currently facing. The following study has discussed the environmental viewpoints in Amitav Ghosh's *River of Smoke* and Uzma Aslam Khan's *Thinner Than Skin*. The aforementioned works explored a range of concerns, including the value of nature, rights of animals, and the effects of authorities on land and indigenous communities. Both of the above-mentioned writers want to recognize people that because they are a part of nature, they have a responsibility to care for the environment and must be conscious of environmental problems. Additionally, both novelists in their selected works, give a clearer insight and portrayed an ecofriendly role of protagonists under the guise of Paulett and her botanist father, Robin Chinnery, Kiran's whole family, Nadir and Maryam and institutional role in protecting the natural surroundings.

In addition to that, this study emphasized Ghosh's concern over the British atrocities and indigenous traitors' criminal concerns who involved in misuse of natural land through poppy farming and the poppy trade for economic growth. The chosen writings

from south Asian countries like India and Pakistan demonstrate the selfish nature of people. They replicated in colonial systems that treat nature as little more than a tool with the sole purpose of advancing and benefiting humankind. The human ego separates him from nature, which perceives it as immoral being. This level of weirdness in nature has caused the tension between people and the environment, which created disruption when humanity exploit nature and its local inhabitants, murder innocent birds and abuse animals for unmanageable progress and for their personal economic gains. Ghosh has emphasized further that if someone fails to respect non-humans, they do not expect to treat the natural environment with the same respect. Similarly, Khan in her novel *Thinner Than Skin* has addressed severe environmental damage such as institutional or authoritarian negative effects on humanity, animal suffering specifically extinction of native/desi sheep, elimination of basic rights for local farmers and wildlife, loss of natural resources like deforestation. Moreover, the development schemes have wreaked destruction on the environment and other human communities. Animals killed and turned into meal indicates an anthropocentric attitude that does not value animal life morally. The use of this reference meat has drawn attention to the anthropocentric view that sees animals as little more than tools and possessions.

The challenges that reflected the connections in their separate cultures given enough space by both selected novelists. In their writings, Ghosh and Khan have both depicted the aforementioned issues in a way that confirmed their exploitation and degrading in the societal and official systems. Their portrayal is in line with the issues of ecocriticism, which maintains a link between literature and the natural world. These books portray environment as having mistreated and ruined by man, who exploits it for his own personal gain. Among their rulers, other enslaved human tribes might see battling for existence.

The economic situation of a few economically inferior groups of people living in the area plays a role in their subjugation. In Khan's novel, organizations and businesses used nature for their own gain under the guise of economic growth appeared to have ruined and poisoned it. The encroachment of large equipment, the cutting down of trees to make enough space for movement, and the contamination that results from this unpleasant activity of training people to kill strangers in northern regions eventually make life

unpleasant for both humans and other animals. Ghosh criticized external businesses for harming nature, in contrast to his vision of nature's destruction, in which both domestic and foreign (British) exploitative organizations manipulate environment for their own material gain. These businesses want to colonize the resources of nature of the indigenous men's ancestral lands. The cultivation of poppy become the reason of displacement of local population. Another indication of slaughtering animals declares that nature is nothing more than a product for them. Ghosh and Khan both showed cruelty to animals who suffer because of anthropocentric mindset. Animals kill in South Asian culture for food and nourishment of plants. Animals experience indirect suffering because of man's emphasis on profit. The investigations showed that overuse of natural resources has emerged as a global problem that calls for both theoretical and practical solutions.

The analysis section gave details of diminishing land like abolishing the peace of nature, destroying the natural surroundings, repressing local residents, harming animals or wildlife, and altering the natural landscape as well as focuses on the preservation of biodiversity, which were the central concerns of this study. It foregrounded the brutal act of humans on Mother Earth in different ways such as the inappropriate and insignificant human progress disrupted fertility of natural surroundings, used land for business reasons, and showed disregard for native communities and wildlife. This study emphasized Ghosh and Khan's environmental concern, which foreshadowed the majority of our current environmental worries and signals a significant change in the way people view the world by highlighting the magnificence of nature. Ghosh concentrated mostly on the mistreatment of natural landscapes as he highlights a serious issue in *River of Smoke*, exploitation of natural landscape, food crops turned into cash crop in India for trade. Both of the writers have also emphasized that if man truly wants to live a peaceful life in natural world, he needs to alter his cruel behavior and examine his current beliefs as well as his social and institutional standards. Both authors issue warnings to the current institutions, elected officials, establishments, and administrators and counsel them to act honorably for the benefit of the environment. They hold the opinion that man is bound to change the natural laws. Nature's laws are broken when people engage in behaviors and practices without considering the troubles they will have to face in future. Man has lost sight of the fact that taming nature always brings with it problems.

However, this study elaborated how the richest lands, complete with rivers, verdant valleys, the tallest mountains, and fertile landscapes of South Asian countries are in danger. A centuries-old tradition is in danger of disappearing because of different invasions made for financial gain. Brutal and unfair political intervention and mistreatment reflected in the slaughtering of innocent birds and animals “makes use of its fat” (Ghosh 98) and “dying indigenous breed”, dwindling plantation, and “felled trees hidden in water wells” (Khan 216). This human behavior endangered wildlife, displaced species, and limited species richness. They disturb species’ peaceful life, which they enjoy in company with cattle and plants. Moreover, it attempted to highlight the hardships that native people and defenseless birds endure during military training, which destroys the natural beauty of the northern valley. Therefore, this study outlined the destruction of the environment through forestry, the abuse of animals through the story of the sheep, and human tyranny of the northern valley. This portrayed nature and the weak as suffering mutes. Khan and Ghosh in some ways emphasized the destruction of local landscapes, animal exploitation, the extinction of local animals, and the link between man and the natural world, particularly in parts of India and Pakistan. This study dealt with a great example of nonhumans, existing contentedly and undisturbed life until the incursion by humans occurs. However, due to development, new equipment, and militarization, both humans and nonhuman animals have suffered a loss of connection. It abhors the idea that the natural environment controlled through forces, innovations, local politicians, agencies, and outside forces. The peace and serenity of mother earth and wildlife has undergone considerable changes due to the interference of governmental authorities, influx of tourists, foreigners, and city inhabitants.

This study found that it is only by discarding excessive anthropocentrism and embracing land ethics, that we can raise people's understanding of the importance of maintaining the environment and all of its inhabitants in order to create a harmonious society. We need to consider three main components of the earth “humans, the biosphere and animals” (White 25). It has become increasingly clear that authoritarianism and hierarchy strongly relate to issues with the environmental disaster and that human ideas directly relate to the control of nature. Additionally, human exploitation and oppression in any sphere of life closely connects to the degradation of the environment. This study showed how anthropocentric greed, unlawful occupancy, and commercial rights are

secured using military force “and the government” (Khan 146) against nature and its people, leading to environmental damage as well as a number of ecological injustices. However, it is the fact that South Asian nations' attempt to control nature's course nevertheless have an impact on the entire biosphere is a harsh reality. The biodiversity loss is a result of the rapacious use of the land and its resources.

Additionally, for the maintenance of ecosystem, there is a need to investigate the details, which become the reason of environmental damage. Because of rise in urbanization and developmental programmes, the present study called upon the fact that institutional decisions and institutional role for economic growth is another reason of environmental and economic uncertainty. For example, their decision to substitute Australian sheep and goats for the indigenous populations' Kilan and Kaghan livestock led to an economic catastrophe for the native groups. Foreign sheep are less resilient and unprepared to withstand the cold breeze and unexpected snowfall of the Hindu Kush Himalayan valley's chilly temperature. After experiencing economic instability, they displaced from their ancestral land in search of food and shelter. Khan ironically has explained the native community of the Northern territories, which constantly displaced and faces environmental setbacks, is unable to find refuge in the “womb” (Khan 124) of the powerful Karakorum. The present study criticized recent development plans because those developmental projects cause disorder by displacing native wildlife with exotic species in an effort to get a handsome profit. The state's impulsive action severely cripples the nomad tribes' traveling style by placing harsh limits on their independence.

Governmental authorities continually endangered the innocent local species, and exploited the local nomads and native communities and put them into danger. They took over native lands for developmental programmes and for their personal economic gain. The authorities have endangered the sustainability and survival of residents who have lived there for centuries and jeopardize their means of subsistence. Therefore, farmers, and indigenous people must contend as they search for justice, identity, and a sense of belonging with these crimes. Throughout the narrative Ghosh and Khan, show how the indigenous communities and farmers are completely under the control of the authorities, with little chance for them to fight back. Hence, the purpose of this study is that all creatures, either human beings or non-human, must be free from all unwanted forms of

oppression and exploitation and intend to build a healthy environment. For this stability of environment, Ghosh explored hookamnama in *River of Smoke* to punish powerful criminals and save the mother earth from exploitation and marginalization.

In the paragraph previously mentioned, the role of government in environmental violence and ecological disruption is an essential issue that this study explored. It illustrated in *River of Smoke* those illegal government actions such as they forced local farmers for poppy cultivation. Likewise, in *Thinner Than Skin* Forest officers were involved in deforestation for construction projects and road expansion, as Khan states they construct “highways and ports through the lands of its own people” (Khan 127) and the killing of endangered animals, as well as the absence of any official response to these illegal actions. They disregard the lovely features of their surroundings, their traditions, and the rights of the indigenous people. It goes on to describe the military forces’ role in targeting foreigners and strangers by using the northern valley as a training ground. This refers to an ecological armed ferocity that works to protect the state’s dominance over its resources. Drones and private jets destroy the natural beauty of northern regions and seize completely rural communities, where innocent local inhabitants become target and strangers become non-target.

Khan and Ghosh, however, reveal the real face of the government and the destructiveness of the external authorities and timber mafia, which has demolished fertile land and lush forests to prepare for the building of enormous structures, expansion of roads, and other construction projects. The way that locals defend their own atrocities also examined in this research. The term ‘exploitation’ was also used in the selected work *Thinner Than Skin* and *River of Smoke* to describe a long-standing social interaction in which people living in northern regions, agricultural laborers, and the environment are abused and banished to serve the goals of the wood mafia and forestry officials. Additionally, the struggles of the local inhabitants also discussed in this study under the guise of Maryam and her family, Pullett, King Charles, who punish land exploiters by sealing their openly selling opium shops and force them to surrender their opium ships. Similarly, Maryam and her entire family, whose family business is in danger by replacing desi sheep with Australian sheep, but they were not limited to this animal grazing, her family moved to other rural areas and changed their profession by purchasing plot for

cultivation.

However, the chosen works *Thinner Than Skin* and *River of Smoke* proposed that ecological issues are due to humanistic behaviors such as due to suppression of humans and non-humans by other human tyrants or dictators. These dominated environmental tyrants and governing bodies like Fitcher Penrose, a plant hunter in *River of Smoke* and forest inspector in *Thinner Than Skin* both involved in humiliating natural resources and ultimately commit ecological destruction of South Asian countries specifically India and Pakistan. Their humanistic power viciously marginalized all of nature, such as wildlife, forests, and inert substances like water and soil, as well as indigenous communities. Khan and Ghosh investigated the overall changing environment. They talk about different profit-making policies and the intricate inventions made by man, as well as new methods, technology, and the establishment of diverse environmental illusions. The authors of the selected novels instruct us on the value of natural resources like desi sheep, food crops, and rich forests in a country's financial, societal, and industrial growth. Both authors attempt to outline how humans are persecuting one another and the natural world, and they both condemn how awful it is for humans to treat animals out of malice. They advocate for the same maintenance and rights for non-humans as they do for themselves by being aware of their plight.

6.2 Guidelines to Maintain Ecological Justice

Despite all the above stated challenges, Ghosh's *River of Smoke* and Khan's *Thinner Than Skin* has revealed the importance of diversity for a strong and stable environment that supported both human beings and non-humans. Firstly, they suggested for dispersing unneeded human interference with the environment is vital, honest, and trustworthy interests that sustain biodiversity and try to reject all forms of power, oppression, subjugation, and abuse. For instance, Ghosh and Khan's goal is to revive awareness of man's beneficial relationship with nature, while also highlighting how inequality and hierarchy have led to a progressive alienation of man from his natural surroundings. They contend that the only way to escape from this existential trouble is to reject all forms of unnecessary human intervention, which reflects in unethical activity of

deforestation, injustice with animals, and the exploitation of local farmers and inhabitants, which deplete natural resources and disrupt the natural order.

Second, this study offered a wide range of profound ecological, sociocultural, and ethical illumination and ideas in a search of the natural balance between society and nature, as well as within human beings themselves. Both authors offer remedies that can contribute to the creation of a social structure that does not foster and sustain unjust conceptual structures. They oppose repression and aim to put an end to it in their different social systems. Additionally, they seek to transform the restrictive conceptual structures into a system that does not support them. If the natural world is to be preserved from annihilation and elimination, they contend that excessive human intervention should be abolished and restored with a concept in which nature occupies a higher status than man. Ghosh and Khan in selected works mentioned the fictitious characters such as Paulette, King Charles, Commissioner Lin, Robin Chinnery, Ah Fatt, Nadir Sheikh, Farhana, and Maryam's family are fully involved in search of healthy atmosphere. For instance, in *River of Smoke* an American businessperson, King Charles is aware of the dangers of the opium substance and it affects everyday life and the natural environment. When he destroys the opium, he is extremely careful to protect the surrounding environment, including the air, water, and all aquatic and terrestrial species. He makes careful to take every precaution to lessen the opium's toxic effects, even when he dumps it in water trenches. He works against foreign companies' interests rather than standing up for them. He has been adamantly opposed to the trafficking and selling of opium by foreign businesspeople.

Third, Ghosh highlights in *River of Smoke* individual and institutional role, which are most important in establishment of sustainable environment, governmental authorities punish criminals, land exploiters, seal their shops and ships who openly sell and exporting the opium and put all the sellers/criminals into jail for trading poppy crates. These clever individuals devalue the environment, which eliminates harmony and a sense of peaceful coexistence on earth. Ghosh is in favor of preservation of natural world and highlights this theme of natural restoration in his writing. Additionally, Khan in her novel *Thinner Than Skin* highlights extinction of desi sheep but local farmers were not restricted to animal grazing when they found free grazing has over for them, so they found substitute for it, they bought small plots and cultivate food crops in those plots to survive.

Fourth, both novels reflect that local inhabitants and farmers respect nature and survive without endangering nature and animals by loving vegetarian food. Deeti and other indentured laborers adore vegetarian food; they enter the forest to get some vegetables and fruits to eat. Similarly, Nadir and his friends instead of meat and chicken, they arrange lavish food like fruit salad, “honey-dipped pears” (Khan133), sandwiches, beans, roasted potatoes, almonds, fruits etc. for their dining table. They enjoy vegetarian food without killing and hunting innocent birds and sea creatures. They considered all these available pure things in valley are blessing of God and declare that everything tasted authentic there.

Fifth, instead of deforestation for development projects, the healing qualities of nature highlighted in their writings, they find serenity in natural environment. They release their worries by evening walks. Furthermore, local inhabitants respect nature as a form of medicine as well. Local farmers save a little amount of opium seeds to utilize them in the cure of serious diseases particularly certain plants' rhizomes, leaves can heal everything from cancer to gonorrhoea to insomnia, and this eventually assures the sustainability and wellness of all life on earth. They find serenity in natural surroundings.

Sixth, the selected authors outline several other remedies and strategies to stop ecological harm and establishes a sustainable ecosystem. For example, in China people without harming the animals use their waste as manure for the nourishment of plants.

Seventh, both the authors are in favor of preserving natural resources instead of destroying them for road expansion while they inform that people cure different serious diseases like cancer, cough, and joints pain by using tree leaves and their rhizomes.

Lastly, this study emphasized Ghosh and Khan’s concern for nature, especially within indigenous communities, who are obligated to preserve the unity of Divine presence, the purity of the land, its species of plants and animals, its fauna, and its natural world. Therefore, environmental justice movements are playing a significant role in raising awareness about the importance of promoting a healthier environment for the survival of humans and other living things.

Consequently, this research study highlights how and why it is crucial for all of us to preserve and maintain the natural world, without any more time passing. Since we have a moral obligation to maintain and preserve our environment, we should value and revere

all living things in the natural world. It is the obligation of contemporary writers to raise interest in environmental issues among South Asian countries' people through literature. The most important thing is that humankind learn to live in harmony and tranquilly and a stable relationship between man and his natural surroundings. Ecocriticism is a lens that is attentive to literary representations of the environment that depicts and elucidates the individual or action within the natural world. This method sees an individual as a component of an ecological system and transfers the essential attention away from social ties and towards natural ones. Ghosh and Khan have long expressed a desire to alter the natural world, social mores, and physical terrain. They exposed the anthropocentric influence and governmental and authoritarian manipulation that goes on in the name of saving animals and their habitat at the expense of human lives. They pointed out the restrictions of the human race and declared that no matter how much man attempts to fight against nature, nature will always win. Man's mistreatment of nature is the cause of nature's brutality towards him. If man is a target, then nature is taking punishment from man. Therefore, for healthy environment man must shift this cruel attitude and shows ecofriendly nature. Similarly, this study aims to raise awareness among individuals of the importance of preserving the natural world and its residents and non-humans by opposing anthropocentric role and embracing environmental principles in order to build a healthy atmosphere.

Therefore, this study explained that man should avoid unnecessary involvement in every field of life for the sake of development; he should try to modify his behavior, respect, and safeguard the ecological system, and take care of both land and oppressive indigenous people. The relationship between civilization and nature, between nature and the inner self, and between nature and other living things need modified for environmental stability. It focused on the idea that humans are an integral part of nature, and that fostering human freedom and self-awareness is a crucial step in resolving the environmental catastrophe. Additionally, there is a message that emphasized the need of preserving nature because it is our "ethical obligation to restore such ecosystems" (Noss 172) as this study's main purpose is to preserve nature's beauty, peace, harmony, purity, elegance, and balance of natural interactions in each setting.

6.3 Recommendation for Future Studies

My research study primarily focused upon the analyses of the selected works of two famous South Asian fiction writers in the backdrop of ecocritical theoretical stance propounded by Robert Douglas White and R. F Noss. The selected works not only highlight the problems which both nature and marginalized human factions are facing but also come up with possible solutions, resolve these issues. My research is limited to the South Asian location and thus it presents a limited scope in the field of ecocriticism.

My recommendation for the future researchers would be that they should conduct research on Canadian, African American and Australian literary works to see how these are representing nature. Moreover, it would be better if a comparative study of the literary works across culture be conducted to see the similarities and differences in terms of representations of environmental issues and how they offer some strategies or plans to square with these problems.

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