

**Distortion of Ecosphere and its Effects: an
Ecocritical Study of Uzma Aslam Khan's
*Trespassing and Thinner than Skin***

By

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ABSTRACT

Thesis Title: Distortion of Ecosphere and Its Effects:an Ecocritical Study of Uzma Aslam Khan's *Trespassing* and *Thinner than Skin*

A balanced ecosphere is significant for a healthy cycle of life. The environmental condition across the globe is getting worse day by day. Hazards of global warming and pollution are affecting the ecosphere drastically. Environmentalists take these hazards as the cause of retaliation of nature in the form of floods, storms, famine etc. The research in hand is an ecocritical study of Uzma Aslam Khan's contemporary novels *Trespassing* and *Thinner than Skin*. The texts highlight the atmospheric crisis that lurks across Pakistan. The purpose of the study is to support the contention that the unhealthy activities of human beings pollute their environment and mental health. It also aims to support the notion that human beings are intruder in the natural world as they try to challenge the equilibrium of the natural world. The study further explores the animate nature of nature whereby nature either becomes ferocious or benevolent. At the same time, the novels draw upon a relation between human's culture and their ecosystem that is why the chosen theoretical framework is Cheryll Glotfelty's principles of ecocriticism. The theory rejects the view about nature as a social construction. Nature is usually considered as a marginalized subject that is brought up to the centre by ecocritics to understand the mutual/symbiotic relationship of nature and culture of human beings. Textual analysis as a method links the series of events in the chosen texts with the ideologies propounded by Glotfelty. The story of *Trespassing* revolves around the production of silk. Through an ecocritical gaze, for example, it becomes easy to understand that how the manufacturing of cloth leads towards the death of innocent worms. A large portion of *Trespassing* revolves around the animal world like silk worm and marine life. Similarly, *Thinner than Skin* is set in the northern areas of Pakistan. This beauty is distorted and abused by the intrusion of human beings. The study becomes significant in realizing the fact that the environmental crisis is not limited to certain geographical regions, it has become a global concern. Also, human beings should amend their ways to restore the balance in the ecosphere.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents and siblings who are always there to motivate me and pray for my success.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Eco criticism

This research is an ecocritical study of Uzma Aslam Khan's novels *Trespassing* (2004) and *Thinner than Skin* (2012). Ecocriticism is the study of connection between literature and environment (Glotfelty xviii). Ecocriticism is critical broadening of literary studies to include texts that deal with non-human world and our relationship to this world. There is an incisive influence of nature on the lives of human beings and for ecocritics a two-way interaction exists between human beings and nature; Human beings effect nature and are affected by it. In her book *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* (1996), Glotfelty highlights the effects of human cultural activities on ecosphere as human beings pollute environment for their own luxuries. This is evident in both selected novels (*Trespassing and Thinner than Skin*), as human beings trespass into natural world, distort it and in the end find their destiny. However, ecocritics want to preserve the natural world from the interference of human beings.

Ecocritics have a staunch belief that "nature really exist ... [it] affects us and which we can effect, perhaps fatally, if we mistreat it" (Barry 252). This quote crystallizes the stance of ecocritics, that the human world and natural world are inseparable, as there lies a close affinity between the two. A two way interaction of nature and human beings clearly suggests that ecosphere has direct influence on our lives and actions of human beings can affect the natural world adversely. The word 'perhaps fatally' averts the stereotypical image of nature constructed in our minds that it is always benign and benevolent. Above mentioned quote is a fundamental premise of ecocriticism, as it admonishes us from the annihilating power of nature. This research revolves around the above mentioned statement

and tends to justify the statement with the help of evidences extracted from the text. It warns us that gentle, sublime nature of Wordsworth can also be hostile and antagonistic, if we mishandle it.

Ecocritics do not treat nature as a secondary object; rather they treat it as a significant entity which has capacity to regulate our mind and body. According to Buell “physical environment influence human imagination and cognition” (qtd. in Yaqoob 94). Human beings cannot detach themselves from the nature’s kingdom. Environment has an immediate affect on our body and health and this fact is justified by Nash when he says “the local environment of an area can be understood by the physical health of its inhabitants” (qtd. in Alamio 104). Thus for Ecocritics, nature is an important subject which needs a special focus.

Ecocritics want to bring change in contemporary society by imparting awareness among us, so that we can realize how our selfish desires can destroy the natural sphere and adulterate the world beyond limits. This statement proposes that connection of culture and environment holds a pivotal position in this theory. Our modern life style and cultural artifacts are constant threats to the biosphere of Earth. Natural resources are being gobbled by technical innovations gradually. Depletion of Ozone layer, increasing global warming, melting of glaciers at very high speed are the testimony of our negligence towards natural world which bring our natural world at the verge of extinction. So our habits and cultural practices have direct relation with the natural world. If the equilibrium of ecosphere gets disturb by us, then the natural world has capacity to distort the balance of our lives. The amicable nature which once used to nurture human beings can be inimical if we mistreat it, as nature is not a passive agent in human’s life rather it is an interactive and animate artifact.

“Ecocritics also believe that nature [is] inseparable from human culture and practices” (Alaimo 106). The Human world and natural world are integrated so well that now it is difficult to imagine nature without existence of human beings, as they have conquered every corner of world and now “for the first time in human history, no true wilderness any longer exists on planet” (Barry 257). Boundaries of the natural world have been touched upon by human beings with technical advancement. The Cosmogenic theory

of four classic, states that all matters, from human beings to the creation of universe, are basically derived from four basic elements: air, fire, water and earth which are components of the natural world. This theory reinforces central debate of ecocriticism that “there’s close link between human and non-human” (Jimmy 370). The words ‘human and non human’ further take us to the realm of human made world which is replete with cultural practices and away from nature.

Evolution of theory in the early twentieth century challenges and subverts the prevalent notion about literature that it has a universal appeal and it is a mouthpiece of all humanity. Emergence of a literary theory highlights the politicized nature of literature and gives voice to the marginalized groups like poor class, women, colonized etc. Marxism asserts the rights of labor class, feminism gives voice to unheard and peripheral group of women in patriarchal society, post colonialism questions biased colonial narrative, and deconstruction deconstructs binary opposition. All these theories collapse central marginal distinction. The stance of Peter Barry further validates the nature of theory, “theorist distrust all totalizing notions ... thus the appeal to the idea of generalized, supposedly inclusive, human nature is likely in practice to marginalize or denigrate, or even deny the humanity of women, or disadvantaged groups” (Barry 36). Theories tend to uncover biases and give representation to relegated groups, likewise ecocriticism, also brings the neglected realm of nature to the forefront as it is mentioned by Serpil Opperman in his essay *Ecocriticism: Natural world in the literary viewfinder* that “ecocriticism... discusses how it [nature] gets marginalized or silenced by ... human language” (4). Ecocriticism is an approach where nature speaks for itself, for its survival and integrity. Through ecocriticism, unheard voice of the natural world can be grasped. And for this reason, ecocritics do not treat nature as mere setting or secondary object rather they treat it as a living entity which plays a vital role in the lives of human beings as Cheryll Glotfelty mentions that “nature not just as the stage upon which the human story is acted out, but as an actor in the drama” (Glotfelty xxi). The quoted line is self-explanatory as it clearly informs that consideration of nature as an inanimate object is illusionary, in fact it is the major actor in drama like lives of human beings, so for ecocritics nature exists like all other major characters of drama which defines our health, life and fate. The persona of nature is well integrated in the plot of drama and it shapes the denouement of drama.

Relationship of culture and nature is a primal debate in eco criticism, as our cultural practices have an adverse affect on ecosphere. Ecocritics resist dichotomy between nature and culture and support an integrated web lies between nature and culture. They believe that the human world and natural world are unified so well that it is difficult to study nature without human beings. Human world and natural world have bilateral relation as according to Glotfelty nature and culture are entangled with each other in multiple ways (qtd. in Das 449). Ecocriticism, as a theory, aims to study bondage between the human and non-human world. Ecocriticism draws connection between the natural world and human made world as this theory is based on the elementary principle that human culture is connected to physical world, affecting it and affected by it (Glotfelty xix). Ecocritics renounce binary opposition between nature and culture (Das 450), and seek to deal the both under same framework, as they believe both are constituent elements for each other. So, a two way association of culture and nature is the major concern for ecocritics. Through healthy criticism they attempt to build a balanced relation between both entities. Through literature and criticism, critics want to bring back the lost harmony of both worlds, as according to Glotfelty “conscious rising is its [ecocriticism] most important task” (Glotfelty xxiv). And literature can serve as a medium to impart awareness among people about existing problems of the earth. According to Ann B. Dobie ecocriticism is a way to renew a reader’s awareness of the non-human world and his and her responsibility to sustain it (Dobie 239). Ecologist and scholars are perturbed to brainstorm some solutions for the survival of the earth. Cataclysmic condition of this planet is largely a by-product of our cultural activities as “ecocriticism takes as its subject the interconnection between nature and culture” (Glotfelty xix). So it is collective responsibility of every citizen to preserve the living planet from further destruction.

The collapse of duality between culture and nature gives birth to many other debates linked with culture. As the present unstable situation of the earth is directly proportion to human activities and their by-products so, culture holds a significant place in this theory. Culture and its implications on nature is interested domain for eco critics and for the reason they reject the idea of linguistic and social construction in literary theory. Theories generally consider our world constructed socially and linguistically Theory falsifies the existence of absolute truth as it believes that everything encompassing our identity, gender

roles and selfhood are shaped and defined by our society and culture. Therefore, theory challenges authenticity of fix truths and makes us believe that everything is dependent upon political, social and economic factors as it is mentioned by Peter Barry that “all these [gender identity, selfhood etc] are contingent categories ... rather than absolute one” (Barry 36). But ecocritics have a contrary belief, they defy the idea of social construction as for them nature has a real existence; it is not linguistically and socially constructed. Nature is an external reality, it’s not a linguistic construct. Ecocritics do not treat nature merely as a concept rather they consider it a living creature which has a real presence. So ecocriticism validates the presence of authentic truth as for them nature is an unconditional truth, it really exists, it is a living entity which is powerful enough to control our lives. The unalienable presence of nature is further justified by the remarks of Kate Soper, “it isn’t language which has a hole in its ozone layer” (Coupe 123). The witty remarks of Kate Soper suggest two things: one, it brings our attention towards earth’s disastrous condition and that its remedy is more important than language study. Secondly, ozone layer really exists as it is proved scientifically and presence of ozone layer affirms the physical existence of nature.

Mutual relation of nature and culture gives rise to many other discussions, for instance, though nature is treated differently in different cultures, this treatment towards nature does not deny the physical presence of nature. Behavior towards nature is culturally determined but diversity of attitude towards nature does not deny the existence of nature (Barry 254).

Another vital aspect of nature and culture’s connection is about the distinction between nature and culture. Ecocritics believe in fusion of both entities and refuse clear-cut boundaries between the two. For them, the boundary between nature and culture is amorphous and porous and allows culture to intermingle with nature to different extent. Peter Barry makes the above mentioned argument legalize by mentioning the example of state. A state is an amalgamation of nature and culture, a state which is an epitome of an intermediate shape of culture and nature doesn’t negate the difference between culture and nature as mentioned by Peter Barry “we have nature and culture and states partaking of both and all three are real” (Barry 255). Here state serves as a medium to coalesce the margins of culture and nature. A state is a place where the boundaries of culture and nature

are overlapped, but it doesn't quash the presence of either nature or culture. Nature and culture move side by side in the sphere of eco criticism as culture and nature share a reciprocated relationship. Areas like forest, fields, hills and parks approve the union of nature and culture, but sometimes their borders are very clear in the form of wilderness where balance of the natural world is not distorted by human beings. Sometimes, surrounding outlines of culture and nature are partially or completely overlapped as evident in the form of gardens, woods, waterfalls etc. But these natural areas do not diminish the existence of either nature or culture. Ecocriticism is also defined in terms of culture "ecocriticism is literary and cultural criticism from an environmentalist point of view" (Das 448). So we cannot study nature in isolation without considering its relationship with culture as nature and culture stand side by side.

An ecocritic tries to figure out this bi-directional association of human beings and their environment. He tends to find how is nature represented in a text? How does the natural world get polluted day by day by human beings? How does nature effect our mind and body? How is nature playing its role in the progression of plot? How are human beings responsible to transform crude nature into human made nature? Does nature merely act as setting in a narrative or it has implications on characters' lives? How can we save our planet from catastrophe? Does nature really exist or it's just an anthropomorphic creation? How far culture and nature are connected? How is the subject of nature treated differently by different writers and cultures? What are our ethical responsibilities to procure our living habitat? Researcher from this field tries to bring these questions to surface in a very implicit and subtle way so that readers can relate these questions to their real life and find possible solutions for prevailing problems of this modern industrialized world.

Human beings have capability to improve their living conditions with the passage of time. Human beings evolve as the time passes on, and the world is also progressing day by day. With the advent of modernization, obsolete ways of life have been replaced by new technologies. Modern machines have rendered our lives easy apparently; we are satisfied with so called modern world. But actually, we human beings are hollow from inside and reduced as commodities in our self-made milieu. Human beings have transformed the world to such an extent that now it is hard to find any traces of crude nature. Ecocritics had a desperate urge to critically analyze the symbiotic relation of human beings and nature,

and for the purpose they just put on an eco-conscious lens to examine the real world and the world of literature from that gaze. Above mentioned discussion can be summed up in this way, ecocriticism is the study of a two-way interactions of human beings with nature and how this relation is portrayed in literature.

1.2 Uzma Aslam Khan

Uzma Aslam Khan, a south Asian writer is the author of four novels and short stories. She got recognition right after the publication of her first novel *The Story of Noble Riot* (2001). She was born in Lahore and raised in Karachi. Karachi remains an influential place in her works. *Trespassing* is set in Karachi. Similarly, half the story of *Thinner than Skin* is set in Karachi. Her works are acknowledged largely in Pakistan as well as in the West. *Trespassing* is nominated for commonwealth prize. *The Geometry of God* has been selected as a best book by Kirkus Reviews. *The Geometry of God* also won an award in Independent publisher book award. *Thinner than skin* is a highly admired novel; it won best fiction prize from KLF. It was also nominated for Man Asian literary prize. Khan mentions in one of her interviews that Virginia Wolf's book *A Room of One's Own* is her inspirational book. Like Virginia Wolf, Khan wants her women liberated from constraints of the society. Women depicted in Khan's novels are strong and assertive who struggle to break down the stereotypes of society. Khan gives equal voice to female characters. She incorporates large to smallest detail including politics and personal relations in her novels. She is a fearless writer who is not afraid of talking about anything, be it politics or sexuality. In one of her interviews with *Dawn*, she says that "love, lust, sex and betrayal all demand detailed detail" (Sethna), and all these details are well mentioned in any work. In the same interview with *Dawn* she says "all my novels have begun either with an image and/or a voice" (Sethna). Her works are amalgamation of politics, love and mystery.

1.3 *Thinner than Skin*: An Outline

Thinner than Skin deals with the ecology of ultimate north of Pakistan. It is a story of four friends who start their journey towards the northern Pakistan. It is also a story of love, identity and betrayal with a provoking question whose land this Pakistan belongs to. Moreover, it is also a story about nomads, their lifestyle, their religious rituals and their free movement across the land of Pakistan. Narrative techniques of Khan enlighten readers

about the geography and culture of Pakistan. The novel allows readers to take a ride into the northern areas of Pakistan where they can witness traditional rituals of indigenous people, flora and fauna of Kaghan and Hunza Valley in depth. *Thinner than Skin* is a modern tale; its story oscillates between past and present. It incorporates the characteristics of modern story as it has sub plots which intersect and inform each other in the end, and there is no time constrain in the progression of plot.

The story is told in first and third person narrative. The story revolves around the characters of Farhana and Nadir who develop a romantic relationship in America; together they decide to visit the northern Pakistan. Nadir is a photographer and his photography is not acknowledged in America and he is advised to go back to Pakistan to take pictures of poverty and miseries of Pakistan if he wants to excel in his profession. Farhana, on the other hand is interested to study the glaciers of Pakistan. They meet on a beach and an intimate relation begins to flourish between them. Farhana forces Nadir to take her back to the places in Pakistan which he loves most. Nadir is reluctant to take her back to Pakistan, however, her insistence forces him to do so. While enjoying their romantic relation in America, they both discuss their favourite moment of life. For Farhana, it was the time when she first saw Nadir on beach. Whereas, for Nadir, it was the moment when he observed the ceremony of ice - mating. Nadir gets disturb when he comes to know that Wes, a friend of Farhana, will also join them on their way back to Pakistan. Irfan, a friend of Nadir, joins the three as he has more knowledge about the northern places.

Four people start their journey towards Gilgit, however their plan changes when instead of going straight to Gilgit, they decide to stay in Kaghan, the place earlier visited by Irfan, Nadir and Zulikha. It was Irfan's idea to stay in Kaghan; he decided this route to pay tribute to his quondam visit.

Besides their story, the story of Maryam, a nomadic girl who practices pagan rituals, runs parallel to Nadir's story. She is a herder and her family moves to highland during the summer. A vivid description of their life style, their hospitable nature and the problems they face inform readers about nomadic culture. Two plots intersect each other when Nadir, Irfan , Farhana and Wes meet the nomadic family of Maryam. Union of two families changes the destiny of both families as Farhana gets closely attached to Kiran

(Maryam's daughter) within no time. Furthermore, Farhan imposes her will on Kiran's family to take her to the boat. Though Maryam does not want her daughter to go with the strangers (Nadir and Farhan are strangers for them), but Kiran's father cannot refuse the guests. He allows Farhana and Nadir to take his daughter to the boat. The boat starts to leak right after their journey, and Kiran loses her balance and falls into the river and is never found. This incident changes the life of Nadir and Maryam's family. The romantic relationship between Nadir and Farhana gets distorted as they blame each other for Kiran's death. Nadir was considered as the murderer of Kiran and treated differently after the incident. Due to incident, Maryam's family moves towards the lowland for Maryam's burial.

Before Kiran's death, the news of bomb blast in Karachi spreads all over Kaghan valley. It was also said that accomplice of bomb attacker had moved to the northern areas, so every person was suspected as an accomplice of attacker and people in Gilgit start to consider Nadir as the companion of bomb attacker. Apart from Nadir and Maryam's story, the story of Gafoor runs parallel in the plot. Gafoor, a childhood friend of Maryam returns from Tajikistan to meet Maryam. When he comes to know about Kiran's death, he vows to take revenge from Nadir. Gafoor, a merchant and trader of jade makes a plan to trap Nadir when Nadir and his friends will move towards Gilgit. Maryam's life in Balakot gets totally disturbed by frequent visits of police and turban men. Khan depicts the height of violence, cruelty and barbarity through the behavior of military men. These men admonish Maryam that they would kidnap her son. They humiliate her many times.

When four people Nadir, Irfan, Wes and Farhana reach Gilgit, Gafoor adopts a disguise of an escort and joins them, as security is needed at first hand for the visitors. Five people start to hike towards Ultar glacier. Gafoor puts a box wrapped in red color cloth with a bomb attached to it in Nadir's pack to seek the revenge of Kiran's death. Instead of one box, he puts two boxes wrapped with red cloth as Gafoor himself was confused about boxes when he picked them up from cave to drop them in Nadir's bag. During their hike, Nadir loses his trek and finds it with the help of camera's lenses. During taking shoots he also observes an intimate relationship between Farhana and Irfan. At that particular instant Gafoor comes to Nadir to kill him, but he spares him with a condition if he would go to the north of China with red box. The plan of Gafoor was to let Nadir cross the border with the

box so that he will be suspected as a bomb attacker and killed. But this plan couldn't work well as the box gets interchanged with the second red box, packed in Irfan's bag. In this way Nadir had a narrow escape from death and story ends when he is protected by a nomadic family across the border after he is beaten brutally by police due to suspicion.

Through her novel, Khan informs us about the history of ancient Silk road. She also discusses the time when Pakistan provided air base to America for drone attacks on Afghan border. It can be said that *Thinner than skin* is the amalgamation of many things; including history, politics and geography of Pakistan. Theme of love, betrayal and quest for identity run parallel amid the historical, political and geographical details of Pakistan.

1.4 *Trespassing*: An Outline

Trespassing is set in Karachi where pollution and corruption are at their peak. At the same time, Karachi has remained the context of indigenous fiction that focuses on individuals and their life styles there. This study is going to tackle this context from an ecocritical stance. The serenity of this metropolitan city is disrupted by human beings and they suffer due to their transgressive nature. The novel revolves around the life of Dia; a silk farmer, and Daanish; a shell collector. In some or the other, both characters are linked with the natural world. Dia is the daughter of widowed silk farmer, her job demands her to disturb natural life cycle of silk worms by transforming their cocoons into threads through warm water. Similarly, Daanish has a hobby of collecting sea creatures.

The novel is set in the southern area of Pakistan and presents a turbulent picture of Pakistan during 1980 and 1990's. The novel is about the cyclic love tragedy of Dia and Daanish and their parents Shafqat and Riffat. Dia, Daanish, Anu, Salaamat and Riffat are the eponymous heroes of different chapters of the novel, as each chapter starts with their names. Novel starts in 1992, when Daanish moves towards Karachi to attend his father's funeral. His father, Shafqat was a doctor and had deep love for sea life. Shafqat loved to visit different countries of the world from where he used to bring precious sea shells and pearls for his son Daanish. Daanish gets a scholarship to study in America and there he witnesses a biased attitude of the American's media towards Pakistan. Through her novel, Khan wants to highlight the folly of Pakistani people who romanticize ideal life in America. She wants to inform readers that life in America is no more different from Pakistan as

Daanish explains it plainly to Dia “There’s cheating there [America] too. Everyone thinks there is different. It isn’t. The deceit is more covert” (Khan 296). When Daanish comes back to attend his father’s funeral, he finds different problems in Pakistan like load shedding, water shortage and terror in every corner of Karachi. The novel is set in a time period, when people were divided into different groups and factions like Muhjair, Pathan, Sindhis and Punjabis and quarrel each other with the name of freedom. Filthy politics was prevailed in Karachi and target killing was the favorite hobby of the people. People are depicted as merciless creatures and full of hatred for other groups. The land is divided into rivers, mountain in *Thinner than Skin*, here land is divided among different ethnicities.

When Daanish comes back to Pakistan to attend his father’s funeral, his mother wants him to marry Nissrine, who is Dia’s best friend. But instead of Nissrine, he gets attracted towards Dia. Soon they have secret meetings. Dia, who is the daughter of Riffat, is a confident and independent girl like her mother. She runs a silk factory but she could not detour herself from the attraction she had for Daanish. Cove along the beach becomes their rendezvous and soon they seem to enjoy their relationship on sea shore. When Dia’s mother comes to know about father of Daanish, she warns her daughter never to meet Daanish again. Riffat is depicted as a liberal woman who preaches her daughter to marry out of love but when she finds out that Daanish is Shafqat’s son, she admonishes her daughter to never see him again. However, Dia manages to betray her mother by having frequent meetings with Daanish, first at cove then in an isolated home in Daanish’s street. Daanish borrows a car from Khurram to meet Dia. Khurram agrees but in the company of Salaamat who would accompany Dia and Daanish during their meeting. So Salaamat becomes witness of their illicit relation. Soon Daanish’s mother finds out the secret meetings of Daanish with the help of Salaamat. The story of Salaamat runs parallel to the tragic love story of Dia and Daanish. Through the story of Salmaat, we come to know how his family was forced to leave the sea-shore and how he joined freedom fighters camp. If on one side, Dia’s life represents the life of elite class, then on the other side through Salaamat’s eyes we witness the poverty, corruption and filth in Karachi.

In the novel, we also find a long mesh where each character is connected to other characters in multiple ways. Inam Gul, who is the father of Salaamat is a cook at Dia’s home. Sumbal, who is the sister of Salaamat is the rearer of silkworms at Riffat’s farm.

Salaamat is the driver of Khurram's Friend. Shafqat was the lover of Dia's mother in 1960 and also the father of Dia. In this way each character is connected to another one in many ways. After finding Dia and Daanish's relationship, Daanish's mother tells him the story of his faithless father. Likewise Dia's mother informs Dia about her tragic love story in Canada. Dia's mother, Riffat and Daanish's father, Shafqat enjoyed the lovely relation in Canada twenty years ago. Riffat and Shafqat had very close relations and were about to marry but one day their different thoughts rupture their peace and dreams. Riffat was a strong feminist and had a strong belief that women should be resourceful if they want to enjoy their freedom. On the contrary, Shafqat belonged to a different school of thought where women were considered to play a restricted role in a society. Difference of opinion brought the end of their relationship and afterwards Shafqat married to Anu and Riffat to Mansoor.

Now after many years, their children follow their parent's footprints and were surprised to know that they are siblings as the blood of the same father (Shafqat) runs in their veins. Dia considers Mansoor as her father but he is not her father, she is an illicit child of Shafqat.

The novel starts with the murder of Mansoor. Mystery of Mansoor's murder allows readers to unravel a new riddle. Mr. Mansoor is murdered by Salaamat when Salaamat joins Fatah's army. Khan weaves both stories in different threads but they merge in the end when we come to know the description of Mansoor's murder. Riffat told Mansoor about her relation with Shafqat, Mansoor could not bear the pain and fled away towards his farm. On his way, he is shot dead by the group of target killers including Salaamat. Mr. Mansoor is destined to be murdered by the member of family to whom once he had provided shelter when trawlers pushed that family away from sea. Salaamat and his family were made unemployed by trawl men, Salaamat's grandmother advised him to move to the city to find some work. First he joined a bus body makers shop, then he joined a freedom fighters camp and finally he became the driver of Khurram's father to transport weapons from one place to another. Through Salaamat's character, readers get a chance to ride in the narrow streets of Karachi, to witness the life of workers in bus shop, and to inhale the smell of explosives on the highway. Apart from Karachi, Khan informs his reader about description of Gulf war.

Khan has captured the gripping beauty of Pakistan and also informs us about the rapid degeneration of the ecosphere. Hence, both novels are appropriate to understand the biodiversity of Pakistan. As Khan is a Pakistani writer, grew up in Karachi and visited the northern areas so she has the audacity to present a clear and real picture of flora and fauna of Pakistan.

By keeping all the above mentioned facts in view, this research work traces out influence of human's activities on our environment and the role played by nature to define our destinies. Hence, main focus of this research is to highlight the affects of careless activities on our environment and it is evident in both novels as human beings trespass into the natural world, distort it and in the end find their destiny.

1.5 Statement of Problem

A healthy life is undoubtedly linked with a balanced ecosphere. The condition of earth is getting worse day by day. Whole world is facing the issue of global warming and pollution, which may be taken as a retaliation of nature that is being abused. This present research focuses on the current atmospheric crisis in Pakistan as presented in Uzma Aslam Khan's novels *Thinner than Skin* and *Trespassing*.

1.6 Objectives of Study

- To explore animate nature of nature
- To trace out ferocious and benevolent qualities of nature
- To support the contention that unhealthy activities of human beings pollute their environment and mental health
 - To trace out relationship between human culture and their ecosystem
 - To highlight the factors that deteriorate the healthy sphere.
 - To support the notion that human beings are intruder in the natural world if they try to challenge the equilibrium of the natural world

1.7 Research Questions

- How is nature represented in *Trespassing* and *Thinner than skin* by Uzma Aslam Khan?

- How far do human activities affect the natural world as presented in the texts?
- How does nature play its role in defining the fate of human beings in the texts?
- To what extent are the boundaries of natural world and human world blurred in the chosen texts?

1.8 Significance of Study

This research aims to develop an understanding of the effects of human's activities on nature. This study gives an insight and an ecocritical interpretation of the chosen texts. This research intends to be a reawakening for its references to the context of an unhealthy ecosphere where man abuses nature and the nature retaliates; it informs readers about present critical condition of our planet as presented in the fictional texts of *Trespassing* and *Thinner than Skin*. And this appears to be an implicit message of Uzma Aslam Khan.

The research also proves significant as it explores various dimensions of ecocriticism in the chosen novels; it fills in the lacunae created by a dearth of exploration in Pakistani fiction in English.

1.9 Delimitation

The study is delimited to the analysis of two contemporary Pakistani novels in English i.e. *Trespassing* and *Thinner than Skin* by Uzma Aslam Khan. Both novels are written by the author of Pakistani origin who has first-hand experience of the prevailing atmospheric degenerations in the region. Since ecocriticism has been selected as a theoretical tool, analysis is confined to Cheryll Glotfelty's theory of ecocriticism.

1.10 Chapter Breakdown

Following the rules and the standard sketch of a literary thesis, this qualitative research thesis is divided into the following five major chapters for the development of argument and for better understanding of the readers:

Introduction

This chapter introduces research objectives, research questions, statement of the problem, significance of the study and delimitation to the readers. In the first chapter, argument and selected works for the study along with author are briefly discussed.

Literature Review

This chapter reviews relevant literature and analyzes works already done on this theory. The research already conducted on Uzma Aslam Khan is critically reviewed. Works already done on the application of ecocriticism have been evaluated.

Research Methodology

In this chapter research design, research approach and methodology have been explained. Theoretical framework is also discussed in length.

Textual Analysis

In this chapter principals of ecocriticism are applied on the texts to meet set objectives. This chapter analyzes the texts deeply to find all elements essential for an ecocritical study.

Conclusion

In this chapter, research has been concluded and findings are mentioned. Different approaches which can be applied for future research are also discussed.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter critically reviews already existing literature related to my research. Since Uzma Aslam Khan is one of the renowned Pakistani contemporary writers, her works have been analyzed earlier through different perspectives. This chapter highlights the prior research done on the selected novels. It also acknowledges former study to highlight a gap in previous researches where this current research fits into. For the purpose, different thesis, articles, journals and newspapers reviews which are related to this research are critically viewed to make them a part of this chapter. Apart from them, other works which were analyzed through an ecocritical perspective are also evaluated. The purpose of this chapter is to recognize and admit the endeavor of other researchers and to add a new dimension to existing literature.

For the sake of clarity, I have divided this chapter into three sections. Section one discusses the current environmental conditions of Pakistan as it is closely linked to my research. Section two deals with the research conducted on Uzma Aslam Khan and her works. Section three discusses various literary works upon which ecocriticism has been applied earlier.

Section 1

As mentioned earlier that the selected theory connects literature with ecology so it is indispensable to study the current environmental conditions of Pakistan to comprehend the central concern of Uzma Aslam Khan. As *Trespassing* is written against the background of Karachi and *Thinner than Skin* in the northern areas so the meteorological details of these areas are helpful in connecting the scientific facts with my research which authenticates this research. It is also imperative to connect scientific knowledge with literature to get deeper and profound understanding of novels. So for the reason, I have

reviewed newspapers, articles, case studies to get authentic and in depth knowledge about the present atmospheric conditions of Pakistan.

2.1 Meteorological Condition of Pakistan

Rapid increase of pollution has an adverse affect on human health. Pakistan is one of those countries who is victim of toxic wastes. Changing climatic conditions pose serious threat to every sphere of life. Be it human health, crops, rivers or the economy of country everything is affected by increasing pollution. Syed Muhammad Abubakr's report titled as *Pakistan 7th Most Vulnerable Country to climate change* (2017), published in *Dawn* informs us about damage occurred due to changed climatic patterns. He brings a bitter reality to the forefront that "the super flood of 2010 placed Pakistan on the top slot among the countries most affected by climate change" (Abu bakar).

Nushmiya Sukhera's report *The Perils of Inaction on Climate change in Pakistan* published in *Dawn*(2017) warns readers about the consequences of rapidly growing pollution on account of our inactivity. According to her report, agricultural and livestock production are largely effected by changing weather patterns. An average temperature of Pakistan has been increased and as a result now the summer season is longer than the winter. She highlights the affects of increased temperature on crops that "an increase of 1c in mean temperature may reduce wheat yield by 5 to 7 percent in country" (Sukhera). Apart from wheat, she also identifies low annual growth of rice, cotton, sunflower and sugar cane (Sukhera). Another report named as *Environmental Pollution and Healthy Pakistan* (2016) published in *The Nation* by Muhammad Nadeem Bhatti highlights the consequences of changed climatic pattern on human health. According to him, smog produced from vehicles and industries can engender "emphysema, asthma, chronic bronchitis, lung infection and cancer" (Bhatti). *The Express Tribune* newspaper provides an alarming fact to the readers that "the horrific impact of air pollution is causing more than 20,000 premature deaths among adults" (Wasif). Sehrish Wasif also mentions, "Pakistan's economic hub Karachi is perhaps the worst hit" (Wasif). It is significant to mention the ambiance of Karachi as it is the locale of *Trespassing*. Karachi is the largest and most populous city of Pakistan and this city is surrounded by constant threat of increasing pollution. According to WHO report published in *The Newsteller* (2015), "Karachi is the fifth most polluted city in the world"

(The Newsteller). But it is not only Karachi which is affected by pollution; other regions of Pakistan are getting equally affected.

Glaciers in the northern areas are melting and retreating day by day, consequently availability of fresh water is also getting scant. Tim Craig published a report in *Washington Post* and the title of report *Pakistan has More Glaciers than Almost Anywhere on Earth but They are at Risk* suggests present receding nature of glaciers. Tim Craig incorporates the views of native of the village in his article to give us a more vivid picture of the changing glaciers. He includes the words of Abdul Nasir who is the local villager of Chitral valley in his article “we worry it [glaciers] may vanish and there will be no drinking water” (Craig). Craig acknowledges the words of hotel’s owner Siraj-ul-Malik by mentioning them in his article. Craig quotes the words of Siraj-ul-Malik in this way “it used to take me a whole day to cross glaciers, he said now it will take me two hours” (Craig). Words of Siraj-ul-Malik are clear evidence of the shrinking nature of glaciers. Craig also quotes the view point of Arshad Abbasi, who is an expert of energy and water resources to tell us the reason of changed behavior of glaciers that “people say global warming, but in fact its human activity” (Craig). Article 1 of the UN framework convention on climate change also considers human beings responsible for climate change as it says “climate change means a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activities that alters the composition of global atmosphere” (UNFCCC 7).

Abdul Hameed, an associate professor of Degree College Gilgit publishes an article with the name of *Climate Change and Glacier Melting; A Case Study on Retreating Karakoram Glaciers, Pakistan* (2016) in which he mentions the affects of glacier melting on the surface of the earth. According to him, “snow and ice cover is decreasing, and sea level is increasing. The frequency and severity of droughts and heat waves are increasing” (Hameed). *Dawn* newspaper’s report published in 2013, anticipates the intimidating future of Pakistan as it says, “Pakistan glaciers will melt by 2035” (Dawn.com). *The Express Tribune* newspaper also brings this bitter reality to lime light that “120 of the glaciers [in Pakistan] are showing signs of melting” (Reuters). All of the above facts and figures mentioned in different newspapers inform us about current horror provoking situation of Pakistan’s climate which needs an immediate solution.

2.2 Multi-Dimensional Readings of Uzma Aslam Khan's Work

Uzma Aslam Khan, a modern Pakistani writer, attained international recognition right after the publication of her first novel. Many researchers give different interpretations to her works and much research are still in progress. The volume of literary interpretations of her works is growing with every passing day.

Rohma Saleem's article *Marketing Otherness: A Re-orientalist Gaze into Pakistani Fiction with Focus on Trespassing and Typhoon* (2017) published in *Journal of Research* discusses the politicized techniques of orient writers to assuage their master's (occident) desires. Rohma Saleem justifies her stance with the help of two novels; *Typhoon* by Qaisra Shahraz and *Trespassing* by Uzma Aslam Khan. Her research revolves around the major argument that the writers who get fame in international market are undoubtedly those whose writings are replete with stereotypical, reductionist and pejorative images of the exotic east. Their writings portray east as exotic, mysterious, land of corrupt, backward and poor people. Writers who reinforce this monolithic representation of the east are highly praised in the west as this representation reserves a valuable place for them in the western market. In this way, eastern writers not only assert the superiority of the west over the east, but they also strengthen the fixed and reduced images of colonized ones as it is mentioned in her article that re-orientalist writings fix "reductionist representation at the expense of holistic ones, and a deliberate process of self-othering" (Saleem 141). Saleem uses the framework of Graham Huggan and Lisa Lau as "Lau and Huggans share the same ground against the aggressive promotion of South Asian origin authors to make a marketable commodity out of exoticizing the orient"(Saleem141). Eastern writers act as mediators between the two cultures (east and west) and they also fill up the gap between the two cultures by their representation. Saleem also quotes the words of an Indian critic Muker Jee to substantiate her thesis statement that orient writers exaggerate, exoticize and partially portray the picture of their land to conciliate and appease the master's taste. Writers put on subjective lens to describe the objective truths (Saleem147). Saleem validates her standpoint by referring to *Trespassing* where orientalist techniques are used by writer. Re Orientalism "focuses on the issue of representation as it is done by orientals themselves ... but that

representation has been criticized for its reductionist tendencies” (Saleem 143). *Trespassing* presents the same negative picture of Pakistan. Novel is set in Karachi which is shown as a hub of corruption, terrorism, ethnic and religious conflicts. All negativity of the city is over emphasized, and the true picture of real Pakistan is somehow missing. (Saleem 146).

Saleem is of view that like all other contemporary Pakistani novels, *Trespassing* is also full of political debates of its era. By discussing the dirty picture of Karachi, Khan tends to present an actual picture of Pakistan which is only unilateral dimension of Pakistan (Saleem154). Review of an Indian English language writer ,Anita Nair validates the central argument of Saleem as she says about Khan “here comes Uzma Aslam Khan who tells us that life in Pakistan is no different from that in India ... from crimes perpetuated against humanity and nature to...rampant corruption of power cuts” (Nair). Khan draws a contrast between the eastern and western world and this technique keeps her position strong among other reorient writers. She juxtaposes the two worlds to let the readers draw a comparison between so called sophisticated western and barbaric eastern life style. Danish, a product of western culture is shown as civilized person while guests on his father’s funeral are epitome of uneducated mob. Similarly another technique used by Khan to “create a sense of different culture” (qtd. In Saleem 157) is the use of vocabulary associated with indigenous culture like “Hookah” which is typically linked with Pakistani culture. Similarly many other local words like chachoo, betie “establish the novel firmly in local color and give[s] western readers a taste of the unfamiliar and hence exotic” (Saleem158). Saleem winds up her article with the conclusion that the obsessions to portray the true picture of native culture makes writers like Khan to fall under the category of reorientalism. This paper reaffirms a fact that “Pakistani English fiction writers consciously or otherwise, resorts to techniques of reorientalism in projecting the indigenous culture” (Saleem159).

Cristy Lee Duce’s thesis *In Love and War: The Politics of Romance in Four 21st Century Pakistani novels* discusses the techniques of four colonial writers who use the element of love and romance to portray the macrocosmic political picture of their geographical areas. According to Duce, political and social factors intervene and effect the private life of characters present in any plot. She justifies her argument by referring to four South Asian works; *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid, *Trespassing* by Uzma Aslam Khan, *The Wasted Vigil* by Nadeem Aslam and *Burnt Shadow* by Kamila

Shamsie. Authors of these four novels have same geographical origin, so Duce compares the works of these authors in relation to their treatment with politics and gender. While discussing *Trespassing* in introduction, Duce, “focuses specifically on theme of love and transgression...[And]individual relations illustrate hierarchies of power at large scale and thence how the political shapes the private” (Duce 4). Duce substantiates her argument by giving in detail analysis of Dia, Danish and Shafqat, Riffat’s romantic relationship. This thesis also revolves around the major idea that “the decisions of past determine the possibilities and limitations of the present and future” (Duce 5). She also argues that a writer; particularly a post colonial one cannot detaches himself from the politics of its region. She incorporates Said’s words that literature is inseparable from social context (qtd. in Duce 7). So there is a sharp influence of Pakistan’s politics on Pakistani literature. Duce presents the major argument of her thesis in very meticulous way “stories of love have provided the vehicle, through which writer could comment on the condition of their time, highlights social concern or caution against particular behavior” (Duce 21). Duce intersects post colonial theory with feminism to analyze the characterization of *Trespassing*, as both theories objurgate uneven distribution of power, based on nationality and gender so in a way they are very similar to each other. Post-colonial theory “mainly addresses power asymmetries based on ethnicity and nationality ... [and] feminism also centers on power and sub ordinates” (Duce17). Researcher tries to present a bigger picture of nations by connecting it to a miniature model of patriarchal society where the dynamics of power act at different levels as Duce mentions that “imperialism and patriarchy often mirror each other” (17). So in a way feminism is linked with the theme of romance. By highlighting the strong voices of female characters in *Trespassing*, Duce wants to explore the politics of gender in her thesis. By bringing the statement of Khan to the surface that she had come from a place where linear time does not exist (fiction and war), Duce explores both private and political turmoil at personal and impersonal level. Riffat in *Trespassing* typifies a “woman resistant to both colonialism and patriarchy” (Duce 41), builds relation with Shafqat who on one hand opposes colonization but at the same time imposes his domination over Riffat, and his behavior depicts double standards of the society. Shafqat and his son “sustain hierarchies based on gender within their romantic relationship” (Duce 41). The end of Dia’s romantic relation with Danish substantiates the fact that “Dia suffers

the tyranny of patriarchy and destiny” (Duce 45). By juxtaposing the tragic story of Dia and Danish with tragic events in the history of Pakistan, Duce concludes her thesis by the final words that “manifold layers of oppression interlock to create their particular circumstances” (Duce 47).

Aroosa Kanwal, the author of book *Rethinking Identities in Contemporary Pakistani Fiction: Beyond 9/11* discusses the impact of war on terror and 9/11’s incident on Muslim identities. According to her, Muslims assume a new identity for the west after some political turmoil at national and international level. Kanwal chooses the works of Pakistani writers including Uzma Aslam Khan who portray antagonism of the west for the east. She argues that “‘war on terror’, which had the affect of equating Islam and Muslims with terrorism, has become a dominant political narrative in Europe and US in past few decades” (Aroosa 2). Pakistani writers together with Khan, foreground hatred and biased attitude of the west for the east in their writings. Kanwal has a view that 9/11 is not the only event which made the Muslim identity hyphenated rather “Gulfwar, Iranian revolution, alliance of US with the jihadist, the Afghan jihad are the other markers that changed the perception of west for east” (kanwal 6). Details of pre 9/11 events are well documented by Uzma Aslam Khan in her novel *Trespassing*. According to Kanwal, intra sectarian Muslim conflicts before 9/11 and then after 9/11 provided a platform to US to propagate a terrorist image of Pakistan. *Trespassing* informs readers about sectarian violence among different ethnicities in Karachi. Kanwal argues, “Khan links these issues [of stereotyping Muslims and war on terror] to sectarian conflicts ... and Islamic reforms in Pakistan since the 1970” (kanwal 16). *Trespassing* presents a vivid picture of political unrest in Pakistan particularly in the 1970 and 80s. However, fearless female characters in her novels collapsed the stereotypical image of veiled women which is again associated with war on terror. In her book, Kanwal also figures out how the lives of Diasporas Muslims are shaped by the political and social settings of their homeland with reference to the character sketch of Danish. While discussing the techniques of Khan, Kanwal concludes her analysis about *Trespassing* that “Khan unhesitatingly condemns Pakistan’s national and foreign policies during General Zia’s rule, and the US intervention in the internal affairs of other countries ... prepared the ground for current perception of radicalized Islam in Britain and the US” (Kanwal 74).

Mark Carey, M Jackson, Alessandro Antonello and Jaclyn Rushing apply feminist glaciology (a fusion of feminist political ecology and feminist post-colonial science), in their article *Glaciers, Gender, and Science: A Feminist Glaciology Framework For Global Environmental Change Research* to analyze Khan's short story *Ice Mating* which later becomes an important chapter of her novel *Thinner Than Skin*. Carey and coauthors of article argue that "global environment change research must pluralize its ontology, epistemologies and sensibilities" (Carey et al.19) by adding the experiences and narratives of indigenous people, folk glaciology and women to make glaciological knowledge more plausible. Khan, unlike historical glaciological discourses illustrates experiences of women to deliver the knowledge of glaciers. In this way Khan subverts "stereotypical and masculine's practice of glaciology" (Carey et al.18), thus adds plurality in her work by quoting experiences of local people in the land of ice. Glaciological knowledge produced by the west or colonizers usually suppress the voice of marginalized local people however "ice mating veers away from the more typical, masculine's representation of glacier" (Carey et al.15), and presents very sensual imagery of glaciers. Khan dismantles traditional technique of acquiring glacier knowledge through a western gaze, as she acquires this knowledge from the local inhabitants for her novel. Quoting from the article "this fictional story draws from local understanding of Karakorum, geomorphology, their culture of glaciers and mountains, the gendered nature of landscape perception, and the legacies of colonization" (Carey et al.16).

Anaya Jahanar Kabir's article *Deep Topographies in the Fiction of Uzma Aslam Khan* talks about two novels *Trespassing* and *The Geometry of God* to delineate real Pakistan by making its connection with the pre-partition history. Kabir finds out different symbols in Khan's work which are relatable to Pakistan's history and geography. Kabir considers the topography of Pakistan a source of re-rooting as the topography of Pakistan is replete with historical account. According to Kabir, in *Trespassing* the imagery of cocoon, silk route, truck art, fabric like ajrak, Makli hills identify the urge of the writer to connect with her roots. Above mentioned symbols built a link of Pakistan with boundaries of other countries and different historical accounts. After partition, the quest for identity and belonging was the major enigma for every individual. Symbols in the *Geometry of God* provide solution to this mystery. The natural objects like soil, Margala Hills, Pakicetus

(fossil of whale) give symbolic interpretations to relocate the sense of the real Pakistan and Pakistanis, as justified by the quotes from the text “the ancient sea in the present day soil, holding within itself the remains of original whale and original Pakistani, enables a dialectal relationship between prehistory ,history and answers identity politics by embracing uncertainty” (kabir 180). According to Kabir, Khan also considers the event of partition as a catalyst for identity crisis as it is mentioned in her article “the post-partition nation-state while a phenomena after lamented as divisive, is in now danger of withering away” (kabir 175).

Aamer Hussein’s review named as *A silken web of politics and passion* (2003) gives an overview of characters present in the *Trespassing* as he says “The novel is as packed with characters as a Karachi bus” (Hussein). According to him, each character of the novel has an important role to play for the progression of plot, Salamaat is a secondary character but his presence is important “through his eyes we glimpse a Pakistan –in particular the environs of Karachi” (Hussein). In his review, Hussein also links Khan with other contemporary writers of Pakistan as he mentions that like all other modern writers Khan’s work “grapples with social malaises of their country” (Hussein).

Islam Bibi in her thesis *Cultural Marxism; Pursuit Of Pleasure Principle In Uzma Aslam Khan Trespassing and The Geometry Of God* figures out the negative impact of cultural Marxism on a Pakistani society which is represented by Uzma Aslam Khan in her two novels *Trespassing* and *The Geometry Of God*. In her dissertation, Bibi finds out how “unconscious and careless practices of parents and elders, their unfulfilled desires in past...are various factors which put children in pursuit of pleasure principle” (Bibi iiv). By using Sigmund Freud’s level of psychology, she points out different characters of the novel that are slaves of their immediate desires and thus proved as rebels. Cultural marxism questions and subverts already established norms and institutions of the society. The characters of both novels do not conform to the standards of society. Islam Bibi says that due to modernization and globalization, people of the east particularly from the upper middle class (Dia and Anu are examples) adopt the culture of west and as a result the culture of Pakistan is now hybrid and all mixed up. In analysis chapter, she also mentions that the language practices of Riffat have a deep imprint on the mind of Dia and shapes her course of action. Rebellious acts of Dia are the outcome of Riffat’s linguistic practices.

Riffat's language and dialogue act as a medium to mold the thinking of Dia. Bibi mentions in her study that "the linguistic practices of parents and elders instill ideological contested ideas in the mind of children which compels them to pursue pleasure principles" (Bibi 135). She validates her perspective by quoting the example of Riffat, she is engaged in extra martial sex thus she instills and passes the same liberal thought to her next generation (Dia). Dia's intimate relation with Danish reflects the behavior of Riffat in youth as Bibi writes "counter discourse of parents and elders in upper middle class of society if continued for longer period of time, is likely to replace establish discourse of value ... with new standards"(Bibi139).

Samina Azad applies the theoretical framework of Michelle M. Lazar for the comparative study of South Asian and Native American novels to her thesis *Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis of Contemporary South Asian and Native American Novels*. According to her, South Asia and native America have something in common i-e both are colonized and exploited by colonizers so it's very suitable to compare the constructed gender role in these works. Samina Azad has selected the works of Uzma Aslam Khan and Monica Ali from South Asia and Linda Hogan from native America to highlight "hegemonic gender ideology in South Asia and Native American novels" (Azad 5). Azad believes that emergence of writers from these lands breaches the conventional image of the East. Female characters of the selected novels are not passive rather they are more prone to evolution as "they breach the taboos, get involved in the process of mental and spiritual development to rework and redefine their position" (Azad v). Azad points out that the female characters of *Trespassing* are constantly oppressed and exploited by male-dominant society yet they fight against the shackles of society. Riffat, the owner of silk factory "is an easy target of those men who try to make her realize that the field needs men to maneuver" (Azad 67), but she passes that phase courageously. All male characters present in her life, be it her husband, father, lawyer or team of expert, all try to threaten her so that she can conform to the defined pattern of the society. A patriarchal society impose its ideologies on Riffat not through repressive state apparatus only but ideological state apparatus is equally responsible to maintain the hegemony of male class. Riffat is restrained to go abroad as mentioned in the novel "that girls shouldn't go abroad alone for who would propose to such girls" (qtd. In Azad 69), and that ideology is inculcated through

ISA. Shafqat, the lover of Riffat is a prototype of male chauvinistic attitudes. Apart from Riffat, Sumbal, the weaver of silk worm, is also a victim of biased behavior of society. Azad also mentions that women are not only mistreated by men, but “some women help in oppression of other women and in maintenance of patriarchal social order” (Azad 75). However female characters of selected novels are strong enough to identify and define their position in the society. They chose freedom even if it goes against the norms of the society. Dia, and Riffat are depicted as strong rebellious female characters who do not follow the patterns and standards of society rather they prefer actions of their own interest. They choose different actions to recognize their true self. Azad mentions “some of them openly oppose the assumption embedded in hegemonic gender ideology while others mark a silent rebellion in their own way to register their objection and opposition for such assumption” (Azad 254). Azad also locates the realistic writing techniques of Khan, she subverts the convention of novel writing. She gives equal representation to the female characters, out of 18 chapters 8 are named with the female characters. Khan also “break[s] the stereotypes of emotional and teary woman, void of any rationality and reason” (Azad 445). Annu and Riffat continue their household and professional duties even immediately after the death of their husbands. Azad also states that characters of Khan are endowed with both good and bad qualities. They are not represented as totally wicked or virtuous people rather they have mixed traits and in this way “writer tinge the depiction with flavor of reality” (Azad 446). Azad concludes her thesis with the fact that male members of society use ideologies to manipulate and brainwash the minds of women so that they can live in their confined boundaries. She concludes her thesis with the statement “gender based ideologies enable the male members to restrict and imprison females within various boundaries legitimized by socially shared ideas” (Azad 445).

VinodsinhV.Patil in his article *War And Politics In The Novels Of Pakistani Women* (2013) mentions that the women writers of Pakistan like Uzma Aslam Khan, Sorraya Khan and Kamila Shamsie depict political conflicts of Pakistan through their works. As literature is linked with society so it is very pertinent for these writers to incorporate political details in their work. Patil labels the novels of these writers political ones as *Trespassing* describes the “aftermaths of Afghan war and gulf war” (Patil 7). Likewise *The Geometry of God* is set during the regime of Zia-ul-Haq and depicts the political unrest during Zia time. *The*

Noor novel by Sorrayha Khan presents the details of miseries during East Pakistan's separation. Another novel *Five Queen Road* by Sorraya Khan is about "surviving tragedies like the 1947 partition of the India sub continent and world war II in Europe" (Patil 7).

Kamila Shamsie also presents bloody politics of Karachi in her first work *in the city by the sea*. Similarly, *Karatography* by Kamila Shamsie narrates the events of civil war in 1971 which affects the internal stability of Karachi. All works by Kamila Shamsie have political vibes in them.

Thinner than skin is a relatively new novel published in 2012, so research on this novel is still under progress. However many researchers, newspapers and magazines have reviewed it like Razeshta Sethna's review in *Dawn*. According to her, this novel revolves around the theme of love and identity where characters are bound in loveable relation and are in constant search of belonging. Sethna also mentions that female characters in Khan's work "are fiercely intelligent, sensuous, courageous and not to be trampled upon" (Sethna). The geographical details about central Asia take the readers to another realm. Khan uses first person narrative for Nadir, and third person for Maryam (a nomad from gujjartribe) to "portray nomads as outsiders targeted mercilessly by government officials" (Sethna). Unjust treatment of government towards nomads is also mentioned by Andrew Tolle in *Pakistaniaat: A Journal of Pakistan Studies* (2013) as he mentions "they [gujjar] are outsiders in the eyes of foreign institutions" (Tolle 131). Like Razeshta, Tolle also believes that different characters of novel like Farhana, Nadir and Maryam face some identity crisis in one way or the other. Tolle also thinks that *Thinner than skin* subverts the stereotypes of Islam and Pakistan for occidental readers. Elen Turner's review *Of Shadow, Skin and Stones* (2017) in *Himal South Asian* magazine also supports Tolle's perspective about subversion of repetitious images of the east. According to her, Pakistani female writers including Uzma Aslam Khan, Fatima Bhutto and Kamila Shamsie give full strength to their female characters as they are "tough, smart, and independent ... [and] such representations are, in part, a response to stereotyped western notion of the seclusion and fragility of Pakistani women" (Turner). Bold depiction of women in *Thinner than skin* gives voice to the unheard marginalized groups by choosing the marginalized boarder of the country as a setting to equate it with "areas of physical, cultural and emotional peripherality" (Turner). Turner also highlights the use of sensual and scientific language in

Thinner than Skin. According to her, Khan provides an in depth detailing of the natural world with scientific yet sensual language that provokes five senses. Narrative techniques, themes, issues raised by Uzma Aslam Khan “represent an exciting future for Pakistan literature” (Turner)

Jessica L.Radin in her review *Sensuous Glacier and Immanent Violence: Uzma Aslam Khan’s Thinner than Skin* mentions recurrent themes present in *Thinner than Skin*. She says although violence, involvement of America in affairs of Pakistan is very prominent, yet human emotions which are very relatable to us, is another compelling factor to read the novel. She says that the use language to indicate empathy, frustration and fear is a technique which makes her work fresh, surprising and often painfully sharp (Radin).

2.3 Ecocritical Approach towards Literature

Ecocriticism is relatively a new dimension of approaching literature from a different perspective however significant number of works have been analyzed earlier through this perceptive. Some of the renowned literary works have been discussed in this section. *Moth Smoke (2000)*, is a story of a man who indulges in a corrupted world and envious of his friend’s elitist status. It is usually read as a tale where clear demarcation lies between the upper and the lower class, however Munazza Yaqoob analyzed it from an ecocritical perspective. She summarizes her central point in this way “poisonous unhealthy environment blots human reasoning and corrupts human emotions” (Yaqoob 93). She equates polluted environment with contaminated mindset, she considers filthy atmosphere responsible to affect human psyche. Yaqoob gives many examples from the novel like dried grass, suffocated grim room, dull sky and smoky breeze which clearly suggest the perilous living sphere of Lahore. All characters in the novel are indulged in some sinful activities which express negative effects of a poisonous environment on their minds. Thus, her article advocates “the necessity to acknowledge the significance of a healthy ecosystem for healthy individual and social life” (Yaqoob 97).

The subject of nature has been treated differently by different writers. Researchers try to add different aspects of nature in their literary works like Saleha Samar in her thesis *Ecosophy in Paulo Coelho: A deep eco-critical study of Paulo Coelho’s selected fiction* finds out that self-realization is possible through eco-awareness. Samar applies the key

concepts of Ecosophy proposed by Arne Naess to *The Al-Chemist* (1988) and *The Pilgrimage* (1987). Naees believes that in this chaotic commercialized world, every human being suffers from the dilemma of loss of self which is the product of ego-centric behavior of human beings and the philosophy of deep ecology provides panacea of this dilemma (Samar 2). Samar applies the framework of Naees to Coelho's fiction as protagonists of the selected novels pass through the journey of self-discovery. In her analysis chapter, she figures out that wilderness and pastoral settings compel the heroes of the novel to find their true self. Santiago understands the real meaning and treasure of the world when he gets rustic experiences and learns the power of language of universe as a "communion of a person's heart and soul with that of the living world ,makes him complete in true sense" (Samar 41). In *Al-chemist*, nature is a very dominant element thus acts as a protagonist of the novel. Similarly in *The Pilgrimage* the voyage of hero purifies the soul of Coelho. She suggests an eco-centered way of living to diminish the egoistic behavior of human beings..

Due to emergence of this theory in literary canon, new interpretations of texts is possible now. Texts which were analyzed through traditional methods are now open for different interpretations. *Stooping by Wood on a Snowy Evening* (1923), by Robert Frost is a renowned poem which is usually read as a poem "about a man who confronts a choice between isolation and community or between life or death" (Dobie 246). But ecocriticism makes the poem more flexible and fluid with the addition of environmental dimensions to it. Ann B.Dobie, the author of *Theory into Practice* has studied the poem through an ecocritical perceptive. According to her, nature in the poem is more like the protagonist and active agent as it has visible impact on the mind of traveler. Dobie mentions "in this poem nature affects the man more than the man affects the nature" (Dobie 244). This poem also depicts a complex relationship lies between nature and culture. Nature in the poem has omnipotent presence and "has power to calm the soul" (Dobie 245).

Similarly *To Autumn* (1920) by John Keats is analyzed by Roxie James through an ecocritical gaze. In her research, *The Function of Nature in Keats*, Roxie James considers autumn season "as a force that is powerful, productive and progressive" (Dobie 250). Like all other seasons, autumn has the power to affect crops, plants, animals and all other process of life. James mentions "it is a productive force that nurtures the growth of other elements of nature" (Dobie 251). Autumn season is pregnant with movement and change, it moves

from ripeness to harvest. The first stanza explains the start of autumn season, the second discusses ripeness of fruit and the “final one suggests the sadness that accompanies its end” (Dobie 251). Like all other seasons, autumn has its own beauty and charm and its existence is inevitable to complete the process of life.

Ecocritics consider the setting of any text an important means to study the natural world, thus what merely seems “setting is brought in from critical margins to critical centre” (Barry 259). This fact is justified by an ecocritical study of *King Lear*. Traditional study of this tragedy revolves around the psychoanalysis of King Lear but ecocriticism “turn[s] the conventional manner of reading inside out” (Barry 259). Ralph W. Black gives a new interpretation to the *king Lear* by using the theoretical framework of ecocriticism. For him, downfall of Lear’s kingdom is due his transgression into the natural world. Black says that the map of kingdom was drawn on “tanned hides of a small herd of royal deer” (qtd. in Barry 258). Furthermore, King Lear uses his sword to divide his kingdom symbolically which is another act of transgression. The part of kingdom reserved for Cordelia is “about to be randomly chopped up at the monarch’s whim, as if they had no claim and integrity of their own” (Barry 258). Similarly turmoil in Lear’s mind is not a symbolic one rather a real storm where Lear enacts his madness. The place where Lear takes refuge is a real place, where he comes to know about the sufferings and pains of poor people and which is neglected for so long. Hence ecocritical reading privileges outer realm over the inner state of mind.

An ecocritical reading of *The Fall of the House of Usher* by Edgar Allan Poe is worth mentioning to justify above mentioned stance. This story is usually read from a psychological perspective as Usher and his sister suffer from a psychological illness. But ecocriticism gives a new dimension to the tale where setting of Usher’s home becomes more important. His home is situated on the bank of a stagnant and smutty lake which is far away from the city thus “the house exists as an isolated entropic system which has no symbolic connection at all with the broader biosphere” (Barry 260). The house is synonymous to a cool planet where no life is possible as it moves towards its decay gradually. People living inside the house are the product of culture and have no connection with the living sphere and this fact makes them sensitive to light of the sun and smell of flowers (Barry 259). Barry concludes the analysis of the tale by saying that people living in this house are part

of “an ecosystem damaged beyond repair and in its death-throes” (Barry 260). Thus the above mentioned analysis suggests that critics from this discipline pay more focus to an outer neglected world rather than the inner complexities of mind.

M. A Afzal Farooq and N.D.R Chandra analyze *Tintern Abbey* and *the world is too much with us* from an ecocritical perspective in 2013 and their research is published in *Journal of Literature, Culture and Media studies*. According to them, “William Wordsworth advocated for the preservation of Nature way back in the 18th century” (Farooq and Chandra 112). Wordsworth suggested solution of the problems of modern human beings in the company of the natural world three centuries back as “Wordsworth pleaded that it [Nature] is a panacea for all with the capacity to elevate the human mind to a higher level of feeling for everything in Nature” (Farooq and Chandra 112). *Tintern Abbey* unrolls different stages of development of love for nature and in each stage there is a desperate urge to preserve the natural world for serenity and proper development of human mind. *The world is too much with us* censures the activities of modern human beings as their activities upset the equilibrium of the natural world. The journal advocates the stance of Wordsworth to preserve nature for durable peace and preservation of society (Farooq and Chandra 119). Researchers of the journal also believe that consideration of Wordsworth as a pantheistic poet is right but Wordsworth’s pantheism is not limited to spirituality rather Wordsworth “extends up to modern man’s desperate quest of happiness and peace at the cost of nature and its assets” (Farooq and Chandra 119). Wordsworth pantheism implies reverence towards nature which directly suggests protection of nature from degradation as pantheism, respect and preservation are interlinked. Unlike Keats and Shelly, Wordsworth appreciates the healing power of nature more than its physical beauty, thus “Wordsworth concept of Nature has something that induces in man a feeling for nature which makes him ponder over and respect it” (Farooq and Chandra 119). According to the researcher, *Tintern Abbey* is a bildungsroman, focusing on intellectual growth of the poet. The love of poet for nature intensifies as he moves from childhood to maturity. There is simultaneous growth of poet’s love with nature and his level of maturity. With every passing stage, the need to protect nature gets more intense as Farooq and Chandra mention “every stage of is an expose of his preoccupation with nature and need to take its care”(120). Poet’s alliance with nature occurs at three stages; one when he is child and

“Nature to be source and sense for animal pleasure” (Farooq and Chandra 120). At this stage, intact nature is important for the proper development of a child’s mind as a healthy mind grows in a healthy environment. His love for nature gets intense in the second stage when this love is converted into passion, and “sensuous charm of nature could be felt and enjoyed only when nature is allowed to grown in its beauty” (Farooq and Chandra 120). Its beauty cannot be relished fully if any damage happens to the natural world. At this stage he is driven by ecstasy at mere glance of natural beauty and this ecstasy “link[s] love of nature with love of man” (Farooq and Chandra120). During the third stage Wordsworth considers “everything in Nature is a manifestation of God” thus implies that any damage to nature is synonymous to damaging god. So “this fear in men would go a long way to save and protect Nature” (Farooq and Chandra 121). All of the above discussed stages compel humanity to protect their environment for one the reason or the other. Another poem of Wordsworth *The world is too much with us* persuade human beings to have synchronized relation with the natural world. Human beings in this modern world damage the beauty of the natural world by their casual acts. Farooq and Chandra believe that “Nature, according to Wordsworth is a living entity, and its preservation is man’s responsibility and duty” (Farooq and Chandra122). But unfortunately modern human beings are unconscious of their duties. Researchers of the article also consider Wordsworth as a father of ecocriticism, he is one of those figures who warned humanity about an endangered ecosystem in the 18th century (Farooq and Chandara 122). This article suggests that protection of ecosphere was necessary in Wordsworth times in 18th century and is necessary in today’s time in the 21st century.

Priyanka Maral analyzed Arundhati Roy’s novel *The God of small thing* in 2013 from an ecocritical perspective and her article was published in *Journal of Humanities And Social Science*. She presents a pathetic polluted picture of Ayemenen (a village in India). According to Maral , “Roy has tried to show how development is taking place at the cost of loss of natural habitat”(40). She describes techniques of Roy that Roy’s story moves in back and forward motion and she uses this technique to compare and contrast the natural habitat of past and present time. Roy describes the natural setting of Aymenen in the past, and then she discusses the same setting in the present times so that readers can assess how “developing countries are destroying their biodiversity in the name of

development” (Maral 42). Natural world portrayed in *The God of Small Things* is damaged completely and it has lost its ability of regeneration. Maral’s article revolves around the major argument that Roy “tried to portray ecological exploitation of nature by human beings in the name of progress and modernization” (Maral 40). Modernization is taking place so rapidly that characters in the novel lose their interest in the natural world. Maral gives an example of baby Kochama, formerly she had interest in gardening but twenty-three years later, TV has taken over alienating her from nature. As a result, a weed name Patcha grows instead of flowering plants. The garden which once used to be a symbol of her excellent gardening skills stands now forgotten and neglected. Exotic and rare plants of the garden are in danger of extinction. Apart from plants, some species of moths are also endangered but characters don’t feel any remorse or regret on account of destruction as “Roy describes human nature ... thinks only of money and glory”(Maral 42). Death of elephant due to electric shocks, garden full of weeds, and discovery of endangered species of moth highlight the precarious affects of modernization on flora and fauna of Ayemnan. River Meeanchal is altogether changed due to industrialization, now it is covered with plastic bags, dirt, dead fish and sea weeds. The rapid growth of population is another factor which destroys natural beauty of the village. As the main concern of ecocritics is to impart awareness so through analysis of *The God of Small Things* Maral concludes “Roy has tried to create awareness among people towards nature so that we may conserve our ecology and save our future” (42).

MIT International Journal of English Language and Literature publishes the research of Animesh Roy in 2014 named as *Greenpoems: An ecocritical reading of selected Indian poems* in English where he analyzes three Indian poems from an eco-critical perspective. Analysis of *The Felling of the Banyan Tree* written by Dilip Chitre describes the brutal act of cutting down trees before migration. Father of the poet orders tenants to cut down trees however the grandmother of the poet resists it. Banyan, the name of tree used in poem, is a symbol of cultural and religious solidarity as it connects Indian people with their religion and enriched culture. Banyan tree is considered very sacred in Hindu religion. Roy mentions “not only do trees have cultural significance but they are also profound religious significance in Hinduism” (Roy 95). Apart from their religious and cultural affiliation with trees, trees also provide shelter to different birds and insects.

Cutting of trees means cutting down a bird's sanctuary. Roy mentions "other organisms ... which depend on the Banyan tree are equally harmed by the cutting of tree" (Roy 95). Roy gives an eco feminist interpretation to the poems. He notices different behavior patterns of males and females towards nature in the poem like female character (grandma) wants to protect nature while male character (father) wants to demolish it. As mentioned earlier, a tree has symbolic implication; a tree typifies "religious and cultural norms link man to nature" (Roy 95). Roy gives an ecocritical interpretation of another poem *On killing a tree* with a similar theme. Roy mentions that the tree in this poem is a symbol of nature (Roy 96). Roy reveals that this poem "may be read as a record of his protest against the violence and ecological terrorism inflicted by man on nature" (Roy 96). He uses the word 'ecoterrorism' to define the brutal killing of trees. For Roy, those people and groups are terrorists for ecosphere who are involved in massive destruction of trees. Greed of human beings compels them to do such cruel acts and "after pulling down the tree, Man subjects it to various processes to fit it for his commercial purposes" (Roy 96). Analysis of the third poem *Factories Are Eye Sores* talks about the omission of pollution from factories. These factories pollute the landscape and "seem ugly in the midst of the green nature" (Roy 97). The internal environment of these factories is also hazardous for the workers who work in these factories. Thus, the concern of these three poets is "to shape a formative opinion among the masses towards preservation of nature, environment and ecology" (Roy 98).

Much research has been conducted on Uzma Aslam Khan's novels with different lenses. Similarly, many literary works have been explored through an ecocritical dimension. However, there is a lacuna in literary research that suggests analyzing Uzma Aslam Khan's work from a relatively new theory of ecocriticism. Therefore, next chapter traces out the elements that establish nature as a living entity, its relationship with human beings, and the effect of this relationship on the deterioration of nature.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter highlights theoretical underpinnings of the present study. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first part discusses research design and methods used in this research. Whereas the second section elucidates the pertinent stages of ecocritical theory proposed by Cheryll Glotfelty which are implemented in the analysis.

3.1 Research Approach

This research is descriptive in nature and intends to describe and interpret the term eco criticism in the background of selected works. It is qualitative in its approach. Like traditional qualitative researches this study is intended to get a deep understanding of the mutual relation of humans with nature. To attain its objectives, the theoretical framework proposed by Glotfelty is applied for the understanding of the texts. Apart from Glotfelty, viewpoints of other eco critics are also admitted for an in-depth analysis of the selected texts. The selected theory has an interdisciplinary nature so this research builds a connection between ecology and literature.

3.2 Research Method

The research has engaged textual analysis as a method for this study. “The important considerations in textual analysis include selecting the types of texts to be studied, acquiring appropriate texts, and determining which particular approach to employ in analyzing them” (Frey et. al). Since the present study has selected Uzma Aslam Khan’s texts that can be elaborated in the light of multiple approaches therefore, ecocriticism is chosen as an approach to fulfill the objectives of the study.

3.3 Theoretical Framework

This research tends to analyze the selected works of Uzma Aslam Khan from an ecocritical perspective; it has engaged a comprehensive project of Cheryll Glotfelty as its theoretical framework.

Ecocriticism, a relatively new theory does not have well-knitted assumptions and doctrines, researchers are still adding different dimensions to this theory due to its suggestive and open nature. Cheryll Glotfelty contributed much to this theory from its definition to its application on literary texts. She explained the crux of environmental crisis and systemized the theory to facilitate the perplexed minds. Her diligent endeavor provided a new scope to neglected but still important discipline. As the cofounder of ASLE, she also composed the first anthology of nature writing essays with the name of *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in literary ecology*. According to Glotfelty, in the twentieth century, issues pertaining to gender, race, and class have remained the pivotal concern for critics and theorists, these topics were frequently discussed in literature, but the most critical issue of ecological crisis was altogether ignored, and the earth's life support systems were under stressed (Glotfelty xvi). However, extinction of species, increasing global warming, depletion of Ozone layer, acid rain, loss of top soil etc. were the major headlines of newspaper at that time so the year 1990 has been declared as 'the decade of environment' and the literary studies have apparently remained untouched by environmental concerns (Glotfelty xvi). For her, it is the zeitgeist to create knowingness among people about threats posed to the vulnerable earth. She associates a more appropriate word 'endangered' with the dilapidated conditioned of earth to delineate its degenerative condition. She has a view that we human beings should take some constructive steps to elongate the living age of our earth because if we are not part of solution, we are part of problem (Glotfelty xxi). Awareness of problem can bring us closer to the solution as ecocriticism is a way to renew readers' awareness of the non-human world and his or her responsibility to sustain it (Dobie 239). Glotfelty clearly mentions the reality that our acts are contradictory to the natural laws, and there is an immediate need that "either we change our ways, or we face global

catastrophe as we have reached the age of environmental limits” (Glotfelty xx). The stance of historian Donald Worster also verifies Glotfelty’s perspective “that we are facing global crisis as our ethical systems are changed” (qtd. in Glotfelty xxi).

Cheryll Glotfelty and other scholars are putting their efforts to convey people about critical situation of environment with a caveat that if we do not amend our ways, we may lose, probably, the only life sustaining planet in the universe due to our negligence. So ultimately, the survival of earth is dependent upon our acts, habits and ethical system.

Cheryll Glotfelty classifies this theory into three developmental stages following the same model, suggested by Elaine Showalter for feminist analysis. Glotfelty uses the analogous pattern of feminism to define the stages of ecocriticism. The first stage of feminist criticism is about representation, that how women are depicted in a particular text, either they are portrayed in a stereotypical way or they surpass that conventional image. In the same way the first stage of ecocriticism suggests description of the natural world that how far stereotypes are maintained about representation of nature? In what way is nature depicted in the texts? What sort of interaction lies between the world of nature and human world? The second stage in feminist criticism is about the study of literature by female writer where she highlights the neglected world of women. Likewise, the second stage of ecocriticism engages researcher to rediscover the overlooked genre of nature writing. Researcher tries to deviate himself from the traditional reading of a particular text and adds a new dimension to the existing analysis. This stage involves an in depth analysis of literary work where ecologists attempt to define and describe the function of nature in shaping our lives. They pay more focus on the ignored genre of nature writing and bring it to limelight. In simple words, a researcher recuperates the natural world in literature and finds out why this work is not recognized as nature writing. The third stage of feminism compels women readers to link more debates with this theory like gender discrimination and sexuality. Analogues to this phase, the third stage of ecocriticism provokes ecologists to contemplate over global issues. Ecologists bring other issues to the centre and tie them with this theory. This stage is helpful to engender more theories linked to ecocriticism like eco feminism, post-colonial ecocriticism and so on. This stage is very significant as it broadens the horizon of ecocriticism by connecting it to different disciplines like philosophy,

anthropology, sociology and psychology. All three stages of ecocriticism are applied for enriched analysis of the selected novels.

Glotfelty also explains interdisciplinary nature of this theory, how it connects various other disciplines with literature. Anthropology, the field which deals with the origin and social interaction of human beings gets merged with ecocriticism to ponder over the value systems and rituals that have helped these cultures live sustainably (Glotfelty xxi). Ecocriticism also juxtaposes literature and psychology. Psychology is defined as a science of mind (Bukhari et al 2) and a healthy mind flourishes in healthy environment (Glotfelty xxi). Some researchers even “regard the modern estrangement from nature as the basis of our social and psychological ills (Glotfelty xxi).

Philosophy, which investigates truths and principles of existence, is also linked with ecocriticism. Amalgamation of both disciplines suggests the “view of existence that will provide an ethical and conceptual foundation for the right relation with earth” (Glotfelty xxi). Theology which is about the study of religious beliefs, also “view[s] the earth itself as sacred” (Glotfelty xxii).

Scholars from the forenamed fields are attempting to add environmental dimensions to their respective disciplines to deal with current issues of environment. Scholars from these areas are joining hands together to brainstorm some solution to the current scenario. Ecocriticism is distinctive from all other theories in a way that all other theories equate the world with social sphere while for ecocritics world is synonymous to the entire ecosphere. It is contrary to all other approaches, like formalism which segregates text from historical, social and political background however, critics from this discipline consider the text a way to look at the world with a novel gaze as it is justified by the quote “ ecocriticism unlike new criticism does not end with the text. It goes beyond the text to the realm of nature” (Das 450). It is also different from Marxism, as Marxism defines the world in terms of economic mode and production. On another hand, ecocriticism defines the world in accordance to physical and natural presence. It is imperative to study this theory as it is “motivating audiences to live within a limit that will be binding over generations” (Dobie 239).

3.4 Research Design

As “Research design is a plan, structure and strategy of investigation” (Kumar 4), so for this purpose research questions are set that are answered as the research progresses. By keeping all the objectives and research questions in mind I have divided analysis chapter into two sections. The first section deals with the analysis of *Thinner than Skin* and the second section deals with the analysis of *Trespassing*. These sections are further divided into subsections and they cover all topics that are mandatory for an ecocritical analysis. Theoretical framework given by Cheryll Glotfelty has been applied for the analysis section. As mentioned earlier, she has given three development phases for an ecocritical analysis which are implemented for an in depth analysis. The first stage proposed by Glotfelty asks the researcher to scrutinize the representation of the natural world in a particular text. The first question of the research covers the same area. Sub headings like ferocious role of nature, living attributes of nature, signs in the natural world and the healing power of nature provide the answer of first question. Glotfelty also mentions the inclusion of topics like animals, flora, fauna, Geographical reasons, rivers, technology and garbage in the first stage of criticism. So, in the analysis chapter all these topics are elaborated.

The second stage explained by Glotfelty allows critics to rediscover and reconsider the genre of nature writing thus gives more emphasis to the natural world. By implementing the second stage I analyzed the selected novels from a new perspective. *Thinner than Skin* is commonly read as a tale of love, identity and belonging however I added a new dimension to the analysis which in a way promotes nature writing. Similarly, *Trespassing* gives details of ethnic conflicts of Karachi and is usually treated as a political novel but as an ecocritic I tried to find out details which link it to an ecocritical theory. Ecocriticism makes a connection of literature with other disciplines during the third phase so psychology is linked with an ecocritical analysis to meet the third objective of the research.

The third stage suggested by Glotfelty is far more complex and theoretical; for it is here the affects of anthropocentric activities on nature are evaluated. This stage is also implemented to find out connecting boundaries of culture and nature.

Questions which are mandatory to answer during an ecocritical research are also kept in mind during analysis. Representation and role of the natural world is the major concern for a critic so in the analysis chapter it has been figured out how nature is portrayed. Does it play an active role or merely act as the locale of the novel? How are environmental crises seeping into our ecosphere? To meet the set objectives, animated qualities of nature are explored which are further analyzed to find out what sort of qualities does it entail. Subheadings are designed according to the research questions and research objectives.

CHAPTER 4

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

As this current research tends to explore the connection between human, non-human world and negative effects of polluted environment on our life so it is worthwhile to mention again the crux of Cheryll Glotfelty's theoretical underpinning "that human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it" (Glotfelty xix). This statement implies two things:

1. Culture and natural world are linked with each other and they are integral part of each other. Both nature and culture have the capacity to impinge upon each other's realm.

2. It gives animated qualities to nature. Furthermore, it suggests that nature is a living entity and the physical natural world has capacity to influence our lives. It is powerful enough to affect our life and affect can be either constructive or hazardous. For ecocritics, natural sphere is not a passive one. It is mentioned earlier in the first chapter that this theory denies the element of linguistic and social construction as:

For the ecocritics, nature really exists, out there beyond ourselves, not needing to be ironised as a concept by enclosure within knowing inverted commas, but actually presents as an entity which affects us, and which we can affect, perhaps fatally, if we mistreat it. Nature, then, isn't reducible to a concept which we conceive as a part of our cultural practice. (Barry 252)

Therefore, for ecocritics nature has a corporal existence, it's not merely a concept which only exists in books. Like all other living creatures, it has a physical existence. It's not a product of social construct rather it is a real one as Glotfelty mentions that "nature not just as the stage upon which story is acted out, but as an actor in the drama" (Glotfelty xxi). The words of Glotfelty elucidate active role of nature in our life. She does not equate

nature with the stage of a drama as stage is a non-living entity; she consciously calls it an actor of drama as our life is a drama in which nature has specific role to play. It is an active agent which is powerful enough to shape our life. It has a physical presence and has capacity to play even a malignant role in our lives if we try to upset its balance. Its existence can be ominous if human beings try to subdue it. Such a perspective can be justified with the help of textual evidences because nature depicted in the novel is not a dormant object rather it plays an active function to define the destiny of Nadir, who is a protagonist of the novel.

4.1 Analysis of Thinner than Skin

4.1.1 Ferocious Role of Nature

According to the first stage of Glotfelty's model for ecocriticism, ecocritics find out "how nature is represented in literature"(xxiii). If we apply the first stage of Glotfelty's model on *Thinner than Skin*, we come to know that nature is playing a major role in the plot of the novel. It shapes the life of protagonist, Nadir. The tragic incident in Nadir's life can be better comprehended if we add an ecocritical dimensions to the text. The life of Nadir is altogether changed after drowning of Kiran. It is altered because he tries to upset the harmony of the natural world. And nature finds its vengeance in the form of Kiran's murder committed by Nadir. After the death of Kiran, he is known as a murderer of the girl. The change undergone in his life is well stated by him when he says "how different the world had become. For instance, back then; I'd never been called a murderer" (Khan 202). He is called a murderer because nature assigns him a new identity. He has committed a crime for going against the laws of nature. In depth eco critical analysis of the text verifies that a displeased change is inflicted upon him by nature. Nature plays a malevolent role to shape his destiny as nature has the complete system of law and order. If anyone tries to violate its order, then nature has capability to seek its revenge as ecocritics assign living attributes to nature. But a serious question triggers the mind of readers that why does nature throw its anger upon him? Which of his wrong act compels hostile nature to torment him wherever he goes as he himself admits "they [mountains] loomed over us, warning that no matter where we went, they could follow" (Khan 152). Mountains acted as a haunted image for Nadir. And the answer lies in a story which begins when he breaches

the oath of the natural world by narrating the secretive ceremony of ice mating to Farhana. During ice mating ceremony, oath is taken from the viewers to not disclose the details of the sacred ceremony to anyone but Nadir violates this promise by describing each and every detail of the ceremony to his beloved. The natural world has its own integrity and Nadir shatters it by his faithless acts, as a result nature vows not to spare Nadir from penalty.

Ice mating ceremony involves the mating of female and male ice. Female ice is chosen from a village where women are hardworking and beautiful. Male ice is selected from a village where men are brave, courageous and successful. Then female and male ice consummate their love in a hole dug nearby. After consummation of love, female ice gets fat to give birth to spring water. Only natives of valley can watch the ceremony with silence as it is believed that words interrupt the stability of lovers-in-transit (Khan 41). Ice mating ceremony is a cultural ceremony in the northern areas. The ceremony of ice mating links the natural world with cultural practices which shows the porous boundaries of nature and culture. This ceremony is celebrated in a native village so foreigners are not allowed to witness the ceremony as they “were told it was bad luck for other eyes to watch. Eyes from somewhere else. Karachi eyes. Peshawar eyes” (Khan 41). And Nadir is undoubtedly a foreigner in this land.

The world of mountains needs privacy to consummate their marriage. Like human beings, mountains are sensitive to the foreign presences. Nadir relates the event of ice mating to Farhana and his act of breaching the promise makes him a criminal in the eyes of the natural world. Nadir himself admits that “perhaps I was breaking the oath by describing it to her in detail” (Khan 41). He not only breaches the oath by describing the ceremony to Farhana but also goes against the rules of the natural world at the time when he witnesses the ceremony. He is other in this new land and the ceremony is set for natives only. At firsthand, his presence is disturbing for privacy of the natural world and then he further upsets its quietude by taking photographs of the event. He breaks the oath twice; first by taking shots of newly-wed glaciers, and then by relating ceremonious details to Farhana. As mentioned earlier that “words disturb the balance between lovers-in-transit” (Khan 41), so his act of taking photographs not only disturbs the harmony but also intervenes the seclusion of the glacial world. And this act of disobeying the promise of the

natural world brings about his destiny. He mentions his disturbing act during the sacred ceremony of ice-making in this way “I’d taken out my camera and aimed. Had it brought us bad luck?” (Khan 41). Surely violation of placidity during the sacred ceremony brings about his bad luck. As a result the natural world devised a plan to inflict a pain upon him.

As mentioned earlier, nature has power to influence our life if we affect it (Glotfelty xix), so the statement proves right when nature seeks its retribution from Nadir by giving him a new identity of a killer, by devising a plan against him to lose his beloved, and finally by allotting him the identity of a bomb attacker.

He states the ritual of ice mating to Farhana twice, once in California then near the glacier where he “hear[s] the bells of Kiran’s goats” (Khan 204). He feels the presence of Kiran around him right after narrating the event of ice mating to Farhana near the glacier. The quote indicates that this place has some connection with Kiran’s death too. Sovereignty of the natural world is broken by him and as a result the natural world smashes his life. He goes against the laws of nature and as a result he suffers more than he can endure. Nature retaliates by devising a plan for Nadir to commit Kiran’s murder, though he is not fully aware if it is really a murder or an accident. It seems that the whole natural world conspired against him.

It’s not only during the ice mating ceremony that Nadir intrudes into the natural world but he upsets its balance several times. Love harmony between Queen Mountain and naked mountain is disturbed by him when he looks at the reflection of Farhana in lake. Textual evidences show that naked mountain and Queen Mountain are lovers, they are hostile towards strangers who come from the lowland as Khan writes “The highlands belonged to those [nomads] who had been coming here for so many summers only they knew how the Queen and the Nude behaved when no one was watching” (Khan 3). It gives us an understanding that these lover mountains need absolute isolation to make their love. They cannot bear the interference of strangers. Queen mountain and Nude were making love when Nadir saw the reflection of Farhana in the lake, as it is mentioned in the novel “The mountains are making deep, quiet love” (Khan 65). Their act of seeing each other in the lake when mountains were making love of mountains induces anger in mountains and lake because “the act of seeing becomes a theft, even a murder” (Khan 59).

And he committed a murder by his act of interruption. It is the same lake which tempted Nadir to row a boat inside it. He commits the crime of watching the lovers while they were accomplishing their love. At that day the lake at the bottom of Queen Mountain had strong tide which is a manifestation of her anger towards Nadir as mentioned in the novel:

The Queen's snow melted even faster, due either to her rage at having her beauty overshadowed, or her excitement at beholding her lover. And on such days his [naked mountain] snow also melted faster, due either to his rage at having his beauty uncloaked- Whose eyes are worthy enough? Or his triumph at beholding the Queen's ferment. Whatever the reason, the lake that day had a strong tide. We could see it from the water rolled onto shore; we could have been by the sea. (Khan 64)

This quote indicates that naked mountain does not want to reveal his beauty in front of foreigners. The eyes of visitors are not creditable to behold the beauty of a mountain. At that particular day when Farhana and Nadir stood at the bank of the lake, Nadir observed a strong tide as he said "behind me, I heard the tide roll again" (Khan 65). Here tide is a symbol of Naked Mountain's anger as his love is being interrupted by Nadir. The words of Nadir affirm the aforesaid statement; he says "It was the same tide that had confounded us when we first got here" (Khan 109). The words 'first got here' indicate the day when Nadir saw the glimpse of Farhana in the same lake. Nadir further says "It was the tide of his ardor for the Queen, hers for him, and we were intruders, duly rebuked by being splashed from all sides. The further out I rowed, the larger grew the swells" (Khan 109). Aforementioned quote is self-explanatory as it elucidates the whole story; Queen Mountain and Naked Mountain are lovers, they are possessive about their love, they do not like the interference of strangers. Nadir disturbs their privacy and as revenge, lake makes a plan against Nadir. As a result of nature's vengeance, Nadir is identified as a killer in the city, his beloved betrays him, and to add insult to injury his childhood friend cheats him. He suffers physically and psychologically, and all these pains are imposed on him by nature.

Nature becomes a violent actor in the life of Nadir. Human beings in the form of Nadir effect nature and as a result nature with its annihilating power retaliates with great fury. Nadir doesn't add any positive energy to his ecosystem. He throws entropic energies to his ecosystem and does not have any symbiotic relation with outer natural world. As a

result, nature adopts the same mechanism towards him which leads him towards destruction. Nature penalizes him because he goes against the laws of nature again and again. He is proved a rebel for the ecosphere. Therefore, how can nature spare him, when he brings a lot of damage to the natural world?

The same love of Queen Mountain and Naked Mountain is again interposed by Nadir later on the day when he rows a boat with Farhana and Kiran in the same lake. At that time, Perfidious lake adopts a deceptive role to define Nadir's identity and fate. The lake which seems calm and stable suddenly became restless when they start to row boat inside it. Nadir's words justify the treacherous nature of lake; he says "the heaviness grew. It was much harder to row that day than it had been the last time I was on the lake" (Khan 110). The tide started to grow within no time as they entered the lake. The strong tide at that particular day affirms the stance that nature does not spare any interloper in its world. He interrupts the love harmony of queen and naked mountain and then both mountains disturb his romantic schemes. While rowing boat in the lake, he observes the furious summit of mountain. He narrates his experience in this way "somewhere over my left shoulder must have loomed the actual summit of naked mountain, radiant in the evening light" (Khan 109). The radiant peak of Nanga Parbat represents the anger of peak for Nadir. When Kiran fell into the lake, Nadir thought that he tried to save the girl but in actual he was moving away from the girl. The act of transgression was performed in lake and he was tormented physically and mentally for the rest of his life. Lake compels him to move into an opposite direction so that he could not rescue the girl. Lake adopts a coaxing persona to tempt Nadir. He explains the insidious nature of water in this way "beside Farhana rolled the Queen's deepest hollows. She [Queen Mountain] was there beneath my oar tempting me to dive, face first" (Khan 110). Here the lake plays a vital role to make him move towards another world which is full of horror. Water which seems crystal clear from outside becomes perfidious in a moment as soon as he jumps into the water and it is obvious in the text "a lake so clear and bright, but hideous underneath" (Khan 157). Lake attempts to put its hostility on Nadir. He sees many fish with bulging eyes which were ready to attack him in lake. He explains the behavior of fish in this way "more fish. White, with yellow eyes. Orbiting me as I orbited them" (113). He describes the world inside the river in this way:

I heard myself shout-and this time ... “it’s freezing!” And then time could not move fast enough. A fist curled around my spine and squeezed, a cold wet eel crushing my lungs, my limbs. My shoulders contorted my muscles screamed, all of me convulsed. I could feel the feeling bleed from me as I became dead weight, plunging vertically to the bottom of the lake. When the pain in my legs returned, it was killing me. That damn eel was shooting electric currents deep into my veins. (Khan 113)

So Nadir jumped into the lake to rescue the girl, he observed a dangerous and ferocious ecosystem inside the lake which was trying to take revenge of the crime which he had committed a few days before in the same lake. He was called killer after the incident as instead of pulling the girl out of water he was swimming away from her to another world. When he visits the nearby village, here the children call him killer. They were clearly pointing towards him by saying “it’s him” (Khan 161). And by him they mean the killer of Kiran. Nadir mentions his traumatic thought in this way “I was considered even worse than hotel bomber”(Khan161).Nadir considers himself an innocent fellow who tries to rescue the girl by jumping into water, but later on Farhana opens the reality to him saying that he was moving away from them. In an argument with Farhana, he asked her “what do you mean by accusing me of swimming away” (Khan 172). The word ‘accusing’ is important to understand the role played by nature to define his destiny. Above mentioned statement indicates that Nadir is being blamed of swimming away from them and he was totally unaware of the fact that he was moving away from the girl. For him, he was trying to secure the girl. He is totally unaware of the accusation, as for him he is the one who jumped first into the water. So the lake at the foot of Queen mountain played a whole game against him as Nadir himself accepts that Ultar glacier is not as dangerous as naked mountain as it did not “open her arms temptingly to us, like Queen of the mountain, when Farhana and I had gazed upon her in the lake” (Khan 275).

It is not only the lake which has seductive nature and invites him to take a ride in boat to define his destiny; land is equally antagonistic towards him after the murder of Kiran. He expresses his fear of land in this way “Now it was land that frightened me” (Khan 114). The land of Kaghan valley which once used to energize him is totally changed after Kiran’s death. It seems that land did not accept him after the crime which he has committed on this land. Formerly, when he used to visit the lake in seclusion, he experienced some

refreshing affect as he says “I returned to the coast often, always alone. A small part of me knew it was to cleanse my palette” (Khan 48). Furthermore, he confesses “surely, it had more to do with the purity of the place, which was why it was here, more than anywhere else” (Khan 9). Textual evidences illustrate friendly relation of ecosphere with him; he used to live in complete harmony with the natural world. But as soon as he distorts its equilibrium through his acts, the same coast and land become aggressive towards him. After Kiran’s death when he visits the lake for the first time, he becomes unacceptable for the land and animals on the beach. He is kicked by a horse. Nadir explains the expressions of horse in this way “of more concern was a horse, dark red in color, and with ferocious eyes, who bared its teeth at me and began to neigh. A smaller horse skipped forward and bucked and kicked the sand. It circled me and bucked again. The third time, it nearly kicked my shin” (Khan 121).

His second visit of the lake is equally torturous as he is almost “attacked by dogs” (Khan 168). Nature takes its revenge from Nadir in many forms. He is totally haunted by the memories of incident. He observes a presence of a phantom in the atmosphere along with him wherever he goes. He experiences betrayal in love. He witnesses disloyalty of his beloved and friend amid the mountains. He is forced to leave his country forever as “A life of exile is worse than death” (Khan 322). He is even suspected as a bomb attacker and is beaten brutally by policeman .Nature curses him where ever he goes. When he leaves the Kaghan valley and moves towards Gilgit, he is still troubled by the images of Naked Mountain as he affirms “The Mountain was following us. If at one end he disappeared, at the next, he rose again. The mountain that had cursed us at the lake. The mountain that moved” (Khan 228).He was punished by nature due to his crime of breaching the balance of ecosphere. His acts are against the law of nature and in return nature punishes him. His punishment is direct consonance to the magnitude of his vices. He has to pay for the crimes which he has committed on the foot of mountains as obvious in the text “The Queen and the Nude, reflected as on another lake, one in which an unspeakable crime had been committed, for which someone had to pay” (Khan 324). And Nadir paid for his crimes, the natural world defines his punishment as it has a complete system of law and justice. If nature doesn’t betray the heart that loves her, then nature never spares the heart that violates its integrity. At one time if nature is benign and benevolent then at other time it can be

malicious dependent on our treatment. He is penalized due to several reasons; he becomes hurdle amid the serenity of the natural world, he also violates the natural affinity of mother and daughter's relationship. Maryam, the mother of Kiran never wanted her child to go with a stranger who comes from a place where a child is pulled from her family for amusement (Khan 127). Nadir also disturbs natural life cycle of animals in Maryam's family and as a result his own world falls apart. Maryam's family and animals moved towards the lowland due to unintentional murder of Kiran by Nadir. The cattle which need to graze in the highland during summer moved to the lowland due to him. Animals get equally affected in the lower elevation as there is a scarcity of fodder there. Moving towards these regions "mean the cattle would starve over winter, or, equally troubling, that they'd spend the remaining summer crossing in to fenced-off field, costing the family hefty fines" (Khan 153). In the lowland sufferings of Maryam's family get intenser due to some Shia Suni conflicts. In short "Kiran's death had disrupted the rhythm of entire tol" (Khan 250), and Nadir is the reason behind her death.

4.1.2 Global Warming and its Affects

Besides Nadir's fate, the novel is replete with other eco centric themes and natural imagery. With an ecocentric gaze, ecocritics tend to find answers to different questions that are discussed in the introductory chapter. In order to get the answer to these questions, researcher finds it apt to bring following facts to the light. As mentioned earlier "consciousness rising is its most important task" (Glotfelty xxiv), so it is prerequisite to highlight erroneous actions of human being which minimize the life span of vulnerable Earth. Awareness can be created among people if they realize how their minor acts of negligence can destroy the equilibrium of the biosphere. The selected novel entails many examples that throw light on our activities which effect environment adversely, so we can reform our conducts.

As mentioned in literature review that glaciers of world are now moving towards their decay due to global warming. Melt of glaciers is getting more intense by the day which can cause heavy flood. The same fact is highlighted by Khan in this novel as she says "Glaciers in the eastern Himalyas are receding. Some says the Alps will be ice-free by 2100. Greenland's glaciers are melting so fast they could sink southern California and

Bangladesh” (Khan 43). It’s not only the Greenland glaciers that are being effected by rising temperature of Earth but the glaciers in Pakistan are getting equally affected. Khan affirms this fact in the first chapter of novel when Maryam narrates “the melt had been too strong this year, obsessive even” (Khan 2). Khan consciously mentions this bitter reality in the very beginning of novel to create awareness among readers about the consequences of their wrong actions as “Glacial growth and decline was equal indicator of global warming” (Khan 44). And global warming is an indicator of wrong actions of human beings. Humans try to conquer the world of nature for their selfish desires, but in their attempt they forget unconquerable nature of nature. Human beings are bound to face adverse consequences if they attempt to harness the natural kingdom. And this stance can be justified with the help of the text when we come to know about killing nature of Naked mountain, this mountain is known as killer mountain as “He’d killed thirty-one climbers” (Khan 228). Likewise, Ultar glacier is equally dangerous as it’s “hike was notoriously steep” (Khan 269). These two quotes highlight invincible world of nature. In spite of indomitable nature of nature, human beings attempt to subdue and seize it and in their attempt they agitate and contaminate purity of the natural world. Nadir mentions the filth left by the footsteps of visitors on the crystalline beauty of glaciers. While tracking up to the mountain, he is thankful for the filthy impression of footsteps on ice as the ice is glistening blind and he is unable to find his way on the glacier without dirty tracks left on ice. Nadir states his experience in this way “The sun ... [was] blindingly white. So blinding that I was almost grateful for the filth left behind by those transgressing against the glacier’s beauty, some while slipping to their knees, others while gliding forward” (Khan 47). The quote shows how human beings are polluting flawless beauty of nature just for the sake of their pleasure. The dirt left by visitors is helpful for Nadir for a short time but he is oblivious of its long term consequences of pollution on entire ecosphere. Human beings like Nadir are not concerned about the fading beauty of glaciers; in fact they are more concerned about their comfort. It is a fact that dirt on ice is useful for Nadir as climbing becomes easy for him, but he is unaware of the fact that same dirt affects the beauty of nature. Likewise when he was following footsteps of Farhana on ice, he again observes the dirty impression of her feet, he says “I walked in the dirt track her shoes left behind as the glacier creaked” (Khan45). The word ‘dirt track’ highlights nasty activities of human beings which lead

them towards destructive end. These quotes clarify the captivating beauty of nature and how that beauty is screwed up by anthropocentric acts. Debates about anthropocentric activities are the domain of third stage of ecocriticism. The beauty of nature is distorted by egocentric activities of human beings. Similarly lake Saif-ul-Malok, which needs to be free of human activities is now adulterated by many boats as Nadir explains the bitter reality in this way that serenity of Saiful-ul-Malok is “broken by a stream of exhausted pilgrims and dozen boats” (Khan 63). Human beings try to invade the water world through boats. Boats are the symbol of technical advancement. Not only land, but the water world is also not spare from human intervention. Gafoor blows his nose in water while crossing the stream as shown in the text “the water was unpolluted here. He [Gafoor] blew his nose” (Khan 248). The act of blowing nose in pure spring water exemplifies filthy acts of human beings which contaminate the purity of the natural world.

4.1.3 Endangered Species

Glotfelty clearly warns us about degrading situation of the earth when she says “we are there. Either we change our ways or we face global catastrophe, destroying much beauty and exterminating countless fellow species in our headlong race to apocalypse”(xx). Warning of Glotfelty brings our attention towards endangered species mentioned in the text. The situation becomes more minatory when Khan talks about endangered species of Houbara Bustard, a bird whose meat has aphrodisiac characteristics. In the novel Irfan explains to Nadir how Houbara Bustard is being hunted by Falcons. He explains the whole process in this way “Falcons. They were flown in on jets to hunt the endangered Houbara Bustard, a pheasant with aphrodisiac meat” (Khan 103). These predators are launched by wealthy Arabs. The word endangered is very important to understand the significance of each species in a complex food web. The rare species of Houbara Bustard which is at the verge of extinction is hunted by Falcons for Arabs. Their existence is already threatened, and they are further overhunted to satiate the sexual desires of Arabs. Their depreciating number poses serious threat to food chain. The lust of human beings to hunt the rare bird thus shakes the stability of the eco system. And the hunting of Houbara Bustard with the help of falcon manifests the cultural practice of Arabs executed in Pakistan. And that practice which is linked with Arab culture effects the ecosystem adversely. Relationship of culture and environment falls under the third developmental stage of ecocriticism. The third

phase also discusses the influence of anthropocentric activities on environment, so hunting of Houbara Bustard through Falcon falls under the third developmental stage. Apart from Houbara Bustard, some species of horse like “Nukra, Bharssi even the Yarkandi breed” (207) are also vanishing from earth’s surface. In a complex food web, organisms are dependent on each other for their survival. The substantiality of biodiversity is very vital as “Biologists warn that global ecosystem would collapse if biodiversity continue to be reduced at the same rate” (Glorge and sheikh 4). “The endangered existence of one organism in food chain relationship affects the balance of everything else” (Egan 126). Survival of one living organism is important for the survival of other larger organisms which are dependent on them. Furthermore, every species is important to retain the equilibrium of biodiversity.

4.1.4 Significance of Vegetation for the Healthy Biosphere

According to Glotfelty “eco ... implies interdependent communities, integrated systems, and strong connections among constituent parts”(xx). It is important to understand major role of trees and plants in an interconnected food web. Trees and plants are also not even spared from the influence of human activities. Human beings do not only harm composure of the natural world by hunting endangered animals, but they also disturb it by excessive cutting of trees. Deforestation is another important issue discussed in the novel. The lines “The field had been rotten because the land was easily destroyed in the floods the previous year. The land was easily destroyed because it had no trees” (Khan 212), are very important to understand negative effects of deforestation on the entire human life. Trees are significant part of ecosystem as “Forests support considerable biodiversity” (Seikh and George 43). They are an integral part of the food chain as they are primary producers. Life of secondary consumers is dependent on them but in last few decades due to rapid increase of population, trees are over-cut to fulfill the materialistic needs of human beings. Over-cutting of trees for commercial purposes is proved dangerous for our existence. Trees act as a hurdle during rainy days to keep the soil intact to its place. Their roots strongly hold the nutrients inside the soil which are essential for the fertility of land. But excessive cutting of trees has made the soil infertile as during rainfall, essential nutrients flow away easily, causing soil erosion. Furthermore their removal brings heavy rainfall and consequently a heavy flood causing much damage to crops and human lives.

In the novel, Maryam prays and hopes for no flood as floods trouble their life. Her prayer is narrated in this way, “She hoped there would be no flood this year. They had endured enough. She hoped the glaciers would behave, and not gallop down the mountain slopes to block their road and break their bridges” (Khan 295). The words of Maryam show that trees are equally important for glaciers as trees act as support in preventing the ice from rolling down. The second part of quote highlights negative consequences of heavy rainfall on human life. Due to deforestation, availability of fresh water also becomes short as dirty and silted water moves to the dams. Forests and trees are also valuable because “forests extract carbon dioxide and pollutants from air, thus contributing to biosphere stability” (George and Sheikh 44). So through her work Khan wants to impart knowledge about significance of plants and trees in our life. The entire ecosystem is dependent on trees. Survival of trees is important from micro to macro organisms. So it is ethical responsibility of every citizen to grow plants in his surroundings. If they cannot contribute positively, then at least their acts shouldn't harm the integrity of the biosphere.

4.1.5 Violence amid the Natural World

Glotfelty mentions “that we have reached the age of environmental limits, a time when the consequences of human's actions are damaging the planet's basic life support system” (Glotfelty xx). She is right in her stance as actions of human beings are dangerous for the eco system. Gilgit, a city endowed with natural beauty is now threatened by foul activities of human beings. Khan mentions human intervention in the beautiful region of Gilgit in this way “Shia-Sunni riots had erupted in Gilgit district” (Khan 166). Human beings are so engaged in their deadly activities that they are unaware of bitter reality that “earth's life support system ... [is] under stress” (Glotfelty xvi). Human beings pollute the beauty of the natural world and they are not even aware of the consequences. Nature and violence are two opposite entities and humans try to mix them up.

4.1.6 Urban vs. Rural Life

Khan compares urban and rural life to show us reality that things which grow in a natural way in a natural environment are more compatible to changed circumstances than those who are brought up in urban settings. In rural areas, nature is purer than urban regions, so organisms living in rural areas have capacity to compete through the thick and

thin of life. Organisms living in the company of nature can evolve much better than others and they are proved as better competitors. This stance can be justified with the help of text when Khan compares urban and rural life. Women living in cities are confined to their tiny rooms and away from nature, while nomadic women "could tame the wildest steed, sedentary folk, without even two legs to stand on, could not even saddle a chick "(Khan 189). Similarly a comparison of Australian Sheep and desi Sheep makes it clear that the Australian breed which is artificially inseminated "could not survive the icy winds and sudden snowdrifts of the Kaghan valley. They were fussy eaters. And they were slow-moving, adjusting poorly to nomadic living and complaining too much" (Khan 190). Apparently they are fat and strong, but like sedentary women they are hollow from inside as they are far removed from nature.

4.1.7 Changed Life Patterns

When Glotfelty talks about technology, it then becomes mandatory to discuss changed life pattern of people due to technical advancement. Now the life style of people has also been changed. Earlier people used to live in complete harmony with nature like Maryam's mother "when alive her mother would say that horses are the wings to their world" (Khan 2). This quote exemplifies the closeness of our ancestors with the natural world but now scientific inventions have taken the place of natural ones. To justify the stance quote the example of Gafoor, "he was offering her [Maryam] liquor, in place of honey" (Khan 244). Previously he used to bring honey for Maryam but after so many years honey is replaced with liquor. During Maryam's childhood "timber and thatching grass had once been free" (Khan 250), but now they had to pay to the Government to get wood and grass. Formerly "the forest department would take away the material each spring when the families dismantled their hut and headed for mountains, and give back the same timber each autumn, when they returned" (Khan 250). So the forest department used to adopt a recycling strategy of timber for the survival of nomads and ecosphere, but now due to modernization everything is changed. Natural sphere has been altered with the advent of technology. Maryam also explains to Kiran that "it was angrez who invented the whole business, the whole revenue-generating forest policy that bound the herders" (Khan 250). So angrez symbolizes the advent of modernization and modernization restricts the freedom of animal and human beings. People in the early times had a mutual relation with nature as

well as with each other but now with the passage of time the entire scenario stands transformed. Sedentary people were welcoming for nomads and “they let the nomad’s camp in their fields during the migration, knowing that when the cattle moved on they left piles of fresh streaming dung. Free manure. What else did anyone want?” (Khan 251). But with the passage of time, behavior of the sedentary folk towards nature and nomads is changed. Sedentary people stand for modernity while nomadic ones stand for rural and rustic life closer to nature. The stance of ecocritics holds importance when they say “no true wilderness any longer exists on the planet, for every region is affected by global warming and other anthropocentric problems such as toxic wastes and nuclear fallout” (Barry 257). In the novel, Nadir mentions that “it was our first night here, on the ancient silk route, a route which had never been the route at all, not for us, for a single man, horse, or fly” (Khan 9). The stance of ecocritics proves right since before the construction of the silk road the region was example of natural world but now in the 21st century human beings have distorted that world with the construction of bridges, roads and cities. Nature is preserved in high pastures to some extent only. The lowlands which are an urban area are far away from nature. Human beings have manipulated the natural world in urban areas, however in the rural highland nature is retained to some degree. Mentioning this reality, Maryam says “there were no barbed wires here [highlands]. No one tearing down the trees” (Khan 3). Extinction of crude nature can also be justified when we read descriptions about Karakoram highway “Karakoram highway, a stretch of road that cut through the tallest peak, creating passes within passes” (Khan 228). This quote indicates how the world of human beings is expanding day by day thus pushing the natural world aside.

4.1.8 Role of Government towards Degeneration of Natural Resources

Government is also responsible for increasing pollution to some extent as it doesn’t take any constructive steps for the rehabilitation of the natural world in fact it is more responsible for devastation of natural beauty. Maryam mentions destructive acts of government in this way “the government was closing off their [nomads] freedom to roam the land the way Maryam had done when she was Kiran’s age , and this too was killing the sheep” (Khan 191). The Government binds the freedom of nomads and animals which leads towards the death of animals. The Government also used to “tore down the old, old trees and poisoned the Gujjar dogs and fenced off the land” (Khan 195). Militants, mafia

and Government thus every group destroys the equilibrium of the biosphere by cutting down trees, text provide us an evidence “ it was bad enough that they had been tearing down the forests for as long as he had walked on two feet” (Khan206). The land inspector whose duty was to protect the land is also not honest in fact his acts are injurious for environment as the land “had no trees because the same inspector grew fat each time the forest was torn down” (Khan 212). Cutting down of forest brings our attention towards the alarming situation of earth. Cheryll Glotfelty also highlights the bitter fact in her work that “if we are not part of solution, we are the part of the problem” (xxi). We are problematic for this ecosphere because we consider the natural world a part of our property. We try to rule the natural kingdom as well. Khan mentions the attitude of Farhana towards the natural world in this way “she rolled her eyes as though cliffs and cypresses were toys for men” (Khan 34). This quote explains the behavior of human beings towards nature; they treat it just like toys that are devoid of life.

4.1.9 Khan’s Proclivity with Nature

Khan gives a special emphasis to the natural setting. Extensive details about flora and Fauna of California and northern areas show her environmental concerns. A reader finds many references of the natural world where Khan incorporates names of many animals and plants in her novel like calla Lilly, juniper, cypress trees, cactus, deodar, pine, chalai, diar, arusha, doves, nightingales , eels, geese, snow leopard, horses, goats and trout fish etc. It is also noteworthy that out of twenty one chapters of novel, twelve start with the names of mountains. Only nine chapters begin with names other than natural elements and they do not even constitute half the number of total chapters. Naming of chapters shows inclination of writer towards the natural world. Environmental concern of the writer is evident when we observe that the novel is replete with natural imagery. Yellow color of flower, sweet scent of honey, mountains covered with ice, licking of honey, all these images appeal to our five senses. Maryam describes the process of honey making which becomes very fascinating for the readers. She informs the readers about the beauty and delicacy of the process in this way “into the flower’s heart would dive a bee, she knew, for she had watched this happen many times, though never to a flower such as this. The bee would carry the pollen on its fur, and from the pollen would come honey, and from the honey would come bliss” (Khan 188)

Cave imagery is also an integral part of the novel. Caves have symbolic interpretation in the text as they are the source of refuge for nomads who travelled from Caspian steppe thousands years before. Maryam's mother used to tell her the story of migration, when they left the Caspian steep, and then they took Shelter in the cave as “the sea was deep and it was black. [But] the cave was cool and it was safe” (Khan 76). The quote explains that nature has remained a soothing platform for human beings. Cave also holds a significance place in the life of Maryam as she can perform her pagan rituals in the cave without any threat from the outer world, it's a source of comfort for her as "for Maryam, solace came in many shapes. For instance, the shape of cave. Like the one she used as her summer shrine” (Khan 75). Caves also play a significant role in the life of Irfan. After his wife's death he confined himself in a cave “to inflict penance on himself” (Khan 76). Caves served as balm to heal his inner wounds. So, it can be safely assumed that caves play different roles in the lives of different characters of the novel. Caves have capacity to protect different characters of the novel like a mother's womb as Khan Mentions “the cave did not need them like a womb; it was complete in itself” (Khan 88). The quote shows that human beings are dependent on nature. Nature is not dependent on human beings; it is complete in itself and has an autonomous existence.

Cave is an emblem of a wild natural place and thus helps human beings to discover their true nature as Neeman Baula jimmy mentions in his article that “Nature is a wild place for people to discover themselves” (374). The stance of Jimmy holds true when we analyze *the Lord of flies* and *Heart of Darkness*. In these novels, true nature of protagonists is revealed when they experience wilderness. Likewise, in *thinner than skin*, if a cave plays a positive role in the life of Maryam and Irfan, than on another hand it acts as a site for other people to discover their corrupt nature. Maryam's husband “might say the cave was dangerous, turning would-be saints into thieves” (Khan 84). The viewpoint of Maryam's husband also shows that caves have capacity to bring inner nature of human beings to the surface. In early times human beings used to take shelter in caves, but now in present time it's a source of refuge for thieves and robbers. Previously human beings used to utilize caves for good and holy purposes but with the passage of time relationship of human beings with nature has been changed. Now instead of productive purposes, they are misusing

nature. However, human beings should protect the natural world for their own survival otherwise life will shatter beyond limits.

Apart from caves, camera also has a symbolic interpretation. Nadir is photographer and the camera he holds every time is a symbol of technology. Technology and nature are two antagonistic entities. Camera emblemizes spiritual decadence of society in the name of technology. It also symbolizes his indifferent behavior towards other creatures like an Owl. In San Francisco, Nadir observes a dead owl; he finds an immediate desire of having his camera with him to take shots of the miserable dead creature. Instead of remorse and sympathies for the dead animal, he thinks about proposal and honeymoon with Farhana. He is not concerned about the death of a rare bird but pre-occupied with his immediate desires. He tries to capture the beauty of nature inside his camera rather than letting it sink in his heart and mind. Nadir embodies a dilemma of the modern human beings as mentioned by W.H Davies in his poem *Leisure*.

“No time to stand beneath the boughs /and stare as long as sheep or cows” (3-4).

Technical advancement brought moral corruption with itself; as a result human beings have lost peace and satisfaction. Nadir is a true example of modern man who always carries a camera with himself to capture the beauty of nature as if his eyes are sensitive to the natural world. He loses all his symbiotic connections with the natural world. Nadir himself acknowledges the advice of his father when he advises him not to be a photographer in this way “I should have listened to my father and not become a man who spend his life hiding behind the lense” (Khan 8). A Camera to him is a veil behind which he seeks refuge. Similarly one night in the Kaghan valley he gets a chance to see a living owl and at that time he took many shots of the bird. He explains his behavior in this way “the living owl was an obliging model. I shot two dozen photographs while she glared, swiveled and glared again”(Khan 8). For an ecocritic, it is obvious that owl does not want herself to be an inanimate model in the photographs. Ecocritic gives more emphasis to the owl’s world. Nadir tries to take the pictures of owl with accuracy but as soon as he enters his room to see the preserved beauty of owl, he finds nothing. He describes his strange experience in this way “when I returned to cabin to review my handwork, all the images were white. Nothing else. Only a sallow blur. Stupefied, I rechecked the setting, the battery,

the light. All as should be. By the time I resolved to try a second time, my visitor has vanished”(Khan 8). This quote shows that owl is a sensible creature and she does not want to be photographed so she devised a plan to disappear from Nadir’s camera. Nature including the owl is vindictive; it knows how to retain its integrity.

It is also the same camera which brought his downfall as he tries to take shots of glaciers when they were making deep love. He becomes a different man with camera as Farhana “frequently complained that I [Nadir] was a photographer by day, a happy man by night...she was also right that leaving it behind made me look at the world differently” (Khan 9). A happy man by night suggests that he is lived only when he is in the company of nature but without camera. Nadir’s view becomes different when he sees the world with naked eye without camera. In his lonely walks he usually moves without camera, in those walks, he is able to absorb nature as he mentions “it occurred to me as I jogged along the river breathing the phantom glass and feeling energized that only happen to me late at night ”(Khan 9). The world of nature imparts energy to him when he sees the world without a camera.

4.1.10 Living Attributes of Nature

If we analyze the role of nature played in the novel we come to know that it is more than the setting of a novel. It has physical presence which is experienced by the main characters of the novels. It’s not just an inanimate entity rather has qualities like human beings. It’s like the third major character of the novel apart from Maryam and Nadir. Different attributes are allotted to mountains, glaciers and lake to make readers feel the presence of nature around them. Animate nature of the highlands is explained in the novel in this way, that the people who come to the highlands “would find that up here, everything moved -the mountains, the clouds, the fairies and the jinn, even the caves” (Khan 75). Nadir observes the reaction of mountains on the death day of Kiran, he describes the reaction of mountains hence “The mountains answered back, with deep thunder” (Khan 319). Khan describes the living characteristics of Mountains in this way “She (Maryam) understood that the mountains were not as fixed as many believed. She knew too that when undressed, the taller mountain had as many angels as a buffalo hip” (Khan 2). Like human beings, mountains, lakes and even animals have names in the text. Loi Tara, Namasha and Girgiti

are the names of horses in the novel. Noor is the name of a buffalo. Burhi and Mukheri are the names of goats. So here nature wears cultural attire, thus culture and nature becomes a unified entity. Similarly for gujjar people “the Karakoram was the black door. The Pamirs the white door. The Himalyas the Abyss” (Khan 2). Farhana mentions the living spirit of the glaciers in this way “I grew to love the language of glaciers. They galloped and groaned, cracked and crept” (Khan 95). Similarly Nadir got jealous of the love that mountains were making while on another hand, he was unable to accomplish his love. He reports his jealousy in this way “it seems so unjust; the land could express its love but we couldn’t” (Khan 65). Naming of animals and mountains seem to be part of the nomadic culture. All these examples show the living characteristics of the natural world.

Like mountains, animals are equally active and responsive as if they understand human feelings. Maryam likes animals because “when you call, they come” (Khan 3). Animals are equally sensible like the natural world. They can anticipate the coming danger for example before the death of a horse, animals sense the danger in the air and the fact is mentioned in the novel thus “then her [horse] was racing forward, straight into a fence of barbed wire masked in the thicket of pine. The mother of his foul lifted her neck. The goats too. They sensed it, even the stupid sheep sensed it” (Khan 1). Similarly after the death of Kiran, Maryam engages herself with animals to forget the traumatic incident of Kiran’s death. She has the habit of talking to animals and while talking to the horse “she was suddenly livid with this animal for stirring the furry she had been holding inside” (Khan 209). When two policemen attacked Maryam’s home and harassed her, animals at that day felt the same pain and shame as felt by Maryam. Maryam explains this strange experience in this way at that particular day after humiliation “the buffaloes lowed in pain, their udders swelling like her shame” (Khan 211). Antiphonal behavior of animals is noticeable when we find the rude behavior of the mare Namasha towards Maryam. Once Maryam pressed the wound of horse in front of Namasha, and “afterward, Namasha only took food from Kiran. At Maryam she snarled and she kicked. It took two years before the mare forgave her” (Khan 125). Namasha’s refusal to take food from Maryam is the expression of her anger towards Maryam. Like humans beings, animals have a complete system of law and order. All these quotes show that animals are equally sensitive to the sufferings of their owners, and the natural world has ability to heal the sorrows of human

beings. It can help human beings to lessen the burden of their miseries. Natural world has ability to purify the human soul from worldly pains.

4.1.11 Signs In the Natural World.

Animated behavior of the natural world can also be justified if we trace out signs carried by the natural world. To explain the above mentioned stance, let's take an example of a red color flower in winter. For Maryam, the blooming of a flower "was a blessing, the way the color lit the freezing air...it had been a sign of an order she trusted in completely" (Khan 294)

The very first page of novel explains the nature of wind that how it has capability to anticipate the coming tragedy in Maryam's life, as mentioned in the novel "the wind carried a similar foreboding, not in the shape of scent but of wing beat, and the lake froze in anticipation" (Khan 1). And Maryam is perplexed as she tries to guess "whose cry was about to cut through the valley" (Khan 1). Maryam experienced the same foreboding once before when "horse impaled himself just before his cry rang through the valley" (Khan 1). Now again she senses some bad signs in the air which shows something bad is going to happen with her. Maryam also observes another sign in her sacred cave and "she could not stop staring at the sign. A single blue feather, from a King fisher's wing" (Khan 88). Later on she understands the hidden message of signs as "The blue feather had been left as a sign. He (Gafoor) was coming" (Khan 89). Maryam gets bewildered after watching the image of Gafoor in the lake, which is again a sign of his arrival. She asked herself "what was he doing here at the foot of two mountains at the bottom of lover's lake" (Khan 3). The novel ends with a sign when a white feather falls on Maryam's face to secure her family from calamity. White feather is a symbol of peace and tranquility. All these quotes show that the air carries some messages for Maryam throughout the novel and the natural world is more like an active agent. Nature carries signs which need to be decoded by human beings.

4.1.12 Healing Power of Nature

Apart from signs, nature also plays another integral role in the novel. It has power to free human beings from physical ailments and sufferings. Maryam used to cleanse her home from juniper leaves as she believes it can cleanse her home from vices. This activity is her cultural practice and this belief is linked with her religion. So culture and nature get unified. Nature becomes a cultural practice and it has a positive effect on their lives. There is reference of Chalai, Diar and Bhenri trees in the novel “whose rhizomes and leaves cured ailments from insomnia to gonorrhoea, and even cancer” (Khan 259). It is also believed that the pistachio tree is a symbol of order in nomads’ life and Maryam “had cured the coughs of all her children with the tissues of pistachio bark” (Khan 294). Nadir drinks “the flowers of arusha to expel the worms by stunning them ... And to stop the bleeding and swelling” (Khan 334). Nature can cure different ailments like Noor Jahan’s eye infection. Textual reference highlights that once Noor Jahan had an eye infection. She washes her eye with fresh river water and “The water was so cool and pure her eyes were cured” (11). That river had been named as Nain Sukh right after her eye was cured. Nature has the power to purify our mind and body. And the fact is mentioned in the novel in this way “the higher up they [nomads] moved, the more the spirit was cleansed” (Khan 126). The quote shows that miseries turn into blessings in the lap of nature.

4.1.13 Environmental Allegory

This novel can be read as environmental allegory as it uses the persona of jinn, wolf, prince and princess to address the issues of global warming. Through her novel, Khan wants to instruct us about consequences of our wrong actions. The novel becomes an allegorical tale when Farhana equates jinn with global warning. She says “so, the jinn's wrath melted the snow? The jinn is global warning” (Khan 46). Jinn here stand for human beings who are the real reason of global warming. Human beings compared with jinn, have given benefits to mankind in the name of technology but this technology has negative effect on the biosphere. Human beings are the cause of global warming so the jinn adopt the persona of human beings. The words of Nadir explain the synonymy between jinn and human beings. He says “his [jin’s] scolding furry caused Malika Parbat snow to melt with such force it breached the banks of lake and nearly drown the poor lovers” (Khan 46). Like

a jealous jinn, wrath and wrong acts of human beings like excessive use of vehicles, air conditions and disposal of plastic bags, removal of trees, non-recycling of garbage compel ice to melt fast causing flood at high rate. Similarly in another chapter, man is compared with a wolf when a goat is killed by a wolf. Khan equates the wolf with man in this way that “it might have been a wolf. It might have been a man” (Khan 124). Wolf is a symbol of cruelty in the eastern culture and this animal can bring harm to small species. In the novel, wolf stands for man, like wolves, human beings are cruel enough to kill innocent animals for their salacious desires. Like wolf, man is brutal towards innocent animals like goat, which is shredded by the wolf in the novel. The quote “before she [Kiran] had seen twelve full moons, Kiran saw her first disemboweled goat ... in the morning the goat’s entrails lay splattered in the green”(Khan 124), shows that animal world is not safe from human beings. Human beings become savage like wolf in order to satiate their hunger. So it is an allegorical tale, in which animals stand for abstract and concrete ideas like the selfishness of human beings. We can safely conclude that man has become an embodiment of self-centered desires.

All these examples from the text show that the natural world is privileged in the text and nature is a true blessing for human beings if they use it well, but if they try to misuse it, then same nature becomes hostile towards them.

4.2 Analysis of *Trespassing*

It is worthwhile to mention that Khan has allotted a large portion of *Trespassing* to the natural world. Natural imagery like rain imagery, silk imagery and fruit imagery is very rich and vivid in this work. Readers find many references to mulberry trees and silk farm in the novel. It is through the reading of this novel that readers enter into silk farms and sea world. They get acquainted with the world of silk worms and the life exists under water. Apart from silk worm, readers also get information about flora and fauna of Pakistan as there are references of indigenous fruits and birds like Jamun, bulbuls, peepal, mulberry tree. Apart from them, we also find names of other trees and animals like cedar, oak, wild thyme, fig, hibiscus jasmine, parakeets, cats, chameleon, butterfly, crickets, snails, bluebells, pansies, cowslips, bluets, buttercups, susan, chickadees, litmice, plaintive, owl,

crow, nautilus, Argonaut, plovers, herons, spoonbills, sea urchins, jellyfish, fan coral, sea snakes.

4.2.1 Distortion of Nature through Silk production

According to Glotfelty ecocriticism “negotiates between the human and non-human” (Glotfelty xix), so the detail analysis of non-human world holds a central place in the theory which “include the frontier, animals, cities, specific geographical regions, rivers, mountains, deserts, technology, garbage and the body”(Glotfelty xxiii). Furthermore Glotfelty puts it plainly “ecocriticism takes as its subject the interconnection between nature and culture” (Glotfelty xix). As mentioned earlier that discussion of culture is also important to understand the distortion of ecosphere by man. *Trespassing* is largely about Danish interest in collection of shells and Dia interest in silk worms and silk production respectively. Production of silk represents the amalgamation of nature and culture. Silk, which is an expensive and luxurious fabric produced by silk worms is also a cultural artifact. It is viable to understand the connection of culture and nature through the production of silk and how cultural practice affects the natural world adversely. Silk is an emblematic fusion of culture and nature. Story of the novel is woven in a delicate fabric of silk. Riffat is interested in launch a silk factory in Thatta and her daughter “Dia” is also interested to closely observe the metamorphic stage of silk worms, so silk is a recurring image used in the text. It is highly recommendable to discuss the procedure of silk production to understand the violation of natural cycle of silk worms by human beings.

Production of silk is closely linked to the ego-centric behavior of man. Ego-centrism places human beings at the top of food web, on the contrary eco-centrism positions human beings at the same as the other organisms. Ego-centrism suggests that human beings are the owners of other organisms and can dominate the whole universe. They can even use other smaller organisms for their materialistic needs. And manufacturing of silk is one of the worldly needs of human beings. They drive silk from the cocoon of silk worm by boiling them in hot water to fulfill their need of clothes. Long threads of silk are derived by boiling the cocoon of silk worm in water as it is mentioned in the text “to extract the thread, the cocoon was boiled in water” (Khan 108), as result “it

shriveled and expelled its last breath” (Khan 11). So, silk is produced by the death of innocent insects.

The life cycle of worm starts when a female moth lays many eggs on mulberry leaves. Larvae hatch out of those eggs within 10-12 days. After few days, larvae start to spin cocoon around them. Inside the cocoon, larva changes in to pupa and this stage is called metamorphosis. This stage is important as after metamorphosis pupa finally develops in to adult moth, hatches out of the cocoon and searches for opposite sex to mate. After mating with opposite sex, female moths lay many eggs and die within three to four days. But for the production of silk, natural cycle of worms is intentionally distorted by human beings. To attain silk, cocoons with living pupae are boiled in hot water which is a brutal killing of living organisms for human’s luxuries. Salammat explains the life cycle of silk worm to Danish in very simple way “Feed them a lot. When they’ve spun their cocoon, if you want the thread, boil them” (Khan 152). It is cruelty of human beings that they don’t only disturbs the life cycle of silk worm, but they kill living creatures mercilessly just for the production of silk. The word ‘squashed’ is used to describe the killing of caterpillars for the sake of silk as it is mentioned in the text “would the empress have squashed caterpillars if she knows what would happen twenty-five hundred years after her find?” (Khan 11).

Human beings do not misuse but abuse nature for their material gains. Khan explains the lust of mankind to attain the benefits from other creatures like silkworm in this way “At one time the cloth was as valuable as oil and men went to equally grotesque lengths to acquire it” (Khan 435). Different people, organizations and even religions condemn the usage of silk. PETA, an American organization stands against the exploitation of animals and objugates the killing of silk worms. According to *PETA UK* research, silk worm are sensitive to pain as “they produce endorphins and have a physical response to pain” (The Silk Industry). The same article informs that 1kg of silk is produced by the death of 6600 silk mothers residing inside their cocoon. Female insects which lay eggs are squashed consciously to make sure if the eggs carry disease, and if any disease is found in the egg then that particular female moth is crushed mercilessly. Furthermore male moths are also discarded right after mating. Treatment of human beings towards silk worms shows us that for human beings worms are non-living creations and human beings are totally

unaware of their pain. Worms only exist to give benefit to human beings and they are worth living only if they give them benefit otherwise they do not have right to live. After getting all the benefits from the silk worms, humans become cruel towards them as insects become useless and repulsive material for them. This fact is highlighted in her novel in this way that “the Insects were handled as mechanically as braids”(Khan 105). Human beings want to harness nature and in their attempt, their selfish desires drive them so crazy that they pay no heed to the pains of other organisms.

Silk worms in the novel seem to have human emotions and feelings. They are aware of Dia’s presence in the room. When Dia vows to observe metamorphic stage of silk worms, at that time silk worms do not spin their cocoon as “a silkworm wanted absolute privacy as it spun. The slightest inference could result in a faulty cocoon or even in death” (Khan 107). And Dia wants to trespass into their private life. She wants to intrude their privacy, but at the same time worms vow not to spin in front of her. Worms are vigilant enough to observe even the slightest presence and they are firm not to share their privacy with anyone. Dia mentions the behavior of larva and pupa when she observes them in the room “if the larva were private about spinning their cocoons, the pupae were neurotic. They seemed able to detect her even when she sat motionless” (Khan 193). Similarly Danish approves secretive nature of silk worm that “they didn’t appreciate my watching” (Khan 225). Danish explains the behavior of silkworm that they prefer the dark corner of the room to fulfill their life cycle because “no matter where he put them, they [worms] wanted to be somewhere else. At last he found a place they found acceptable: inside a dark, dry corner of the drawer” (155).

Worms in the novel signify the natural world. Worms depicted in the novel are blessed with human like emotions. If human beings want to trespass and intervene the territory of nature, then nature has the capacity to throw back its anger upon him. So, nature is shown as animated and responsive figure. If human beings are persistent to dominate nature, then nature is also persistent to dominate the human world. And to prove the stance, let’s take the example of Dia who waits for so long to closely observe the last stages of their cycle, but worms complete the last stages when Dia leaves the room. And at last silkworms win the battle as Dia herself acknowledges it “They’d won” (Khan 196). Even ferocious expressions of silk worms are witnessed by Dia, She describes the angry

expressions of silk moth in this way “They were stark white and wore a fierce expression” (Khan 109). Angry expression which silk moths hold in their eyes is the manifestation of their anger for human kind because human beings are crushing them brutally. Silk production got very low in the year 1992 and the reason was “fewer caterpillars had lived through fourth molt than ever before” (Khan 106). Dia observes silk worm talking to each other and saying, “Let us vow never to spin our fine threads for these wretched humans again” (Khan 106), who had made us their property. Dia believes that silkworms do not produce good thread and die before completion of the cycle because they are angry by heart, they are protesting against the cruelty of human beings and “mutiny is the real reason output is down” (Khan 106). Dia conceives that silkworms had formed “a guerilla alliance and revolt” (Khan 106). And the reason is mistreatment of human beings towards them. Production of silk and response of silk worms towards Dia manifest after effects of cultural activities on the natural world. We need to understand that like all other living organisms, they have the right to live, but human beings snatch that right from them. Dia explains self centered interest of human beings in this way “People have always depended on animals for food and clothing and then, four thousand years ago, along came a Chinese empress who made insects our property too” (Khan 106). Now other animals and insects are property for human beings which can be built and destroyed mechanically at any time. And this fact makes human beings sufferable.

4.2.2 Disturbance of Marine Life by Danish

Dia is interested in silk production likewise another major character of the novel; Danish has a hobby of collecting shells and sea creatures. Shafqat, the father of Danish brings nautilus for Danish when he returns from Philippine and “the doctor had dabbed it with mineral oil to preserve the pearly coat” (Khan 62). Danish preserves Argonaut, as he has a deep love for sea creatures and sea shells. On one hand it shows his inclination towards nature but on another hand his hobby of collecting and preserving sea creatures shows that he is oblivious of another ecosystem exists underwater which can be disturbed by his unusual hobby. He keeps all those creatures preserved to satiate his pleasure principals. He destroys the life of sea creatures for his own interest. He and Dia are the epitome of modern beings who seek refuge in the natural world yet disturb it for their self centered interest. For them living creatures like silkworm, limpets, nautilus and

winkles are instruments to play with. They are totally forgetful of the fact that their trivial acts have a large influence on the ecosystem. As things are interconnected, so intentional killing and preservation of worms can affect the life of other creatures dependent on them. Similarly, removal of shells and sea creature from sea disturbs the balance of life exists underwater. Dia and Danish both want to encroach upon the territory of the natural world. Danish intervenes into another world which belongs to sea creatures and Dia tries to trespass into the realm of silkworms. She desires to witness something which silkworm didn't allow her to do. Silkworm did not like her intervention and did not permit her to trespass into their private life, the title of the novel suggests the same, that human beings want to trespass the natural kingdom and as a result they meet failure.

4.2.3 Human's Intervention in the Natural World

Apart from Dia and Danish, other characters of the novel also try to intrude into the natural world. Prologue of the novel informs us that the community of fishermen is displaced by trawlers. Trawlers trespass into realm of sea life. Prologue is titled as death and is significant to inform us about the death of other turtles which were expected to be hatch out of the eggs if those eggs were not spoiled by a trawler. The man who attempts to steal eggs is called an intruder because he tries to snatch something which belongs to the animal world. Salamaat predicts that same man will not steal the eggs gently rather will steal them violently thus harming the sensitive world of defenseless reptile. Salamaat is beaten brutally when he tries to save the eggs from being stolen away. Men beat him with eggs thus exterminate the life of the new born ones. Salamaat explains his bitter experience in this way "instead of their blows he hears shell's splits. Thud !Crack! The men are petting him with eggs" (Khan3). The behavior of other men towards nature is contrastive to Salamaat's behavior. Salamaat sacrifices his life to preserve eggs, while other people throw them extravagantly. It is obvious that the act of a single person cannot cope up with environmental crisis; in fact collective efforts can bring some reformation in our society. Glotfelty mentions the stance of Donald Worster in her essay which is very relatable to understand our basic mistakes towards environmental degeneration. Worster says;

We are facing a global crisis today not because of how ecosystem functions but rather because of how our ethical systems function. Getting through the crisis requires

understanding of our impact on nature as precisely as possible, but even more it requires understanding those ethical system and using that understanding to reform them” (qtd. in Glotfelty xxi).

The quote elucidates the fact that it is our collective responsibility to preserve our earth for our own survival. It's not only the obligation of Salamaat to stop other people from foul acts which can destabilize the natural harmony, but other people should also act wisely to prolong the life span of healthy sphere. Human beings become so selfish in taking benefits from other organisms that they become indifferent towards their pains. In the prologue when trawler tries to steal the eggs, his “ripe fingers nearly scraping the reptile orifice for a gift” (Khan 2), so he becomes unaware of the fact that animals are also sensitive to pain like human beings. A new trawler community poses a grave threat to marine life. Turtle gets afraid of human's world. The thoughts of turtle while laying eggs reflect the unsafe zone of shore. She thinks “how much safer it had been when coastline belonged to the fisherman. Now the boats sail in like giant moths” (Khan1). Placement of trawlers' hut around the shore and the crowd of visitors bring problems for the aquatic animals and as a result turtle is afraid of human beings. Line from the text justifies the insecurity and fear of turtle as Khan says “but he is afraid, as afraid as turtle is, of the men in the hut” (Khan 2). This quote allows us to probe into the mind of turtle that she is fearful and defenseless in a human dominating society. Invasion of human beings in animals' land has created insecurities in the animals mind and this stance is justified from the text when we read thoughts of turtle “it is for the visitors from the city, hidden in their huts, that her brow has creased beyond her age” (Khan 1). The shore was safe for marine animals when the coastline was not invaded by trawlers. The trawlers came to the sea shore and they pushed the fishermen's community out and as a result “on the beach calm descended” (Khan123). Fishermen have negative views about trawlers “they say the foreign trawlers have stolen their sea. They trespass. Fish once abundant close to shore are now disappearing even in the deep” (Khan 2). Beach which belongs to sea creatures and fishermen now becomes a site of violence as Salamaat is beaten there. Fishermen were living in harmony with the natural world to some extent but trawlers had changed the shape of shore completely. Fishermen catch fish to earn their basic needs however, trawlers symbolize the greed and lust of human beings to catch a large amount of fish. These

trawlers do not invade the sea world but they also try to violate the serenity of the ecosphere by their foul acts like stealing of eggs and beating of Salamaat. Sea shore which once used to be the source of calmness and income for fishermen is now occupied by trawlers. Now it is not safe for marine animals. Technical advancements have replaced local fishermen's net with trawler's net. Trawlers have disturbed the entire underwater ecosystem. As a result, fish a major aquatic animal which is supposed to exist in abundance in sea is on the verge of extinction, and human beings are responsible for decreasing number of fish. Fish hunting, fishermen and trawlers are the words linked with the culture of Karachi around the sea. The cultural practice of fish catching presents a danger to the marine life. Humans need to understand that their actions create serious threats to other organisms as Glotfelty mentions "we are there. Either we change our ways or we face global catastrophe destroying much beauty and exterminating countless fellow species in our headlong race to apocalypse" (Glotfelty xx). In fact we have already lost many species due to our wrong conducts. Even fish, which is very common organism, is also endangered as it is evident in the text "Dacoits are now attacking every one. Not just the rich. Just this month they raided a fishermen's village. I cannot imagine what they took; there are hardly even any fish left" (Khan 43). Formerly fishermen's life was synchronized with marine life but now "many huts dotting the shore" (Khan 1). And the aquatic life is totally disturbed. "The nearest [hut] is just thirty feet away" (Khan 1) which shows that even sea shore is occupied by human beings. Humans need to develop a mutual relation with other organisms for long term existence of healthy ecosphere.

Similarly the men in Fateh's camp are also trespassers, as they built the camp of freedom fighters amid the natural world. This particular camp gives training to youth to kill innocent people in the name of jihad. In simple words, the camp is the center of corruption where explosive material is sold and bought. It is the same camp which brainwashes the youth towards the commission of inhumane acts. The camp is constructed on the bank of a river away from the hustle bustle of city. Construction of camp in natural place is significant to understand how human beings intend to contaminate the natural world with their evil acts. Salamat wishes .

"Sometimes that the camp weren't in such a beautiful place. It should have been in a filthy burning city street. In the charred backseat of an overturned bus. The stinking hole handsome's workers shat in. Instead it was here, in an isolated patch in the far north of the province. Fatah said, most camps were further south, where the banks were heavily forested" (Khan 358).

Placement of camp in this natural place shatters the tranquility of the place. Location of camp in this beautiful site pollutes the natural quietude. Its setting in a beautiful place disturbs the serenity of quite place where grass, soil, river and everything could be the source of comfort. So human beings disrupt the natural world through many ways. They try to pollute and contaminate the beauty of the biosphere through their deadly acts and training camp is an explicit example of this fact.

4.2.4 Environmental Pollution in Karachi

Trespassing is set in Karachi which is a metropolitan city. It is largely polluted and populated. As soon as Danish enters Karachi, he observes "the sky was light grey haze and the leaden heat immediately stifling, not a star shone through" (Khan 39). The sky is dull and hazy due to dust and smog. The word 'stifling' explains the extreme suffocative environs of Karachi. Layer of dust and smoke has concealed the beauty of stars and that's why no single star is visible as it is mentioned in the text "hardly a star lit the overcast sky" (Khan 204). Khan uses adjectives like hazy, smoky and peach-grey for the sky to present the populated picture of Karachi. Danish describes the condition of sky in this way "a thin light pierced the haze and the sky turned smoky purple" (Khan 42). Adjectives like clean, serene and calm could be used instead of smoky, but usage of the word 'smoky' helps readers to better comprehend the polluted environment of Karachi.

Khan explains the careless activities of citizens to connect them with declining condition of the earth. She says, "once the city awoke, pedestrians would scoop the dirt in their shoes and kick into the sooty air, to resettle on the next passer-by" (Khan 42). The air which is already sooty becomes more polluted due to ignorant acts of the citizens. Khan highlights the behavior of the Karachittes in this way "karachittes walked out of necessity, not for pleasure" (Khan 42). Everyone is conscious of his own personal interest and no one notices the filth in public places. Karachi was once among the beautiful cities of Pakistan.

Ethnic conflicts have distorted the entire beauty and serenity of the city. Shafqat, the father of Danish tells him about beauty of Karachi twenty five years ago when Shafqat returned from England. He compares the scenario of the city during his youth time with present times. Danish mentions his father's words in this way "he'd [Shafqat] pointed to the dense smog choking the city and frowned. It was a different country then. Barely twenty five years old roughly your age. Cleaner and full of promise. Then we got ourselves into a war and were cut in half" (Khan 44). It was hardly twenty years ago that this city was secure and clean, now in Danish's time everything is over turned. Discussion of Khurram's family about "the time of day the traffic was heaviest, the importance of the time of day in gauging the traffic, the overall increase in traffic, the necessity of cars, the necessity of two cars and the overall decrease in time, specially time to spend with your friends and family doing just this: chit chatting"(Khan 44), explains the changed pattern of life. Now in present time, technology has replaced the natural world as mentioned by Danish "the sky was a peach-grey pierced by dish antennas, sooty rooftops, and telephone wires. There were hardly any trees" (Khan 151). In modern times, antennas and wires have taken the place of trees. Wires and dish antennas symbolize technical advancement. But this advancement has left the natural world far behind. Now instead of plants and trees we see telephone, cable and internet wires all around. Availability of fresh water is also inadequate.

4.2.5 Water Crisis

Access of fresh water is again dependent on human actions. Disproportionate increase of population leads to shortage of water availability "and in a city of eleven million, life pressed very, very close" (Khan 312). The Indus River which once used to be a source of pride and enriched with historical accounts now presents a deadly picture. While crossing the river Dia thinks "River beds ought to teem with life ... Now its banks teemed not with sassi's pavilions, but with some of the nation's deadliest gangs" (Khan 97). Now freedom fighters have built their camps around the river and throw bodies of the murdered ones in the river. "It was believed her [Dia's] father had been kidnapped on this Stretch" (Khan 98). The condition of the river is entirely changed. Indus River is now filled with the bodies of innocent ones and lacks fresh water and as a result mangroves inside the river have now diminished, and the fish dependent on trees are also in scarcity. Salamaat mentions this fact in this way "with the fresh water cut off, the trees were withering, and

the fish dying. Many of these villagers too had to leave” (Khan 359). The words of Salamaat show how a whole community of animals and plants suffered due to deadly activities of other human beings. Supply of Indus River is insufficient due to ethnic conflicts, which in turn became cause of the death of plants and animals. It is not only the life of aquatic animals and plants which is affected due to water shortage, in fact flora and fauna is also affected. The annual yield of mulberry tree has been lessened. Dia compares the annual yield of mulberry leaves in this way:

The yield of leaves had peaked at sixty tons when she was child. But in the last three years three years, due to the increasing water shortage, this had begun to drop startlingly. A reduced diet meant larva either never reached the cocoon-stage, or that the cocoons were thin-shelled, too small or pierced , resulting in poor quality thread. (Khan 103)

The words of Dia inform us about importance of water that how water shortage can disturb the life of every organism on the earth.

Through this novel, Khan also addresses the issue of water crisis. Glotfelty mentions that ecocriticism “implies interdependent communities, integrated systems and strong connections among constituent parts” (Glotfelty xx). So water shortage is again dependent on human activities. Temperature of earth has increased due to improper disposal of garbage, burning of tyres and many other careless habits, as a result the water cycle remains incomplete. Water which needs to be evaporated from rivers and lake is insufficient and consequently we face less rainfall. Due to less rainfall, people are deprived of water; they have to buy a tanker to fulfill their domestic needs as evident in the text that “It had been five days since either he or Anu had showered or even washed”(Khan 334). They do not have any water for their lavatories and as result both Anu and Danish were stinking, finally Danish decides to get a tanker filled by the authorities. It is even difficult for citizens to buy a tanker of water from the water office, and a large crowd strives to get water. And finally with the help of his uncle, Danish manages to get it. Even rain could not solve the problem of water shortage in fact it brings more trouble to the lives of citizens. Dia describes the quality of last year’s rain in this way “Last summer a black rain fell. People said it was because of the bombed oilfields in Iraq. For months, soot covered the

world and fell like ink. Anu said the rain destroyed our mulberry trees” (Khan 343). Rain which is usually a symbol of hope, growth and regeneration couldn't bring solace in people's life, in fact it proves destructive for them. Black rain represents hazardous after affects of pollution and war. Smoke, garbage and vehicles increase the amount carbon monoxide which is very hazardous for human life. Reference to carbon monoxide draws our attentions towards increasing temperature of earth. While driving towards the cove, Dia notices “a bus passed them flashing messages of love, belching gallons of carbon monoxide” (Khan 288). Carbon monoxide is one of the poisonous pollutants that are emitted from vehicles, industries and smoke. Accumulation of carbon monoxide in the air is also one of the reasons of less rainfall. Due to low rain, trees are thirsty and waiting for rain shower as mentioned in the text “ Salamaat rolled on to his back in the dirt, gazing up at the top of thirsty tree”(Khan 392). “The level of Indus began to drop”(Khan 383). Everyone in the text is in desperate need of water and rain, as the land is “thirsty and desolate” (Khan 99). Similarly “the grass was beginning to scorch in patches. His [Danish] body wanted water” (Khan 157). Fish in the river are dead. Lines from the text explain the miserable condition of people as it is mentioned that “the lake has grown salty. It is stagnant, filthy. Dead are the fresh water fish: kurero, morakho, thelhi. And what are the people to drink? We were born to water. We drown on land” (Khan 102). Fresh lake water which once used to be clean and pure is now littered due to the ravages wrought by human beings..

4.2.6 Inexorable Significance of Rain

It's not only the material world which is dependent on rainfall; in fact rain is inevitable for corporeal needs as it is mentioned in the text:

Sumbal said Riffat Mansoor's farm was in the throes of a water crisis. The level in the wells has risen but it needs to rain much more. She explained ‘poor baby. She says when it rains life stops. But when it does not the spirit just shrivels up and dies, slowly slowly curling with exhaustion. (Khan 391)

So rain has some association with soul. Rain is also a symbol of joy and hope for birds, as “bulbuls sang more vibrantly, as if rain had cleansed their vocal cords” (Khan 299). Every living creature becomes vigorous and vibrant in the company of rain. A very

beautiful imagery of rain has been presented in the novel which appeals to our senses. Dia explains whole scenario in this way; “Best was when the rainfall softened to cool drizzle, driving the tiny, furtive creatures she loved out into the open. The torpid snails emerged ... leaning far out of its shell, creeping up walls and staircases like an errant knight. Earth worm slithered the leggy crane fly sipped moisture from grass. (Khan 298)”

And this rainfall helps Dia to see and understand things in a better way as it is quoted “she’d feel things so poignantly it was as if the flaccid sky had sunk into her bones, teaching her to see life close, closer than anyone else”(Khan 299). This quote suggests that nature is shown as a powerful entity and plays a constructive role in the lives of various characters. The sea breeze is also a soothing element for Nini’s house as it is mentioned that “if it weren’t for that lovely sea breeze, they’d all choke”(Khan 218). Similarly while living at sea shore, waves are the source of catharsis for Salmaat’s grandma as it is indicated in the text “Grandmother would stare at sea till she was in a trance. She was tossing her worries out letting the waves carry them away” (Khan 353). For Dia, silk farm is the source of elevation as mentioned in the text, “the thought of visiting the silk worm farm tomorrow lifted Dia’s spirit” (Khan 14). Nature is shown as a benevolent entity in the novel, thus plays a positive role in the lives of characters.

4.2.7 Healthy sphere and Human Health

The third stage of ecocriticism links ecology with other disciplines thus discusses the issues addressed in philosophy, psychology, etc. By implementing this phase, I as an ecocritic draw parallels between human health and a healthy sphere. According to Glotfelty, now historians, philosophers and psychologists are adding an environmental tint in their works by keeping in mind “the reciprocal relationships between humans and land” (Glotfelty xxi). The human world and natural world are indivisible so psychologists “are exploring the linkage between environmental conditions and mental health, some regarding the modern estrangement from nature as the basis of our social and Psychological ills” (Glotfelty xxi). This quote suggests that a healthy and pollution free environment can foster a healthy mind, while a polluted and filthy atmosphere pollutes human psyche and this stance can be justified with the help of novel. In *Trespassing*, the natural world moves parallel to corrupted world. Khan beautifully links the external world with internal psyche

of human beings. The novel is set in Karachi which is densely populated and the third most inhabited city of the world. It is largely over crowded by people of different ethnicities as indicated in the text “the city that swarmed with immigrants” (Khan 241). Karachi is also considered as a hub of corruption at the time when this novel was written. Furthermore, it has remained the victim of heat waves in the last few years. It is easy to understand the polluted environment and polluted psyche of the Karachiites by keeping all these factors in minds. With the help of the novel, Khan draws similarities between the polluted environment and polluted mind. Khan wants to prove that toxic surroundings strike the human mind and reasoning. She has presented a grim and dark picture of Karachi, where people are gradually moving away from the natural world. Prologue of the novel shows that Salamaat has a strong bonding with the natural world but as soon as he joins the camp of corrupted people, he becomes a part of that corrupted world. His psyche gets tuned with that contaminated environ. At the beach, he risks his life to save the eggs of tortoise from an intruder who tries to steal them. But later on, when he moves to Karachi, he observes that “Sand was replaced by granite, mud with cement, fish with scraps of rubbery mutton, and that too on good days. He smelled no salt in the air, only smoke and gases that made his chest burn. The moon was dimmed by lights” (Khan 126). All of natural, rustic elements were replaced by artificial glittering beauty of urban life. He is dragged into another world of corruption and this world is full of hatred and filth. He is surrounded by desolate world of filthy people. Now he is in the city of technology and violence which is far away from the natural world. In the city, he tries to please himself by manufactured nature which is drawn on the bus. It is mentioned that the interior of the bus is covered with the pictures of “fish dancing; storks wading; a lofty crown; parrots with girlish eyes, preening. The tranquility of each scene contrasted with the activities of the commuters, who spat paan juice everywhere, extinguished cigarettes on fish fins, blew their noses on crown jewels”(Khan 127). Beautiful natural world which is painted on bus is polluted by repellant activities of human beings. Their nasty actions like spitting paan and cigarettes residue damage the delicate beauty of nature. Now nature is more vulnerable than human beings. The warm refuge which Salamaat and his grandmother used to get in the lap of nature is now totally cold, as he is now the part of dirty world which affects his mind gradually and “Salammat was beginning to like his world again”(Khan 358). His journey from the sea

shore to the city shows that human beings are moving gradually from nature towards technology and dirt. And “instead of distancing himself from the land, he was entering it” (Khan 358). Now he has plunged into a world which is teemed with violence and rottenness where human beings are killing each other brutally. Violent surroundings play a secretive role in corrupting their mind as they are destroying the beauty of nature by their potentially lethal acts and as a result the polluted world which surrounds them has the capacity to corrupt their mind. The floor where Salamat sleeps after joining Fatah's camp “was carpeted with soft pine needles and pigeon shit” (Khan 356). Now the system which surrounds him is gradually moving towards its degeneration and Salamat does not put any effort towards its regeneration, in fact his actions are cataclysmic, causing more damage to the ecosphere.

Apart from Salamat, all other characters of the novel are also part of such a system which is sinister to its core. Society portrayed in the novel is utterly corrupt one, where every member is engaged in some negative activities. Dia and Danish take refuge in perverted sex, Salamat is a part of a terrorist group, Shafqat and Riffat also had illicit relations, people kill each other brutally with no remorse, girls get marks in exams by cheating as is evident in the text “all those who'd cheated had passed” (Khan 283). Thus every character in the novel goes against the natural law. The polluted environment of Karachi makes their thinking equally poisonous. They breathe in the dangerous air which can bloat their cognition. Dish antennas have replaced trees, there are no traces of the natural world around them where they can breathe some clean air. As soon as Danish enters Karachi, he notices that “No one bothered with public space. As if to illustrate, the little boy, tired of the ching-um wrapper, bounced over the bags on Daanish, unrolled the wrapper and tossed it out. He then proceeded to empty his pockets on to the street—more wrappers, a Chili Chips packet, and fistfuls of pencil shavings. No one noticed” (Khan 42). The same boy throws more wrappers on the road and no one stops him as if it is a normal course of action for the people. They are unaware of the fact how their trivial acts like throwing garbage on the road can affect the bigger interconnected web of the natural world. He also observes “time of day traffic was heaviest” (Khan 44). Neglected acts of human beings destroy the surfaces of the cove as Danish hints “Though silt and human waste had destroyed most reefs off Karachi's shore” (Khan 45). The destruction of coral reefs shows that even the

water world is not safe from human beings. Anu observes “Somebody burned litter” (Khan 69), as the smell of smoke arouse her nose. Her observation draws our attention towards a bitter reality that there is no proper disposal of garbage in Karachi and this fact is highlighted at another place in the text when;

She [Anu] was about to drop the bag in the basket by the mailbox when she paused: it was Monday, the load would not be picked up till Friday. She decided to walk to the empty lot at the end of the street, where everyone left their trash. Plastic bags flapped in the branches of the tree sprouting in the centre of the dump. Beneath it was a pit stuffed with rotten food, plastic containers and ash from numerous trash-fires. (Khan 277)

Anu and Danish notice a large heap of garbage at the corner of their street. Condition of streets is pitiable as “Polythene bags hung on tree limbs and telephone wires, plugged, open gutters tumbled along driveways” (Khan 327). When Dia visits the interior of city she observes “a narrow lane where a gutter had leaked. It smelled of old cabbage” (213). People throw litter everywhere and some people like Anu even throw valuable shells in that heap of rubbish which shows their indifferent behavior towards natural elements. Disposal of shell indicates that modern people devalue valuable assets of nature, thus contaminate beauty of the natural world. Anu also removes all signs of the natural world from Danish’s room as Anu believes that if anyone plunges in to the natural world, it becomes impossible for him to come to surface again so according to her “it was essential that all the images of his submarine life be removed from his room” (Khan 61). So, she voluntarily takes away all natural belongings from Danish’s life. She has changed the setting of Danish’s room, now “the new bed was no longer under the window, where he’d spent so many nights gazing up at the stars. It lay beside the new closet, and the landscape outside was mostly invisible” (Khan 56). In his room he is deprived of single glimpse of nature. He is far away from nature. In America, he used to live in the lap of nature, now he is slowly moving away from nature towards filthy world. Khan portrays dirty, desolate surroundings of Danish to prove that the contaminated environment can block human reasoning. He is rotten from inside and outside. Surroundings of his room do not impart any positive energy towards him rather has poisonous effect on his mind set. His house is like a prison where readers do not observe healthy growth of plants. Lawn is covered with

prickly grass and “fringed with hibiscus bushes” (Khan 157). No breeze can refresh their home and “the lawn outside conspicuously without birds” (Khan 266). It is a barren land of barren people whose minds and hearts are as grimy as their surroundings. They are not concerned about decay of the natural world. Their minds are rotten like their world around them as we observe that “There were ants on his [Danish] toothbrush” (Khan 313). And this situation is not repellant for him, he gets immune to nasty surroundings with the passage of time. Danish is surrounded by crickets in his room. He is indifferent about his surroundings and takes refuge in alcoholic drinks as textual evidences show “He sat with lacquer box on the dirty white rug. The crickets hopped aside as he stretched his legs” (Khan 323). Even the cutting of dirty nails is a burdensome activity for him. Instead of cutting them off, “he began to chew them off, swallowing the slime wedged inside. Some particles he spat onto the increasingly soiled rug. Since he kept his door shut, the room was never swept” (Khan 334). He ingests filth and then ogles out that filth in his environment. For him, cleanliness does not make any difference in his life as “He’d rather live in filth than have his things disturbed further” (Khan 334). Danish had not washed himself for five days. He is encapsulated in dirt but this situation seems normal to him. He now gets immune to dirt and filth as “He seemed to have lost his sense of smell” (Khan 336). He is now a morbid person, who has no connection with the nature world, and he is not regretful for the loss. It is totally okay for him if he has perverted sex in a dirty confined room. Earlier, he used to make love with Dia in open natural place, but now with the passage of time they make love in desolate place where there is no single tree in sight. The room is surrounded by dirty puddles “The ground was muddy and uneven”(Khan 342). Dia, for a moment seems to be nostalgic for the lost natural world, but later on she also seems to be satisfied with her surroundings. Formerly she used to enjoy sweet music of rain but now as soon as she plunges into dirty world, her choices have been changed as evident in the text “on the roof, the rain continued to pound. Once, it had been sweet music to her ears. Now only the telephone was” (Khan 303). For a moment the “city looks so sinister” (Khan 288) but then gradually she becomes a part of that weird environment. Formerly she was happy in the company of silkworms, but later on like Danish she moves towards dirty world. Now even Dia’s “household was inebriated with stale air” (Khan 302). Even in her neighborhood the “food was beginning to rot. Mosquitoes invaded”(Khan 299). She also

observes “the yellow tiles of the wall were dotted with moisture, and a tiny mushroom spore was beginning to form” (Khan 304). She is confined in a dirty world where there is no escape for her. Polluted, rotten world has bloated her intellect. She is incapable of realizing the filth around her. Dirt clings to her wherever she goes, be it her house or the interior of city, or the desolate room where they [Dia and Danish] have secretive meetings. Picture of Karachi presented by Khan is desolate and bleak. Not only Dia’s room, but every corner of Karachi is bleak, dark and sinister. During Shafqat’s funeral people gathered in a room and that “room began to smell of feet, armpits , fermenting sugar” (Khan 160) Similarly the floor where salamaat used to sleep in his workshop “was carpeted with soft pine needles and pigeon shit”(Khan 356). When Salamaat joined the camp, here “the room smelled of shit” (Khan 366). Khan has presented the accurate picture of Karachi through vivid imagery. And through that imagery she wants to highlight the reasons behind increasing pollution. Readers get an exact idea about declining condition of Karachi when they read the lines “he [Salmaat] lay in the middle of a street in flames. Tyres burn...there was only broken glass, burning carts, people scrambling, and the sound of shot guns...The stench of charred rubber mingled with singed hair, food and plastic and his stomach heaved”(Khan 252). Reference to burning tyres, broken glasses and plastic shows that how non biodegradable materials add more poisonous gases to already polluted air. Every place is polluted beyond limits “The air [in hospital] was pungent and stale. Not a window in sight” (Khan 68). The condition of hospital is pathetic as it is mentioned in the text “the wall of the corridor is pasted with grey finger prints and red pan stains... the air was pungent and stale. Not a window in sight...clumps of hair and dust tumbled on the floor like weed” (Khan 68). Hospital which ought to be clean and hygienic is replete with dirt and malady. Even nurses present a very dirty and gothic picture as mentioned in the text “the nurses had long, black nails... bottles of antiseptics lay uncovered” (Khan 68). How hospitals and nurses can cure patients when they are the actual reason of sickness. Windows in the hospital are covered with dust and Anu senses the smell of burning garbage, “She [Anu] stood, wondering whether to return or breathe the noxious fumes” (Khan 69). Anu and other patients in the hospital ingest those poisonous fumes that emit from the garbage. Likewise when Salamaat works at workshop, emission of toxic fumes effects his eyes then he gets used to that different routine as it is mentioned in the text “the fumes were toxic.

His eyes grew bloodshot and nausea become part of the routine” (Khan 238). With the passage of time, his eyes get immune to these dangerous fumes. Similarly Danish also gets used to eat plastic in the food as it is mentioned in the text “ the weight he’d acquired this year at college when the plastic flavors of fully Food finally stop nauseating him was beginning to settle around his midriff in a soft barely noticeable belt of flesh” (Khan 154). This quote shows that Danish ingests some plastic particles in his food which upsets his health in the beginning but then slowly he gets immune to that unpleasant change. The word plastic flavor draws our attention to the fact that even food is not pure in this modern time period

4.2.8 Ethical responsibilities of citizens

All discussion shows that People of Karachi are involved in unlawful activities in some or other way and they take their biosphere for granted. “Toppling governments, ethnic hatred, foreign aid, sanction on Iraq” (Khan 313), had filled the city with terror. These fears have replaced the concern of people for their ecosphere. In this hustle, noise pollution also affects the mind of the people as composure of the mind is distorted by noise pollution. Danish puts it in this way. “Noise, always noise. Construction, neighbor, children on the street, generators, loudspeaker. Never a moment of natural silence, the kind in the sunken garden. Or the cove” (Khan 312). Danish is disturbed and aware of noise pollution around him but his morbid psychology affected by sick atmosphere does not allow him to take a practical step. Danish also finds out that “Drivers flickered lights even at daytime. There was no sidewalk, no zebra crossing and there might as well have been no traffic lights” (Khan 327). Observation of Danish shows that every person in the novel is forgetful of his ethical responsibility. No one contributes positively to the biosphere. The world around them is chaotic and unhealthy. Instable ecosphere around them has shaken their mindset to such extent that it is not eccentric if they pay no attention to their surroundings. It is not strange if they are busy in their worldly pursuits as they are psychological ill because a healthy mind nurtures properly in healthy and safe environment.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Textual evidences justify the privileged world of nature. Analysis of the novels through an ecocritical gaze suggests that “man's nurturing environment threatens to stop nurture and to start kill” (Glolfelty 34), if we mistreat it. The first objective was to justify the animate quality of nature and it is proved through textual evidences. References from the texts verify living attributes of the natural world. Behavior of silk worm, mountains and lakes highlight the living spirit of nature. The second objective of the research was to trace out ferocious or benevolent qualities of the natural world and it is justified by the analysis of factors responsible for the tragic end of Nadir. Nature which we conceive as a stagnant and imbecile entity stirs and shatters the life of Nadir. Nature which usually seems to be kind and benevolent has the capacity to act oppositely if human beings try to disturb its integrity. The third objective of the research was to support the fact that hygienic environment is pivotal for complete growth of mind, and this can be seen in the text and justified through the analysis of *Trespassing* where characters like Dia, Danish and Salamaat have retarded mentality and they move slowly towards their degeneration due to strong influence of the polluted environment on their minds. Their unhealthy minds and activities further destabilize the once balanced ecosphere

The fourth objective of the research was to find out the reciprocal relationship of culture and nature and it is proved through analysis of the texts. Boundaries of culture and nature are porous and they seep and penetrate into each other and that is the reason we

witness an immense effect of culture on nature. It is impossible to separate culture from nature as both are integrated into each other's realm.

Ecocritics strongly condemn egocentric behavior of human beings as they consider "man's tragic flaw is his anthropocentric vision" (Glotfelty 113). Anthropocentric activities of human beings lead them towards evil acts like their lust to supervise the natural world. Ecocritics are actually lawyers who advocate for the survival of ecosphere. Critics have diverted their focus from the marxist and gender based agendas towards the current atmospheric crisis. To save our earth is more important than socio-political debates.

Khan advocates for the rights of the natural world through her novels. World she has presented in her works is dystopic and imparts warning for future speculation. Animistic nature needs a sensitive handling, a slight mishandling can lead towards destruction of the whole world as things are interrelated and integrated with each other. Titles of both novels propose the same warning that the natural world is thinner than skin and its needs careful handling or else it will be wounded like skin. Similarly an act of trespassing into natural domain can lead us towards destruction. Everything including the natural world has its own limits and boundaries and if human beings try to pass them, they are called traitors. Nature is wild and unconquerable and any desire to dominate it is futile. Ecocritics want to reshape a society where the lost harmony with nature can be retained and every species can live safely without posing any threat to other species. For the purpose, they use literature as a tool to instruct human beings about looming threats. They want to recreate a vigorous sphere where every individual utilizes his positive energies for the welfare of society as mind and body can function accurately only in a healthy environment and it is justified when we relate the example of Dia, Danish and all other characters of the novel. But human beings of this modern world are completely discordant with the natural world. We modern human beings are so embroiled in our problems that we are totally unaware of our surroundings. We are living in claustrophobic rooms, having no concern of our environment. Our personal needs have pushed the natural world aside. However the day by day declining condition of Earth demands us to reconsider and redirect our actions which lead us towards damaging of embroiled natural world.

It is an immediate requirement to rehabilitate and reconsider our relationship with the natural world. We need to direct our positive vibes towards construction of wounded ecosphere. The dire need of time requires us to divert our interest from more petty issues towards global one. Stifling situation of the earth poses a serious danger to human life. And it is the right time that we amend our ways otherwise nature including earth will be damaged beyond recovery. We desperately need to change our acts otherwise life will suffocate in his pathos.

5.1 Recommendations

Here are some recommendations which are helpful for the retention of a healthy sphere. As silk production is a painful process for silk worms so people should prefer other fabrics instead of silk. Similarly, instead of polythene bags we can use bags made up of paper as paper is biodegradable while plastic items are non biodegradable. We can grow more trees for pure and healthy sphere. Government should impose ban on the purchase of more than one vehicle for one family. Toxic fumes can be reduced if instead of using vehicles excessively, we walk on feet. Bicycles should be reintroduced to lessen the consumption of fossil fuels. It is ethical responsibility of every citizen to protect his environment, so for the purpose every house should not have more than one refrigerator and air conditioner as these appliances omit dangerous gas CFCs which affect ozone layer adversely. Proper garbage disposal units should be installed so that our land and water remain safe from pollution. All these minor steps can bring a major change to our atmosphere where we can live happily and safely.

5.2 Recommendations for the Future Research

This research is confined to an ecocritical perspective, but thinner than skin can also be read through a psychoanalytical lens. The complex personality of Farhana and problematic relation of Farhana and Nadir can be understood if we probe into their Psyche. Farhana had some fears and through Psychoanalytical approach we can come to know about adoption of a defense mechanism to overcome them. Similarly insecurity of Nadir about his relationship with Farhana compels researchers to observe his past life. Nadir is frequently haunted by the images of Kiran which highlights the effect of tragic event on his life and his guilt after murder.

The novel can also be scrutinized through an oriental gaze as it is loaded with many examples which show the behavior of American people towards Muslims and Islam. It highlights how people living in the west appreciate the exotic beauty of the east and at a same time develops phobia for Islam while living at distant place. We also come to know biased attitude of the Americans towards Nadir as he couldn't find appreciation of his profession in America, every one demanded dirty pictures of Pakistan from him, if Nadir wants acceptance in the American society.

Trespassing can also be analyzed through Marxist perceptives as there is clear demarcation between the upper and the lower class. It highlights how the lower class is deprived of basic necessities of the life while on another hand rich are born rich to perpetuate their hegemony over the poor class.

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