TRANSGEOGRAPHICAL ECOSENSITIVITY: A COMPARATIVE ECOCRITICAL STUDY OF PAKISTANI AND AMERICAN FICTION IN ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

Thesis Title: **TRANSGEOGRAPHICAL ECOSENSITIVITY: A COMPARATIVE ECOCRITICAL STUDY OF PAKISTANI AND AMERICAN FICTION IN ENGLISH**

This comparative study aims to explore how different cultures understand and represent environment and nature in their respective discourse. Four texts are selected for the study: *Moth Smoke*, *Trespassing, White Noise* and *A Thousand Acres* for an in-depth analysis**.** Examining the material and discursive areas of environmental exploitation and injustice across different regions, the selected Pakistani and American texts in this study are interpreted in a transgeographical context. It is argued, the difference in perception of environmentalism in different fictions, originate in large-scale political and economic processes that give rise to most social and environmental problems in regions that are in the global south like Pakistan. American environmentalism on the contrary, that is originally founded on deep ecology and nature conservationist paradigm, saw a fundamental shift in the late twentieth century and deviated at a mystifying pace and emerged with a new paradigm with radical environmental criticism of capitalist consumerism and ecological toxic contamination which is manifested in American novels like *White Noise* and *A Thousand Acres.*

By creating a dialogue between ecocritical and postcolonial theory, the study seeks to address how the selected fictions are interweaved with human and environmental history, thus subtly alluding to ecological and cultural sensibilities and underscore a very different vision of human relationships to the environment in Pakistani and American English fiction. In doing so, the selected texts also foreground that there are significant discrepant political, historical and social features across the variety of environmentalist perspectives. These varying perceptions emphasize a sense of place as a basic prerequisite for environmental awareness.

Furthermore, by paying attention to the style, linguistic and visual topographies of the selected texts this comparative study also establishes how environmental degradation manifested as pollution, chemicals toxins, contamination and unbound consumption disrupts the human – ecology, alters the environment, and complicates human and nonlife life forms. I draw upon Lawrence Buell's notion on "Toxic Discourse" in *Moth Smoke* and *White Noise* which are examined to show how enviornmental degradation represent a toxic and fractured world due to consumption and neoliberal capitalism. On the other hand, a planetary and cosmopolitan vision is also explored by focusing on texts like *Trespassing* and *A Thousand Acres* which are significant to trace "cultural imagination from a sense of place to a less territorial and more systematic sense of planet" (Hesie 56). Both novels reflect how different communities and individuals negotiate the relationship between what Heise terms as local and global networks of economics and culture while also considering their exposure to risk scenarios.

An explication of these various environmental scenarios underscore that the multiple varieties of ecosystems from the global North and the global South in their respective socio-cultural spheres are by no means holistic, utopian or harmonious in any sense, but each, on the contrary, emphasises the possibility of rapidly growing environmental risks affecting the ecology as well those inhabiting that environment. While their similarities are tied together by a thematic unity as manifestations of various environmental visions that communicate a planetary heightened environmental awareness in the contemporary society, their differences accentuate that within each of these competing discourses there exists a fundamental difference that is specific to their historical, cultural and material conditions and require attention when exploring environmentalism in a transgeographical context.

DEDICATION

In memory of my parents

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Transgeographical environmental debate is contested on a turbulent terrain through a variety of voices, philosophies and discourses. A shared and collective linguistic expression in the English language, when considering the environmental concerns of the global North and South, may provide an appearance of contingency; as does the hypothetical reality of our shared humanity. However, the colonial past and the globalized present in a postcolonial and postindustrial capitalist age have prompted a concomitant shift in the worldwide struggles against it. When viewed in this context, there is but diminutive communion between the two sides that participate in the environmental dialogue. Since they inhabit different geographies, environmental issues and concerns then assume a kind of ideological difference. It is not that no amount of rational consideration can create views across an incompatible gulf. Instead, one must address the estrangements that create fissures in the varied landscapes. In this regard, this comparative study is an attempt to examine how these geographical links tie the environmental scholarship between selected Pakistani and American fiction in English and argue for a **transgeographical** paradigm for understanding contemporary ecocritical discourse in a much political and globalized milieu, especially considering the fact that the environmental conditions of America and Pakistan are different in terms of the social and political realities and therefore require different lens for an environmental analysis.

From the beginning, this study has been motivated by a belief that is socio-political and cultural in nature. This conviction is based on our contemporary reality that the worldwide inhabitancy and the biospheric harmony are undergoing a decline owing much to what David Harvey calls a "historical-geographical materialism" (15). It is not possible to understand the environmental conditions in different geographical zones of the globe unless we understand the geography, history, culture and nature and their joint interpenetration (Mukherjee 19). In the backdrop of environmental issues that constitute mainstream discourse in the Pakistani and American contexts, various theoretical debates impinging on these discursive forms of representation, including postcolonial literature and significant philosophies of Western environmental thought, are discussed. While doing so, the study accentuates the necessity to keep

environmentalism linked to universal questions of environmental justice and draws out the uneven burdens of consumption and violence subjected to the already burdened planet earth by its communities affluent or impoverished, on an individual as well as on a global level, simultaneously. Thereby, the two literary paradigms of Pakistani and American fiction in English with a focus on environmentalism discussed in this study highlights the significance of the texts originating from distinct geographical dimensions that are equally important for unearthing the nature and scope of the comparative literature. With a specific focus on postcoloniality and western environmental and philosophical thought, the relationship between discourse and environment are also established.

Research Assumption

The present study begins with the assumption that environmental degradation in the global North and South in the last half-century has accelerated massively due to human technologies, neoliberal capitalist development and transgeographical material conditions, which can be explored by comparing works from writers of fiction and considering them as an ecocritical discourse in terms of their textual representation of ecological challenges faced by their respective communities and humanity in general.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

By examining various responses towards the environmental dilemmas embedded in the human value system, imagination and practices, the present study attempts to critically read and compare selected fiction in English from Pakistani and American writers in terms of their representation of environmental challenges by means of offering an imaginative ecocritical discourse in an age of planetary crisis. In making this statement, I draw on insights from *Ecocriticism* and *Postcolonial Environments* for the present research, which may facilitate in positing a broader understanding of human-nature and nature-culture interactions in transgeographical contexts.

1.2 Research Questions

The comparative study is guided by a textual analysis that sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How does the transgeographical environmental context play out in the selected works of Pakistani and American writers?
2. How do Pakistani Anglophone and American fiction writers represent problems of environment and human engagement with it in their works?
3. In what ways can we compare texts across regions and cultures and how do such comparisons address our present-day environmental sensibility?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The research objectives for the same are as follows:

1. To explore Pakistani writers' contribution to the rapidly evolving ecological debate
2. To investigate to what extent the selected texts seek to address issues of environmental degradation and the conceptualization of ecological imbalance in fiction
3. To compare how the concepts of geographical space, sense of place, locality and global risk scenarios seek to address the environmental challenges in a more planetary context
4. To examine how the ecocritical study of these texts can contribute to raising the public environmental consciousness that will eventually feed into attitudes.

1.4 The Criterion for Selecting Texts

Lawrence Buell's account in his 1995 edition of *The Environmental Imagination* guides the criterion for selecting the novels in consideration of environmentally oriented texts. In that, he delineates four essential characteristics, earmarking those that could be "said to comprise an environmentally oriented work", which are as follows: (7)

1. The non-human and natural environment within a text is not only and purely used as a strategy and device to frame a setting, but the non-human environment is a presence that begins to propose that "human history is implicated in natural history" (7).

2. The human interest is not understood to be the only legitimate interest.
3. Human accountability to the environment is part of the text's ethical orientation.
4. Some sense of the environment as a process rather than as a constant or a given is at least implicit in the text.

As it is inconceivable that all these tenets would be present simultaneously in one text, it would be feasible to probe how the texts engage some of these characteristics in multiple ways. With these impressions and suggestions in view, the researcher was mindful to select Pakistani and American writers who have consciously and unconsciously given priority to their physical environment and its relationship with human/non-human world, simultaneously fulfilling some of the criteria of environmentally conscious texts.

1.5 Delimitation

The study is delimited to two Pakistani and two American contemporary fiction writers for a comparative study. To acquire a possible size, the parameters of my research are focused on Pakistani and American fiction published between 1985 and 2005. *Moth Smoke* by Mohsin Hamid has been chosen to examine the role of pollution, contamination and consumer culture that is seen as responsible for creating an environmental disequilibrium in Pakistan. *Trespassing* by Uzma Aslam Khan explores a sense of place and environmental risks. *White Noise* by Don DeLillo and *A Thousand Acres* by Jane Smiley provide a rich platform to investigate pollution, consumerism and toxicity in the American context. The selection process of considering which texts to include quintessentially was guided by the consideration of Lawrence Buell's four primary characteristics that qualify texts as environmentally oriented texts, as already mentioned in section 1.5 of the Introduction.

Furthermore, the pervasive environmental challenges that Pakistan confronts today, which require attention when examined in comparison with the environmental vision represented by American fiction writers simultaneously seek to expose ecological issues within a broader global context. The underlying principle for selecting Pakistani and American fiction for a comparative analysis bears upon one of the primary tenets of "Comparative Literature" (1998) as outlined by Totosy, according to which such a study should bear upon "theoretical, methodological as well as the ideological and political approach of inclusion. This inclusion extends to all Other, all

marginal, minority, and peripheral and it encompasses both form and substance"(19). Furthermore, the inclusion of American fiction for comparative analysis is grounded in what Ursula Heise proposes as "the geography of difference" (*Sense* 51) in the global North to resonate with the two distinct visions of the globe where most of the planet's economic capital and political power are concentrated. When compared with the narratives from the global South like Pakistan, where most of the human population and the subsequent natural system suffer disproportionately in the form of economic exploitation, climate change, and rampant toxic pollution makes it significant to understand that the concept of environmental imagination is not homogenous, rather contemporary environmentalism and ecocriticism manifests in many strands and shades. The comparative readings in a more planetary context can be meaningful in tracing shared grounds regarding the vast scale rising and escalating environmental problems. The comparative analysis, therefore, offers an effective way to determine the widespread ecological degradation, and the intensity of response we generally term as "environmentalism" in different cultural settings.

1.6 Defining Transgeographical Ecosensitivity

The use of the terminology "transgeographical" is significant for this study and requires elucidation before I proceed further. According to the Oxford English dictionary, the etymology "transgeographical" implies "across different geographical areas" or different geographical boundaries[1]. This basic definition is in line with its epistemological implication, which also classifies it as a process that involves contested spaces and resources that have been mapped on throughout the human history of conquest and control (Nelson 140). With past colonial practices and the modern-day neo-colonialism based on cultural and economic imperialism, the concept of territorial complexity has increased even more. In general, the different views on and experiences with natural habitats in spatial and temporal contexts are being continually questioned due to significant influences such as "globalism" and must be understood to indicate dissimilar scenarios in different cultural and geographical contexts. Rob Nixon recently noted that ecocritics and related theorist have become more transnational; however, postcolonial theorists must confront the reality of environmentalist imperatives among other political issues in developing postcolonial states (Roos and Hunt 5). He also argues that the developing nations in the global South have a distinct environmentalism that is radically different from that of the global North (Nixon, *Slow Violence* 6). Most of the developing countries situated in geographical zones like South Asia, for

example, are marked by what Johan Galtung (1990) defines as "structural violence" (292). Galtung's model of structural violence is relevant to explain how it is embedded in the social institutions in many postcolonial countries. This type of imperceptible violence manifests in the form of inequality in the distribution of resources, access to education, political power, legal position, and health care, which are a few examples (Farmer et al. 43). Nixon shares Galtung's concern:

> with social justice, invisible agencies that can be recognized as instances of structural violence embodied by a neoliberal order of austerity measures, structural adjustment, rampant deregulation, corporate megamergers, and a widening gulf between rich and poor is a form of covert violence in its own right that is often a catalyst for more recognizably overt violence. (27)

Nixon and Galtung's observations are pertinent to explain how this type of violence is indirectly and directly causing environmental crisis and creates a hindrance in maintaining the ecological sustainability in a majority of the third world countries. This scenario is compounded by the impact of imperial globalization and uneven development in South Asian countries. Postcolonial scholars such as Ramachandra Guha and Juan Martinez, in 1997, critiqued in the *Varieties of Environmentalism: Essays North and South* that the environmentalism of the global south is distinct from the environmentalism of the Euro-north American regions, which is marked by discrete material variations, and is determined by the inequality in the capital wealth of the people in these zones (75). This condition is peculiar to almost all inhabitants of the developing nations in the global south; in turn, Guha and Martinez terms it as the "environmentalism of the poor" (34). Both Guha and Martinez extrapolate that this specific type of environmentalism is radically different from the "environmentalism of the affluent" in matters of practice and ideology:

> The environmentalism of the poor originates as a clash over productive resources: a third kind of class conflict … In Southern movements, issues of ecology are often interlinked with questions of human rights, ethnicity, and distributive justice. These struggles, of peasants, tribal and so on, are in a sense deeply conservative … They are a defense of the locality and the local community against the nation. At the same time, the sharper edge to environmental conflict, and its close connections to subsistence and survival, have also

> prompted a thoroughgoing critique of consumerism and of uncontrolled economic development. (75, qtd. in Mukherjee 31)

Mukherjee explains this pheromone further and argues that poverty is not simply the only factor responsible for the environmentalism of the global south; however, he defines it as a "special kind" of poverty, as it is one that is embedded in the cultural history of colonialism and present imperialism. This is manifest when one explores the allegories of farmers and local resistance of the tribes who see their "struggles as the continuation of the struggles waged by their ancestors against the European colonizers" (31).

Contemporary postcolonial Pakistan then shares those very conditions that have been stated above as these are the overall circumstances present in the entire postcolonial world, though, of course, Pakistan's regional and local specificities may be different than that of the other postcolonial regions that will be discussed in the literature review as well as in the analysis of this study. It is in this context, therefore, that the concept of transgeographical ecosensitivity becomes useful and relevant in this study, because when compared to the developed North transgeographically, Pakistan is a site having undergone deepened exploitation and one that continues to struggle against the structural violence (social and economic injustice and inequalities) by a ruling elite (Mehmood 1–7) as well the forces of globalization. Moreover, developing countries such as Pakistan are saddled with an uneven development, environmental destruction, poverty and overpopulation that align with these contradictory structures.[2] These references then point out the challenges of environmental degradation that many developing countries confront on a global scale. On the contrary, American discourse on the global North shows a radically different understanding of environmental challenges that are specific to the American landscape, culture and social problems in the global North.

This phenomenon then becomes a matter of significance in the literary and cultural analysis and requires attention in terms of the representation of these differences as portrayed and critiqued by writers of fiction from distant geographies. However, to understand this transgeographical difference in terms of the cultural specificity between Pakistani and American environmental discourse and to contextualize my arguments in the following chapters, followed by the primary themes and focus of the study a background to the study has been provided.

1.7 Important Themes and Focus of the Study

It is important to categorize main concerns and themes as they progress in the selected works of Pakistani and American writer works in English. These major ideas and themes draw attention to different ways in which contemporary writers experience and explore the various ways in which they represent the relationship between humans and their environment. These leitmotifs also serve to demonstrate how the texts incorporate the wide range of concepts that are taken into consideration while analyzing environmental degradation as well as other environmental dimensions that are a part of this study.

1.7.1 Pollution / Contamination

One of the major themes that runs throughout the study is the theme on pollution and contamination as major environmental distraught. However, this theme is analyzed from the distinctiveness of environment and place in context of Pakistani novel as a representative of South Asian fiction and raises related political questions about resource insurrection (Deckard 1, Mukherjee 13). American selected fiction in terms of pollution and contamination raises the question, "how has the concept of wilderness changed over time?" (Garrad 16) and represents pollution accordingly in its cultural and social context.

1.7.2 Consumerism

Consumption is an important theme in this comparative study, and it explores how unchecked consumption impacts people and the environment. The study also considers consumerism as an idea that incorporates the consumption of chemicals in the form of drugs, hash, cigarettes (*Moth Smoke*) and chemicals (Dylar–chemical drug in *White Noise*). These are important themes as they relate to how nature is replaced by consumerism in the contemporary society and may have toxic implications.

1.7.3 Eco-cosmopolitanism-local global networks

Another theme of the study is the concept of local inhabitation and global citizenship that is discussed with reference to Ursula Heise's recent conceptualization of "eco-cosmopolitanism" (*Sense*, 50). This theme is significant to understand how different cultures imagine attachment to local landscape, but also how they connect with network of "ecological links that span a region, a continent, or the world" (Heise 56).

1.7.4 Capitalism (promoter of ecological vulnerability)

The origin of the modern environmentalism especially in the United States of America is generally linked with the publication of Racheal Carson's most important nonfiction *Silent Sprint* in 1969 which I shall refer to later in chapter 2 as well. Since that period an immense awareness around the role and impact of industrialisation in perpetuating ecological destruction has risen considerably. Ecological problems are generally presented as a clash between humanity and nature. The apparent tension between the human accumulation of commodities, consumption of natural resources and individual welfare versus a sustainable environment is surmounting. Moreover, the prevailing capitalist system of private ownership and production is complicating the relationship with the environment and therefore needs to be addressed (Navanit 2). Unchecked neoliberalism is responsible for "system-wide crisis" that now overwhelms the world and has dramatically altered the state of the global environment (Harvey). Considering these important parameters capitalism is also addressed in the analysis as one of the important concerns when analyzing environmental problems while discussing the selected works of fiction. Having discussed the significant and defining features of the present study, it is also essential to present a background to the study in order to contextualize my work in the area of ecocritical and postcolonial paradigm which the following section tracks.

1.8 Background of the Study

Graham Huggan (1997) observes in "The Neocolonialism of Postcolonialism: A Cautionary Note" is that "postcolonialism … does not imply that the colonial era is over; on the contrary, it confronts the 'neocolonialism' of our present times" (19). Huggan's observation is useful to understand the epistemology of the concept of postcolonialism and how it is applied in the modern-day realities of postcolonial states. Building on Huggan's insightful observation, there is no denying the fact that in contemporary times, "we live in neocolonial" period. Historically, the Western supremacy[3]– Britain, the United States of America and France – has used strategies of "intervention" in various geographical regions such as the Middle East to safeguard and protect their "national interests" (Kieh 1–16). The intervention in Iran in the 1940s by the British and the Americans to guard the oil sector interest of their ruling elites and the intervention of the British and French in Egypt during the Suez Canal crisis in 1956 to protect their military and geo-strategic interests are instances of imperial exigencies (2). Moreover, the military intervention of the U.S in the Gulf, the Iraq war, the continued racial subjugation and separatist conflict in South Africa, the Pacific, most parts of Asia and the Middle East are also notable examples. This is not to underestimate the global international hegemonies that have been monopolized by transnational companies and preferred nation pacts and trade alliances that buttress economic divides, a variety of civil domestic struggles implicitly buoyed by the previous imperial powers, extensive corruption in funded oppressive regimes across the underdeveloped Third World and the mounting ethnic violence far and wide. All of these examples are a reminder of Fanon's statement that colonialism doesn't come to an end with the announcement of political liberation (Huggan 20).

Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth* exhorted that it would take centuries to civilize this world that had been mercilessly subjected to dehumanization by imperial power (Fanon 100, qtd.in in Huggan). According to postcolonial critics such as Fanon and Edward Said, decolonization is a process that is continuous, usually violent and which encompasses a relentless vigilance to periodic imperial threats (ibid 20). These experiences reflect how perceptions are transformed under the impact of different power relations in geographical territories as part of a cultural infrastructure that can be described as "transgeographical". Furthermore, terrestrial and geographical dimensions of colonial expansion and regional distinction have also been debated about in revolutionary texts such as Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1977) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993). "Just as none of

us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free from the struggle over geography" (Said 7). For the same reason, South Asian postcolonial ecologies and environmental problems cannot be separated from the political-geographical context to underscore the economic and political powers that shaped the past and influence the present conditions of many South Asian ecological material realties.

While it is imperative to provide a postcolonial framework in the context of environment for Pakistani Anglophone fiction, it is equally essential to review debates and trajectories that summarize the dominant western perspective on the environment – wilderness and pastoral models that epistemologically differ from South Asian material conditions and require a postcolonial ecocriticism to be forged for a more grounded and comprehensive understanding of environmental perceptions specific to a certain geography to carry out a meaningful comparison.

It is comprehensible how such an attempt would irrefutably entail the very question of style, content and forms of novels that fall in the category of postcoloniality when compared to a different Western literary tradition and environmental philosophy. Mukherjee has asserted that South Asian literature in English has its literary specificity – what he calls "cultural politics" – within its texts as opposed to their sociopolitical positions and modes of circulation (9). Agreeing with Mukherjee, I would in tandem argue that although Pakistani Anglophone fiction, like many South Asian postcolonial texts, may be rooted in global neo-colonial regimes (for example, the way Anglophone texts are published, consumed and placed in the international market), contemporary Anglophone Pakistani fiction offer a critique of neo-colonial regimes via its own specific "literariness" and inventiveness of style that Derek Attridge (2017) terms as "the singularity of literature" (173). As the label suggests, Attridge provides an engaging reflection of what features make literature singular and distinct from other representations of art but also from other forms of writing (51). He proposes a view that the verbal happening or portrayal typifies the literary work. The work of fiction or any other genre in literature is to be viewed as an event that involves the participation of the written word(s) and its reader(s) in a complex and creative cultural, temporal and historical relating (55). Further, presenting a perception of the environment at a thematic level[4] would also contribute to the literariness of the texts and ensure how the environmental problems, concerns, depiction of flora and fauna, various habitats and postcolonial

geographical dilemmas in a globalized political milieu are interconnected with the main story and give it a distinctive flavor (Mukherjee).

Moreover, one must also recognize the connection between environment and society and address ways in which the most damaging processes can be identified. Some of the necessary assumptions and characteristics of this study are already apparent. One must accept that environmental complications are not only technical or physical challenges but should also engage with their underpinning of cultural, social, political/historical, economic, and geographical aspects. In this regard, one starting point to compare the American and Pakistani fiction in English is the fact that the two belong to different and broadly opposite geographies based on two distinct modes of experience as well as literary and cultural histories. The separating lines between the two are political and historical, suggesting that despite sharing global environmental dilemmas such as pollution, chemical contamination and ecological risks, the material realities and expressions of the two may not be identical. Equally connected with these core differences are the spatial strategies of colonial rule and the ensuing struggle of the people to resist these forces, past and present. This leads us to another significant aspect of Pakistani Anglophone fiction – the manifestation of postcolonial resistance against the forms of neo-colonial dominance and the hegemony imposed by the indigenous ruling elite and the shifting regimes. This predominantly then calls into consideration the historical past and present political scenarios of Pakistani culture and works written within this cultural atmosphere. Mukherjee notes in *Post-Colonial Environments* that the idea of "postcolonial" is significant and is not a sign of a clean historical break between the era of modern Euro-north American colonial domination and that of Asian, African and Latin American self-determination:

> but rather as a historical condition of intensified and sustained exploitation of the majority of humans and non-humans of the former colonies by a cartel composed of their own and 'core' metropolitan European/North American elites. That is to say, the 'post' in postcolonial marks not as end of colonialism, but an end of a particular mode of colonialism which then shifts its gears and evolves to another stage…. The globalized ruling classes of this postcolonialism, whose interest are often embodied in gigantic transnational corporations and the labyrinthine world of speculative financial transactions, are often called the new cosmopolitans. (Mukherjee 6)

With the relinquishment of the colonies by British and French empires after the Second World War, imperialism did not end but became more consolidated in the form of neocolonialism. Postcolonial intellectuals and theorists such as Bill Ashcroft, Robert Young, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin agree that the term neocolonialism is generally associated with Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first president, who believed that the end of European imperialism emerged into new kinds of burgeoning consciousness among postcolonial elites, creating the Manichean structure of exploitation and dependency:

> Neo-colonialism is... the worst form of imperialism. For those who practice it, it means power without responsibility, and for those who suffer from it, it means exploitation without redress. In the days of old-fashioned colonialism, the imperial power had at least to explain and justify at home the actions it was taking abroad. In the colony, those who served the ruling imperial power could at least look to its protection against any violent move by their opponents. With neo-colonialism neither is the case. (Nkrumah xi)

Connecting this postcolonial scenario with Pakistan and its environmental degradation, I will quote one example from the state of forestry in the country to make my point discrete. While the phenomenon of deforestation is already at a high rate, it is compounded by capitalistic drives by the timber mafia and illegal logging affecting Pakistan's socio-ecological degradation. This phenomenon is accelerated by a deficiency of the state's control over markets, liberalization of the economy in the form of a massive privatization drive and noticeable dropping of trade-linked tariffs, otherwise known as "free market principles," in traditional economic literature (DiLorenzo 2). Yet, while these market principles of the neoliberal kind were forced upon the overseas colonies (and afterwards through what Chomsky calls "manufacturing consent" or as loan and mortgage conditionalities in underdeveloped aid-dependent third-world countries), exactly the reverse ensued in these industrialized countries when they were in developmental stages during the colonization process – high protection, imposing the concept of these market-oriented principles on their colonies, including widespread practice of "comparative advantage", whereby, for example, the British India was kept at the level of raw resource materials generation in order to use it for British industrial revolution by manufacturing value-adding products (Shepley 12). In retrospect, the sources of this phenomenon expose its intrinsic flaws and the level of obvious desperation of the economic and political elites to use it to their benefit (Javed n.d). This is an

example of many south Asian countries; whereby neoliberal policies have become hegemonic. The unevenness and irregular development and the escalating injustices are cautiously masked under the pretense of opportunities that exist in consumption for the political and economic elites alone (Centeno and Cohen 318). In this light, the timber mafia in Pakistan, under the protection of political elites, operates without authorization in the forests of Pakistan to profit their own business and amass millions of monetary capitals through illicit cutting and logging of timber. It is a phenomenon that Rob Nixon terms as "slow violence"; it is slow, invisible and takes place over so much time that many postcolonial countries experience it as a neocolonial process. This is how the economic and political systems such as neo-liberalism are stamped and carved onto the ecologies and inhabitants of postcolonial societies, and contemporary Pakistan is one such example. In this context, expression "postcolonialism" then becomes relevant as, Huggan (1997) notes, the term postcolonialism, "has arisen *to account* for neo-colonialism, for continuing modes of imperialist thought and action across much of the contemporary world" (22, emphasis original) and leads us to the question of Pakistan.

1.8.1 Discourse on Environment

This situation is not new to contemporary Pakistan, many writers and intellectuals have often addressed the problems and dilemmas of the relationship between decolonization and the ensuing cultural imperialism. For example, many postcolonial writers such as Mohsen Hamid, Nadeem Aslam and Uzma Aslam Khan have addressed socio-environmental dilemmas both explicitly and implicitly in their works. Novels such as *Thinner Than Skin* and *Trespassing*, which I shall discuss in chapters Three and Five, exemplify an intensified form of exploitation both economic and environmental and showcase the indigenous people's struggling resistance against this exploitation carried out by a ruling elite. In textual representations, for example, in *Thinner Than Skin*, Khan exposes how the shadowy system of politically well-connected elites and corporate firms log the forests and are complicit with forest department officials and local elites constantly degrading the forests, particularly in northern Pakistan. Similarly, Ejaz Ahmad[5] notes that pesticide suppliers for capital accumulation prompt farmers to cut trees, instead urging them to invest in crop cultivation. The free and unregulated marketing of transnational pesticide companies and their dangerously toxic pesticides promise short-term benefits but result in a severe degradation of the environment. In this harrowing way, large populations, by following the food

chain, become secondary consumers, thereby indirectly consuming pesticides that are detrimental to both human and non-human life and health (WHO 88). This predicament of Pakistan also reflects the situation in former colonies in South Asia, Africa and the Latin Americas, because at the core of exploitative systems such as colonialism and new forms of imperialism are the past histories of subjugation and their interests in extending capital, thereby rendering postcolonial countries even more "uneven" in the world (Mukherjee 7).

Historian Guha argues that the intervention of politics and colonization and its impact on ecology in South Asia suggests that complex questions about geospatial politics need to be considered, since the geographies of South Asia cannot be comprehended without an analysis of colonial practices; additionally, specific attention needs to be paid to the unfolding of colonial (post-), and industrial developments to address the complexity of changing ecological scenarios (*Environmentalism: A Global History*). Correspondingly, Guha in "Environmentalism of the Poor" and Williams in *A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* consider looking into society and nature as a dialectical unity. Both of them emphasize the domination of economic, geographical and imperial histories between environmentally oriented thought in the global North and South to a large extent, which I shall try to explain in the subsequent discussion as I foreground how discursive post-colonial and the modernization processes, in terms of Pakistani and American representation/interpretation, are necessary to provide a background for a better understanding of environmental discourse and an overall meaning of the study.

Similarly, Graham Haggan (2004) in his article "Greening Postcolonialism: Ecocritical Perspectives" writes that the "green" trajectory in postcolonial scholarship indicates that writers at least agree on the fact that it is not possible to examine contemporary imperialism without highlighting the tremendous environmental damage that they involve (702). Particularly after the Second World War, new forms of power dynamics have overtaken the control of once-colonized countries who suffer extreme forms of exploitation in the form of economic and capital dysfunction, with a clear impact on their environment. Major European powers and American Imperialism play a significant role in perpetuating the "Neo-ecological Imperialism" of more impoverished and underdeveloped countries of the world for its policies aimed at extending the military, economic, political, and cultural control of other geographies beyond its boundaries (Nixon, *Slow Violence*). Such imperialistic moves in the form of militarism has also compounded

many underdeveloped territories with the dysfunction of ecosystem structure, habitat alteration and displacement (Lawrence et al. 443). Similarly, this phenomenon has also impacted global environmental politics in the form of "global waste trade", which is the transnational trade of waste between countries. Toxic wastes, for example, in the form of e-waste and discarded electric equipment are often transferred from industrialized nations to third world poorer countries that are also known as the countries of the Global South (Laha 24).

I offer these examples to show the inextricable entanglement of the term postcolonial geographies and environments to underscore the condition of postcoloniality that is distinct in matters of environmental problems and involves both economic as well as political matters. These scenarios echo what Lawrence Summers, the former president of the World Bank, recommended in 1991 – to develop a scheme to transfer rich nations' toxic waste and severely contaminating industries in Africa:

> I think the economic logic behind dumping a load of toxic waste in the lowest-wage country is impeccable and we should face up to that. . .. I've always thought that countries in Africa are vastly under polluted; their air quality is probably vastly inefficiently low compared to Los Angeles. . .. Just between you and me, shouldn't the World Bank be encouraging more migration of the dirty industries to the Least Developed Countries? (Summers, qtd.in Nixon 1)

Summer's callous scheme underlines a reality that explains the unevenness of global geographical conditions with respect to the environment. Unburdening rich nations' toxic trash from the global North onto the poorest geographical zones of the world rationalizes an imperialist mindset. Thus, Nixon argues that Summers' solutions for the global North much disgracefully disregarded the African recipients of the rich man's garbage as "political agents" – Africans were disregarded as long term victims of a discrete type of violence and were also disregarded as the inhabitants of a distinct geographical zone with its own set of environmental concerns and practices (2). Nixon's observation reflects how transgeographical eco-sensitivity/insensitivity is a matter of global concern as it addresses the representational challenges posited by a slow and invisible violent act and the way it impacts the environments and the environmentalism of disenfranchised impoverished geographies of the world (3). This scenario then raises questions of significant importance. In the contemporary age of neoliberalism when capitalism has intensified

violence on resources, how would developing nations participate in resistance? To answer this question, in the discussion that follows, I will address the Pakistani postcolonial fiction in English to underscore the place and position of writers who a part of resistance to the challenges imposed by capitalism and neo-colonialism are, followed by the American discourse and environmentalism.

1.8.2 Resistance and Imperialism of the Present

Ashcroft el al. (1989) observed how English fiction and literature in the former British colonies have emerged with a distinctive flavor of their own in the dismantling and appropriation of the "model of center and margin" (83). These works, which are generally termed as "postcolonial" works, became a riding force in questioning, resisting and challenging the western imperial monolith of authority and power of the canon (84). Likewise, postcolonial Pakistani fiction in English has emerged as a separate genre of modern and postmodern writing (Raja 2). While Pakistani fiction in English represents a small portion of the total production as a cultural artifact, the writers in this group have endeavored to represent the Pakistani culture, identity, and politics. Raja Masood (2018) argued for characterizing and being a representative of the entire Pakistani culture in terms of portraying what Kobena Mercer describes as "burden of representation" (qtd. in Raja 3) in the globalized and neo-colonial era, the role played by these writers is two-fold:

> The metropolitan audiences and market force the writers to be 'representative' of their culture and the primary culture also expects the authors to represent the whole of their culture. Thus, the diasporic author of English is in a double bind: he or she must meet the expectations of the metropolitan market and the pressures and pulls of their own primary culture. (3)

Raja Masood's justification and argument for the contemporary Anglophone Pakistani writer's dilemma is notable especially in terms of those who are global spectacles[6] in the metropolitan market and those who are reading that text in the country. The consumption of Pakistani writers' work from the global periphery, in some ways, facilitate a paradigm of exploitation that was initiated by the Euro-American system of colonialism in the sixteenth century while representing Pakistan using the stereotypes that the West wanted to see and read. Even though the diasporic novelists writing in English are under constant attack from the Western media

as well as the Pakistani reader for portraying Pakistani culture in partiality or in negative metaphors,[7] I would like to clarify that I intend to focus on the Pakistani fiction in English and their postcolonial writing in this study instead of stereotyping as a form of resistance.

For example, in spite of the fact that one finds postcolonial writers entrenched in this phenomenon of "global-neocolonialism" (Mukherjee 9; Huggan, "Neocolonialism" 21), they have in many ways also critiqued those postcolonial regimes and the existing ruling elites of the country who have sought to perpetuate the colonial policies and the phenomenon of neo-colonialism. I will show in chapters two, four and five how writers such as Khan, Shamsie, Hamid and Aslam have, in subtly direct as well as indirect manners, critiqued what Graham Haggen (2001) terms as "differential relations of power" (ix). Moreover, it is also the responsibility of the postcolonial writers to discern what Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o calls the "pitfalls" (7) that may be in our paths so that they can be avoided. In this context, I believe that texts by Hamid and Khan are appropriate examples of how they have in style, form as well as in theme represented the environmental problems in a capitalistic neoliberal imperialism of the present milieu. The literariness or the literary specificity of postcolonial writers, as Mukherjee argues, resides in the "uneven styles" that are aware of the "unevenness of capitalist development in the post colony, which renders the environment as well radically uneven" (13). This is the postcolonial condition bonded together by conceptual terms such as "postcolonial", "literary singularity" and "environment", as postulated by Pablo Mukherjee and relevant for this study as well. He contends that it is imperative in this age of globalization and historical capital for one to also understand that the:

> Globalization of capital is marked by the rhythm of a radical unevenness, we need to understand how 'postcolonial' or especially, postcolonial environments, constitute a particular expression of this rhythm, for it has profound and irreversible effects on the materiality of the world that our writers inhabit, reflect upon and in which they intervene with their writing. (Mukherjee 13)

Hence, relating it to the Pakistani context, the role of capitalism and capital world market and its impact on the geographies of South Asia and the way it influences the uneven developments in terms of socio-economic as well ecological context are significant. The phenomenon of accumulation of wealth in specific geographical zones of the world and the deprivation of another hemisphere in the world is a reality that has been indicated by geographer-anthropologist David

Harvey in *Spaces of Hope.* He contests that the dichotomy of accumulation of capital has been greatly a geographical phenomenon (23). The capitalistic nature of accumulation of resources and wealth has resulted in what, according to Harvey, is an "uneven development" or "spatial fix" (23). Such differentiations are important when the Pakistani fiction in English is examined from a postcolonial ecocritical perspective. This structure of unevenness in terms of ecological and environmental degradation provides space and possibilities for Pakistani discourse in English to reflect on the issues such as environment, urbanization, pollution and deforestation where the gap between development and underdevelopment is immense. Therefore, Pakistani writers, via their textual representations engage in exposing the cause and effect of environmental degradation and provide a comprehensive critique of the political/historical forces responsible for much of the ecological crisis. Having contextualized this, I will address American environmental discourse to see how it differs in matters of environmental philosophical thoughts that shaped the American literary environmental scholarship.

The comparative study requires a Western environmental model dominated by the tropes of wilderness and pastoral, which makes much of the ecocritical paradigm be examined so that comprehensive specificities and differences can be explored and how wilderness and pastoral tropes diverge from the environmentalism of the global South. Euro-American ecocritical tradition can by no means be regarded as standardized and homogenous to focus on what ecocriticism looks like in Pakistan. What follows below is the American nature writing in the pastoral tradition, which is fundamental to the three phases of ecocritical development (three waves) and the role of nature. Further, as it will become apparent through the following paragraphs how the discussion in the Western literary ecocriticism founded on pastoral and wilderness nature paradigm, a celebration of the pristine wild beauty and harmony of the land can overpower or minimize much of the truly existing human cultural entanglement with the environment in the world. According to Mukherjee, such types of recognition of the "purity and preservation of 'nature' are often vehicles for the progress of the very capitalism that they are trying to oppose" (41). These varying and differing concepts are significant for questioning the western dominant canon, as it is equally crucial to note who voices and from where in order to recognize the silences and to consider why they exist and what might be done to address them.

1.9 Anglo-American Nature Paradigm

1.9.1 Pastoral:

Greg Gerrard, in his 2004 -book, *Ecocriticism* talks about the idea of "pastoral" as the most "deeply entrenched" trope in Western culture (28). Pastoral as a genre emerged in the Hellenistic period in the form of poetry and dates to Greco-Roman antiquity as an outcome of robust and longstanding narratives of heritage and genealogy on one hand, and the more contemporary anthropological accounts of Greco-Roman antiquity's radical difference from the present on the other (Holmes xii). Based on the Idylls of the Alexandrian poet Theocritus, the term *idyll* has come to become associated with rural tranquility and calm. The appearance of the "bucolic idyll" became associated with extensive urbanization in the Hellenic period (Garrard 35). That is why, in American and British literature, the pastoral trope focuses on the dichotomy between rural and urban life. From the Romantic movement and onwards, the pastoral trope molded the construction of nature accordingly based on the literary responses to the horrendous repercussion of the Indusial Revolution. As Gerard observes, even scientifically oriented books such as *Silent Spring* drew on the pastoral tradition (46). The pastoral trope is generally manifested in three different kinds in the literary tradition (Gifford 2). The first is the "classical pastoral", a "retreat" from metropolitan to a more agrarian setting, depicting an idealized form of county existence. This type of pastoral includes all the pastoral literature forms until the eighteenth century. The second type is the literary manifestations that depict the rural and the country with a direct or indirect contrast to the urban way of life. Finally, the third type is the implication of an idealized form of rural life that obscures the realities of hardship and labor (Gerrard 46). Further, the western pastoral tradition typically falls into two categories – the American pastoral paradigm and the tradition of British pastoral. Much ecocriticism has been drawn from the pastoral traditions of the antiquity and a brief survey of this popular tradition may help us understand the relevance and significance of this popular concept in the Anglo-American version of ecocriticism.

1.9.2 The American Tradition

The American Environmental tradition is generally identified using Leo Marx's *The Machine in The Garden* published in 1964 and offers a pastoral model based on Virgil's *Eclogues* while exhorting "against the illusion of peace and harmony in a green pasture" (25). Marx claims for a distinctively American paradigm of pastoral in which the problematic role of "technology" distorts an idealized American landscape. The prominent works of Jefferson, Hawthorne, Beverley, Twain, Thoreau, Frost and Fitzgerald are examples of American writers who have followed this tradition that Marx calls an "unmistakable sophistication" that resonates that of Virgil (212). Marx also described the increasing domination of machine evolution in the American landscape. Similarly, Joseph Meeker in *The Comedy of Survival: Studies in Literary Ecology* (1972) argued for examining relationships between literary forms and ecology. Joseph Meeker expanded on what he called "the comedy of biology" (Meeker 26) not considering them as dramatic concepts of sadness and humor but relatively as systems of adaptive behavior in the natural habitats that either facilitate our survival (comedy) or alienate us from other lifeforms (tragedy). According to Meeker's concept of pastoral, the emotional cycle of the idyllic rustic experience interchanges between nostalgia and hope from disappointment to anguish (189). However, this kind of thinking presents a reductive view of the pastoral as "a domestic and tamed landscape swept clean of dangers and discomforts" that "leads necessarily toward ecological damage and toward human dissatisfaction" (Meeker 189). His notion was followed by Lawrence Buell with the publication of his most foundational text in ecocritical quarters, *The Environmental Imagination*, in 1995.

Lawrence Buell reviewed the American pastoral tradition in one of his chapters called "Pastoral Ideology" (31). Pastoral, as Buell explained, has become almost synonymous with the concept of " (re)turn to a less urbanized, more 'natural' state of experience" (*Imagination* 31). Like Leo Marx, Buell held that pastoral concept would adapt in the construction of new forms, performing less as "a theatre for human events and more as advocacy of nature" (52). Buell's pastoral scholarship focused exclusively on the American culture, history and environmental ethics. This vision was later taken up by Glen Love in his essay "Revaluing Nature: Toward an Ecological Criticism", published in *The Ecocriticism Reader* in 1996. By offering a "new and more complex understanding of nature" in the American context (231), he argued for a better focus on

the "profound threats to our biological survival" (226). Glen Love extended a broader vision for a new and different role for the pastoral rather than the traditional retreat into the wilderness. The pastoral vision that Buell termed the "narrative of retreated" ensured a focus on the vulnerabilities of pastoral ideologies as well as the nostalgia for the American criticism in ecocriticism (Ladino 198). Similarly, Jennifer Ladino in *Reclaiming Nostalgia: Longing for Nature in American* (2012) presented a new vision of American pastoralism with a futuristic potential, claiming that the nostalgia for nature has also aided as an instrument for social change, a framework for moral relationships and powerful inspiration for social and environmental justice (231). Like other American writers, critics and contributors to the formation of ecocriticism, Jenifer Ladino also traced dominant forms in American culture and literature.

1.9.3 The British Pastoral Tradition

On the other hand**,** the British pastoral tradition was dominated by Raymond Williams especially with the publication of his book *The City and the Country* in 1973. While *The Ecocriticism Reader* launched in 1996 was predominantly American, *The Green Studies Reader* was a British equivalent (Gifford 9). In terms of British criticism, Raymond Williams's views greatly affected both the Marxist readings of pastoral and the ecocritical responses. One of Williams's significant perceptions is that the pastoral has always been categorized by a longing so that wherever we investigate its past, we will observe an "escalator" drifting us back into a healthier and better past (50). William also demonstrated the perils of romanticizing the pastoral through the provincial novel. Kate Ruby, later, in *The Oxford Handbook of Ecocriticism*, presented a different argument against the representation of British culture and nature. She suggested that a Romantic pastoralist like William Wordsworth resisted the escalating commodification and the subsequent industrial exploitation of the land (69). While the legacy of Raymond Williams awaited the rise of British ecocriticism, the-book *Green Voices: Understanding Contemporary nature Poetry* by Terry Gifford made use of the concept of "post-pastoral" to bring in voices from both the British as well as Irish poets of nature. In defining "post-pastoral" poetry, he significantly relied on poets like Sorley Maclean and Seamus Heaney, the successors to Wordsworth and Blake (200). Gifford took the concept of pastoral "beyond" the traditional and simplistic idealized concept by attending to more "complex" forms of "pastoral" significance in British and Irish poetic forms. Similarly, with the popular pastoral ecology and modes of harmony and balance in the Western

tradition is another equally significant trope, the idea of "wilderness" that has shaped the making of a Euro-American model of ecocriticism and needs to be reviewed in tandem.

1.9.4 Wilderness Trope

According to Greg Garrad, "The idea of wilderness, signifying nature in a state uncontaminated by civilization, is most potent construction of nature available to New World environmentalism" (72). Definition offered by Garrard is a manifestation of the American strain of environmental criticism that is marked by what is termed as "wilderness", a paradigm that largely describes the philosophical underpinnings of Henry Thoreau, Aldo Leopold and Barry Lopez. Like the "pastoral" trope, the idea of wilderness generally has played a critical role in the American culture and especially in the rise of American environmentalism. However, unlike the pastoral, the idea of wilderness came to be a part of the American cultural in the eighteenth century, and the "wilderness texts" debated by ecocritics largely center on non-fictional nature writing and generally remained ignored by other critics. Abundant scholarship in this field that was philosophical in nature stretched the bounds of traditional literary criticism (Garrard 72). Like the pastoral, the wilderness concept has its roots in American history and conquest. Conquering wilderness was fundamental to the colonial and settler narratives of progress. Admiration, nostalgia and reverence for wilderness became associated with the American nationalism with the closure of the frontier by the end of nineteenth century. Furthermore, the Wilderness Act marked an important historic event especially in American environmental politics. Greg Garrard argues that:

> If pastoral is the distinctive Old-World construction of nature, suited to long-settled and domesticated landscapes, wilderness fits the settler experience in the New Worlds – particularly the United States, Canada and Australia – with their apparently untamed landscapes and the sharp distinction between the forces of culture and nature. (72)

The reference of Old-World is directed to the Judeo-Christian and Graeco-Roman cultures that defined the pastoral. However, as Garrard explains, wilderness on the other hand is relatively a recent notion – a concept endowed at the launch of the eighteenth century. By the advent of the enlightenment humanism in the eighteenth-century, reason became the motivating factor for achieving complete mastery over nature and wild spaces, and with the displacement of an emergent

Romantic sensibility by reason, wilderness came to be associated with the popular idea of "sublime" (75). Edmund Burke in his *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* argues that the concept of beautiful generates feelings of pleasure, whereas "passion caused by the great and sublime in nature…is Astonishment" (53. Qtd. in Garrard). However, analogies such as "beauty" with "smallness" and "delicacy and sublime" with awe-inspiring power and vastness incited feminist critics to critique his idea of an overt gendering of the sublime and beautiful (Garrard 77). Ecocritic Garrard note that:

> Just as feminine and beautiful is denigrated by comparison with the masculine sublime in Burke's definitions, it is argued, so women were excluded from encounters with the wild. (77)

Although initiated by Edmund Burke, it was later in Romantic verse that the "sublime wildernesses" found its literary climax (77). Rousseau's love for nature and his long walks in wild meadows and Goethe's passion for rocks and stones in *Werther* and *Wilhelm Meister*, respectively, portrays the mountain countryside both as a place of great tranquility, of unmovable strength and of solid majestic height and a disturbing, perilous and demonic place (Giacomoni 112); these can be considered examples for the sublime. On the other hand, in Romantic poetry such as that of William Wordsworth's works and other Romantic poets', the landscape and the Scottish Highlands were made popular for their likeness to the "archetypal locus of the European sublime", which was always awe-inspiring (Garrard 77). The sublime in wilderness with its awe-inspiring spiritual phenomena signaled a social and cultural change that appeared vulnerable at the same time. As the Western world primarily conquered the very same mountains and meadows with the advent of technology – (steam engine, tools), another significant wilderness sublime writer, Henry Thoreau, and his popular nonfiction, *Walden* (79) can be brought to focus. Likewise, John Muir (1911) and his famous "wilderness preservation movement" and the concept of sublime wilderness that he described as a "vast display of God's power" (238; Nash 122) became associated with the American cultural identity. Because of his deep-seated concepts on human harmony with natural ecology, his key insights into the initial stage of the Deep Ecology movement took its roots in modern American environmentalism.

1.9.5 The Contradiction in the Wilderness Narrative

The authentic wilderness perception had some basic flaws. The pristine nature that Muir and other writers advocated excluded the presence of humanity that were a part of that landscape, which these writers revered so much. Such pristine beauty became a symbol of American culture by excluding human history whenever the wilderness and pristine literature was undertaken. The allegory of an "uninhabited wilderness" of the white-dominated American culture conveniently excluded the indigenous Ahwahenechee tribe who lived in the Yosemite park. The "violent displacement"[8] of the Ahwahenechee Indians from the Yosemite Valley in the name of conservation is a reminder of unforgotten stories of displaced inhabitants hidden within enduring romantic ideas about nature conservation and national parks (NoiseCat par. 4). Historian William Cronon in "The Trouble with Wilderness" (1996) explains such eliminations, silence and paradoxes that the wilderness narratives inculcated. According to Cronon, we need to rethink about the concept of nature, he observes that "wilderness" does us more damage than good (7-28). The trouble with wilderness then lies at the heart of the perceiving nature as removed from civilization. That meant that nature is where human race isn't. If the human civilization is defined by crowded urban spaces, capitalism, class/race struggles and pollution, then the pastoral and wilderness is a place to escape the real problems of human civilization and go "back to our roots" (Frontier myth) or "find God" (the Sublime). Therefore, one must guard nature from people. This also meant excluding hundreds of native tribes and their displacement throughout the Euro-American history of colonization and conquest. In the name of preserving the "untouched" pristine beauty of wilderness, the western narrative never talked about natives being marginalized into the shanty reserves in honor of creating the "Fortress Conservation" park. Therefore, the idea of "wilderness" mostly reflected male-dominated white urban bourgeois excluding women as well as the indigenous people. The nature became a spot created by capitalists who sponsored the creation of national parks with a hope to escape the dismays of civilization. William Cronin observes in "The Trouble with Wilderness" :

> this will seem a heretical claim to many environmentalists, since the idea of wilderness has for decades been a fundamental tenet—indeed, a passion—of the environmental movement, especially in the United States. For many Americans wilderness stands as the last remaining place where civilization, that all too human disease, has not fully infected

> the earth. It is an island in the polluted sea of urban-industrial modernity, the one place we can turn for escape from our own too-muchness. Seen in this way, wilderness presents itself as the best antidote to our human selves, a refuge we must somehow recover if we hope to save the planet. As Henry David Thoreau once famously declared, 'In Wildness is the preservation of the World.' (7)

Cronon's argument clearly stated the inherent contradiction present in the Western notion of wilderness. The more we dive into the historical reality of the Euro-American model on conquest, the more one realizes how wilderness is not quite what it seems (8–27). The flaw in the wilderness myth of pristine purity was later demonstrated by Bill McKibben in *The End of Nature*. He observed that the contemporary world has witnessed a global change in unprecedented environmental cataclysms such as global warming, icecaps melting and ozone depletion and, therefore, required a radical and philosophical shift in the manner we related to nature (xxii).

This classical wilderness narrative not only misrepresents nature but also absolves us from being accountable towards it in our daily lives (Cronon 82). The erasure of the political and social history in the wilderness accounts in Western thought then takes an ideological position in a most crucial form that is eventually manifested in reactionary politics. The philosophical and theoretical roots of environmental movements such as *Deep Ecology* found in the ecocritical paradigm and social criticism of Anglo-American nature writers Henry Thoreau, John Muir and others risk what Garrard observes as the "identification with privileged leisure pursuits that sell authenticity while mystifying the industrial consumerism that make them possible" (84). Hence, ecocriticism, the deep ecologists' primary concept of wilderness exaltation and the many above mentioned writers who have examined it risks the complicity of these two paradigms with this ideology. On this note Garrard writes that:

> Deep Ecology, it might be argued, has conspired with some American ecocriticism to promote a poetics of *authenticity* for which wilderness is the touchstone. To critique this is not to argue for the abandonment of wilderness to the tender mercies of ranches and developers, but to promote instead the poetics of *responsibility* that takes ecological science rather than pantheism as its guide. (79, emphasis original)

It is understandable that there are obvious discrepancies in ecocriticism grounded in some deep ecological principles, requiring a more enlightening discourse of nature, but it also requires a comprehensive rhetoric of mitigation and transformation (ibid 85). At the same time, however, disqualifying the fact that the ecocriticism in literary studies has been entirely dominated by "deep ecological" positions is not justified. For example, the social and ecological emphasis on the interpretation of culture and nature have been dealt by many key figures in modern Euro-American canon of writers, especially after the writings of Raymond Williams (Mukherjee 44). Although deep ecology has engaged and contributed to the development of ecocriticism and many other strains of fundamental ecopolitical thought, for postcolonial critics and theorists, its silences and omissions are significantly problematic. Today, in the contemporary world more than ever before in the channels of history, cultures all around the world need to think about the ways social and environmental justice interact in a more integrated and global manner. The environmental trajectories in ecocriticism and deep ecology that took root seek the question as to why the historical processes of capitalism and industrialization in the western hemisphere and their affiliated struggles for similar kinds of equality were not as noticeable as ecological processes (ibid 45).

While South Asian and other neocolonial state are by and large influenced by certain former colonial policies and the complicity of ruling elites in perpetuating environmental degradation, the western hemisphere, on the contrary, also has significant historical depth and some assumptions that inspired modern science and technology, which has played a critical role in advancing ecological consequences. In this section, based on these fundamental observations, I have attempted to provide a brief overview of Euro-American environmental philosophy concerning the most prominent voices in the "swift-running" stream of "western" Anglo-American ecological thought (Hay 1-16).

In the context provided, the study, therefore, attempts to add a critical postcolonial dimension to an interpretative framework that would facilitate reading transgeographical sensitivity and ecocritical studies together. Hence, in this way, one can address eco-aesthetics that would offer a unique postcolonial Pakistani and an industrial consumerism from the American ecocritical perspective. Therefore, by doing so, one may argue how various human cultures located in differential geographical zones relate and conceptualize habitats and their subsequent

environments respectively. One can further differentiate the transgeographical environmentalism based on their corresponding political scenarios, modes of production and ideologies that are influenced by a political and cultural production of the ecological and environmental inequality and not just anthropocentric assumptions alone (Mukherjee 81).

Furthermore, I have preferred to use the term "west" to imply "American north" especially in terms of the intended industrially developed west. Although western environmentalism includes variation in their ecological vision including indigenous native American environmentalism, I shall, for the sake of argument under consideration, adhere to the western Euro-American environmentalism and how it challenged as well as was reshaped in complex, burgeoning, western industrial cities under the impact of various philosophical beliefs and capitalism that ensued. The intention behind this is to foreground the form of environmentalism in the American context so that the distinctive features as well similarities between Pakistani and American perception towards the environment can be best understood.

1.10 Thesis Breakdown

Chapter 1- Introduction: This chapter offers a general background to the study and contextualizes the study in a broader transgeographical framework. It introduces postcolonial Pakistani context and Western environmental thought as two dominant paradigms that seek to investigate human-nature perception. The background and context are followed by the problem statement and aims and objectives for undertaking this research. The research questions formulated, and the objectives of the study state the primary purpose of conducting this research. Finally, the rationale and significance of the study provides the grounds for the research.

Chapter 2- Literature Review. This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part reviews colonial impact on ecology and postcolonial environment in South Asian context which leads to discussion on Pakistani fiction. The second part deals with American environmental discourse and capitalism. It also includes works on relevant literature for reviewing what has already been written about the texts under study. This chapter addresses Objective 1: *To explore Pakistani writers' contribution to the rapidly evolving ecological debate.* A comprehensive review of all these aspects, therefore highlights and accentuates the need for the present study.

Chapter 3- Research Methodology: This chapter outlines the theoretical framework and analytical method to be used for analysis and interpretation. Ecocriticsm is used as a main theoretical and analytical strategy and used as an umbrella term to donate the representation of environment as textual representations under the subject of toxic discourse and eco-cosmopolitanism. Postcolonial perspectives are merged with ecocriticsm with reference to main postcolonial theorist to contextualize and to foreground the fact that environmental and postcolonial varies radically in different geographies.

Chapter 4 and 5 Analysis: comprises of the main arguments of the study as they contain the interpretation and analysis of the selected texts. Chapter 4 begins with the ecocritical readings of the two novels. Don DeLillo's postmodern fiction *White Noise* and Mohsin Hamid's *Moth Smoke*. In the light of the discussion this chapter addresses objective 2: *To investigate to what extent the selected texts seek to address issues of environmental degradation and the conceptualisation of ecological imbalance in fiction.* Chapter 5 –turns to the question of the Pakistani and American sense of place in *Trespassing* and *A Thousand Acres.* As I also examine the texts from an eco-cosmopolitan perceptive, the contamination and environmental risk factors are never overlooked. This chapter addresses Objective no 3: to *Compare how the concepts of geographical space, sense of place, locality and global risk scenarios seek to address the environmental challenges in a more planetary context.*

Chapter six - Conclusion: The final part of the thesis concludes the arguments and analysis of the comparative study and presents the findings of the study in light of the research questions formulated. Based on the study's conclusion, the chapter also suggests recommendations for further studies. This chapter also addresses objective no 4: *To examine how the ecocritical study of these texts can contribute to raising the public environmental consciousness that will eventually feed into attitudes (Environmental Praxis)* and suggests an answer to this objective in the light of the works explored. This study draws upon the Modern Language Association (MLA) style of publication.

1.11 Rationale and Significance of the Study

The Euro-American ecocriticism has been dominated by nation-centeredness and isolationism of the field in its established modes. Therefore, I believe, it is also necessary to reconfigure and reorient it along the parameters of fundamentally global and comparative modes rather than monolithic impenetrable perspectives. In this context, to explore Pakistani fiction in English in a comparative mode is to discover the complex relationships between human and environmental transformation and exploitation. The Pakistani landscape – a landscape that is quite opposed to conventional notions of wilderness – reveals through its changing environment dynamics how it tangles between a present post-colonial ruling elite, a history of colonialism, military violence and a vision of the environment quite different from the Euro-American model. Therefore, the study recognizes the significance and importance of critically engaging and revisiting other traditions and cultures for better understanding. Hence, in my opinion, the study is significant as the analysis of different cultures establishes a kind of a worldview that all humans are a part of this larger planet and that the significance of such a study cannot be disregarded in the wake of what the present-day world confronts regarding large-scale environmental crisis induced by anthropogenic activities as well as existing power structures.

The study is significant as it enriches our understanding of complicity and accountability by revealing the ecological network of material and discursive forces in which we are deeply embedded. Furthermore, the shifting perspectives on environmental consciousness advances our understanding to value uniqueness and the specificities of ecological commonalities as well as the differences in distant geographies of the world. However, as Mukherjee asserted, this difference should not hamper our ability to learn from other paradigms of difference. One should be able to draw comparisons in order to further a postcolonial and ecocritical concepts in order to learn methods of resisting injustice in its various forms.

Similarly, this research offers one a different focus as it attempts to present a reading of famous writers from different cultural and geographical contexts in tandem to address the surmounting interest in comparative postcolonial ecocriticism. While the similarities in the works of fiction address globally sensitive environmental consciousness in the modern society, their differences in perception may raise important questions such as the application of ecocriticism in

non-Western Pakistani contexts and the possibilities of various Pakistani writers' ability to draw more environmentally conscious discourse in the future. Hence, in the light of these concerns, the present research responds to a need for theorizing ecocriticism across postcolonial cultural, political and geographical contexts, especially when the ecocriticism in Pakistan is relatively a new and emerging field of inquiry in literary discourse.

Summing up the research premise, within the realm of Pakistani and American English fiction, the introduction offers a background to the study of the topic mentioned contextualising it to the relevant area of ecocriticism and postcolonialism as an approach. The purpose of building the context is to foreground the scope of the field and its relevance to the comparative study. With transgeographical and historical positioning of environmental dilemmas, the chapter argues that the selected texts from two disparate geographical terrains underscores postcolonial ecocritical reading which captures imagined and real spaces and expands the margins between interdisciplinary platforms. Given the mutual interest of both the discourse types; Pakistani and American fiction in English in concerns and issues like geographical postcolonial space, environment and politics of neoliberal capitalistic consumption, it is not surprising to discover these types of convergence between the texts under consideration as well as the differences that frame their uniqueness. Although the ecocritical study of Pakistani fiction in English has been examined through various critical epistemological lenses from an anthropocentric, cosmopolitan and ecofeminist perspective, it has not been explored from a transgeographical viewpoint [9]. Transgeographical perspectives in today's world of immense globalization, environmental challenges and changing political scenarios seems more indispensable than ever in understanding cultural and political processes of the varied ecological phenomenon taking place across world (Kevin et al. 2). Therefore, the next chapter, in the light of the research premise presented in this chapter will further the argument and seeks to review contemporary critical scholarship in Pakistani and American environmental discourse.

NOTES

[1] Definition of the term 'transgeographical' as it appears in the Oxford Dictionary Web. Accessed on 5th June 2019. https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/geographical.

[2] The economic activity of powerful struggle in the global economic market centered on developed first world nations has its locus of production in developing countries where it can benefit the cheapest and advantageous labor and natural resources of raw materials in order to raise higher profits at lower cost. These are examples of structural violence by a globalized ruling elite. See 'Environmental Issues: Structural Violence and Inner Peace' by Yoshikawa Mami. Also, see 'Structural violence in Pakistan' by Tariq Mehmood . Mehmood provides a detail of how structural violence operates in Pakistan.

[3] See for example, George Klay. Kieh, Jr. 'Western Imperialism in the Middle East: The Case of the United States Military Intervention in the Persian Gulf'. *Arab Studies Quarterly.*(1992: 1-16).

https://www.jstor.org/stable/. Accessed on 18th June 2019.

[4] I have in my thesis related my stance with that of Mukherjee (2010) that he has provided on postcolonial South Asian novels. His articulation of a unique position and place of postcolonial writers has been useful for me to relate it with the postcolonial Pakistani context.

[5] Senior director programs at WWF.

[6] Term borrowed from (Mukherjee 8) to suggest the foreign reader

[7] See, for example, Diana Ocheltree's. 'Tainted Through Transfer: Dis/connective Residues in Mohsin Hamid's Contaminated Fiction,' and Raja, Masood Ashraf. 'The Pakistani English Novel: The Burden of Representation and the Horizon of Expectations.' (*Pakistaniaat* : 2018).

[8] See for example, the 'The Forgotten History of "Violent Displacement" that helped create the National Parks' by Juliana Brave NoiseCat. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/national-park-service-anniversary-indigenous-people. Accessed on 6th June 2019.

[9] See for example, Shazia Rahman's article on Pakistani ecocosmoplitanism (2011), and Neelam Jabeen, "Ecofeminism and Pakistani Anglophone Literature" *Interventions* 21.3 (2019: 354) .

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I review contemporary critical scholarship in the domain of Pakistani and American Environmental paradigm. I have two objectives in mind while reviewing the secondary sources; contextualize my research within the existing critical attention on my area of study and find out the gaps therein that my project is likely to fill up. Therefore, this preliminary literature review seeks to outline the rhetoric and trajectories of various environmental perspectives that review how concepts such as colonial, postcolonial, imperialist and environmental ideologies are tangled as epistemologies to understand the situation in South Asian environments better. In this chapter, I also attempt to underscore the environmental movements and conservationist impulse in America that has witnessed a boost with the emergence of a postindustrial or post-materialist society. Expectedly, environmental movements, struggles and ideologies in the global North are distinct from the global South (Guha 16). The writers, texts and critics I engage with in this chapter are geographically diverse and have been specifically selected to highlight a variety of transgeographical environmental perspectives.

2.2 Review of Critical Sources

I have reviewed the selected critical corpus in my area. I have not carried out a chronological review of sources rather my focus is on thematic dimension because I have to move horizontally. The rationale to include colonial critical literature is to historically contextualize the trajectories of ecological violence in the subcontinent and how the legacies of the past colonialism are now shaped by neoliberalism, and globalization in the South Asian region. Therefore, the historical review is fundamental in understanding evolution of environmental disparity in the region. I have carried out my review under the following subheadings:

- Colonizing Geographies: Imperialism and Neocolonialism
- Fissured Land: Imperialism and Ecological Damage in the Subcontinent
- The Postcolonial Context and the question of Environment
- Postcolonial Text and the Question of Aesthetic Value
- Pakistani Fiction in English
- Review on the Main Debates in American Environmentalism

2.2.1 Colonizing Geographies: Imperialism and Neocolonialism

A review of the existing literature in the area indicate that the process of imperialism in the subcontinent caused extensive damages to the indigenous habitat and ecosystem[1]. Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin argue in "Green Postcolonialism" in the special issue of the postcolonial journal *Interventions* (2008) that under European colonialism, the resources of colonized nations were exploited for imperial revenue. For example:

> [C]ash cropping, and other European agricultural practices usually replaced hunting and subsistence farming, thereby damaging established ecosystems. (Huggan and Tiffin 1)

This is an important observation and is crucial in the context of colonization and began with the idea of control over land. The following argument draws on such observations and focuses on the attitude of the imperial mindset that is grounded in imperialism's drive for global domination. On this related note, Allen Blunt and Cheryl McEwan (2003) argue that the term "colonizing geographies" from whose work the title is borrowed conveys the idea that the empire, geography and postcoloniality work together in innumerable interconnected ways (341). Furthermore, critical debates have also been attentive to the formal interdisciplinary relations between colonial imperialism and geography – they deliberate over imperial authority and control of geographical tenets and practices [2] that became central to geography's logical development and public image. Though colonization across the world was escorted and perpetuated by the exploitation of nature and environmental degradation, liberation from colonial rule did not put an end to these processes. Instead, the disrupting and unsettling relationship between native habitats and their natural resource bases have persisted in the global drive towards modernization (Pouchepadass 205). Correspondingly, though most of us may enjoy postcolonial freedom

currently, as Linda Colley states "we are not yet living in post-imperial times" (qtd. in Nixon 233). This statement holds true when one tries to configure the state of present-day postcolonial ecologies concerning the past processes of colonization and their impact on local ecologies and habitats. The aim of accentuating the historical origin of the problem is to enable us to comprehend how "the past informs the present", encroaches upon it and often determines it in various ways (Nand 2).

Investigating the conception and theorization of land in post-colonial studies will further enhance the explication of the works of fiction that I draw on. The idea of geography, region and territory have played an instrumental role in colonial expansion and transgeographical knowledge. Postcolonial studies critic Edward Said (1993) argues that "imperialism is after all an act of geographical violence through which virtually every space in the world is explored, charted, and finally brought under control" (227). Said's' analysis of geographical conquest, territorial aggression and the process of controlling land are significant in conceptualizing the colonist desire of expansion and domination (Al-Mahfedi 23).

In order to develop the concept of land expansion and control further, Said explores the significance of land and geographical space to the project of empire building. Geography, according to Said, assumed one of the vital features for demarcating binaries between the dominant and antithetical concepts of the East and the West –that he has referred to frequently in his much-acclaimed book *Orientalism* (1978). Furthermore, Said identifies how the political representation of the colonized shifts from mere reflections and representations to more concrete organizational, militarily violent and terrestrial dimensions and thereby highlights the idea of transgeographical binaries and their "appetite for more geographical space into a theory about spatial relationship between geography on the one hand and civilized or uncivilized peoples on the other hand" (*Orientalism* 219). This interpretation undoubtedly argues for a sense and implication of an inhabitancy; between geography and interventionism the material and the symbolic. Said elaborates on geographical importance in *Culture and Imperialism* highlighting it as an instinct:

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

Important to Said's theorization is the proposition that the geographical conquests evidently segregate an intimate space that is ours from one that is theirs[3]– a concept relevant to understanding the parameters under which the present study is carved out in terms of transgeographical environmentalism. Said's argument is valid in the light of what is happening in the contemporary world. New imperial forms have persisted with the reality of what is generally termed as neocolonialism. Ann McClintock in her essay "The Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the Term "Post-Colonialism"' critiques how the terms "geography" and "geopolitics" are significant in attempting to understand the imperialistic ideology operating successfully in contemporary countries that have been decolonized. She corroborates these claims with examples such as the role and function of global financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and trade treaties such as GATT with the aid of global finance capital in burdening developing nations in Africa, Asia and Latin America with mortgages and loans under the guise of structural adjustment programs and progress. Such programs only facilitate the small ruling elite of loan recipient countries and defile the remaining resources in these countries. McClintock notes:

> under the financial spell of the US (and now Japan), and in the name of the fairy-tale of unlimited technological and capital "growth", the World Bank engineered one ecological disaster after another: the Indonesian Transmigrasi programme, the Amazonian Grande Caracas iron-ore and strip-mining project, and Tucurui Dam deforestation project, and so on. The Polonoreste scheme in Brazil carved a paved highway through Amazonia, luring timber, mining and cattle ranching interests into the region with such calamitous impact that in May 1987 even the President of the World Bank, Mr Barber Conable, confessed he found the devastation 'sobering.' (95)

The example quoted above shows how such programs facilitated and funded by the IMF and World Bank have led to severe environmental casualties in some countries. McClintock argues that a single easy definition for neocolonialism is not available because it carries different meanings for different geographical conditions in the world. There are other examples of imperialism; Frantz Fanon foresaw it as kleptocracies in the Third World, with military oligarchies and military leaders:

> scrambled[ing] over each other to plunder the system. To protect these interests, "the tiny, male elites of 'developing' countries have spent almost 2.4 trillion on the military between 1960 and 1987, almost twice the size of the entire Third World debt. (94)

Harvard historian Naill Ferguson has similarly opined that in the late 19th to the early 21st century, British rule enabled a form of globalization that was tragically interrupted by the two world wars. However, following this, a new kind of globalization materialized as a result of American air and naval presence across massive geographical regions on the globe (Kaplan 3). The philanthropical interventions in Kosovo and Bosnia, on the one hand, and the absence of such moves and measures in Rwanda and Syria indicate contemporary imperialism in reality (3). New imperialism, in other examples, are visible in the struggle over water and land in Palestine, burning oil refineries in Iraq and cluster bombs in Afghanistan (Mukherjee 51). Do these interpretations remind of Rudyard Kipling and his reference to "the White man's burden" in the eponymous 1899 poem? Alternatively, does it declare geographical racism or is it a reminder of the new imperial order and burden of colonist desire? It also leads to questions regarding how imperialism impacted the captured ecologies and landscapes. To answer these questions, briefly reviewing colonial history with a special focus on the environment of the subcontinent is essential. Furthermore, the discussion on how land has been conceived in postcolonial discourse is beneficial for the forthcoming discussion and examination on the Pakistani texts that I focus on in my analysis.

2.2.2 The Fissured Land[4]: Imperialism and Ecological Damage in the Subcontinent

A historical study of past events serves as an index of the happenings of the present. The present temporal and spatial moments are captive of history in diverse ways. Fernand Braudel states that these are all pervasive, and their tenacious influence is ubiquitous (qtd.in Nand 2-3). The scarcity of food in the subcontinent, famines, malnutrition and failure of harvest were episodes in British colonial history that devastated the region. However, all of these matters on one level are historical realities while on the other hand, are visibly political, historical and economic (Mukherjee 5). Colonial rule in British India is such an example; although the historical moment is over, neocolonialism in the former colonies persists. The modern perception of contemporary problems such as economic setbacks and environmental degradation in the form of deforestation and capitalistic agrarian policies are deeply entrenched around colonialist mindset. Pablo

Mukherjee makes a compelling argument in *Postcolonial Environments* that the state of the farmers and agricultural policies in the subcontinent cannot be divorced from historical, political and economic matters. He argues that:

> There is no way to understand these without paying attention to their material strata, one that is composed of soil, water, plants, crops, animals (both domestic and wild). The complex (and often conflicting) web, field, or system-whatever we choose to call it - composed of the relationships between human and nonhuman agents or actors that define the history of the Indian subcontinent is what I understand as 'environment'. (5)

The British imperial rule had a lasting impact on the lives of the people of the subcontinent. They oppressed and capitalized the Indian soil for their interests and left the colossal Indian territory in disorder that initially resulted from territorial feuds between different geographical regions, monarchies and religious differences (Saleem and Rizvi 401). Authors such as Pallavi Das (2011) have highlighted information about the background of the ecological problem in British India. Much of the deforestation and environmental degradation witnessed in the Northern regions of the Himalayas in postcolonial India and even Pakistan today can also be traced back to the colonial period and its policies, especially between 1859 and 1884 when railway building project commenced in Punjab [5] (Das 38).The expansion of railway lines that significantly relied on Indian resource extraction was not free of environmental consequences. In particular, the forests suffered the most. Das also argues how such a project devastated the Indian Himalyian forests. Her critique of the impact of colonialism and economic exploitation provides an insight into the misfortunes of the marginalized communities that were brought about by such an enterprise. Citing McNeil, Das argues that:

> global economic integration through the market leads to drastic ecological changes in the zone of resource supply (usually in the periphery) as the consumer demand increases (largely in the metropole). The above studies, however, generally focus on resource extraction and depletion and the dumping of wastes by the metropole in the periphery that transforms the environment there. What they do not analyse to a large extent, is that in order to extract resources, the response-extracting mechanism (e.g. railways) itself entailed

> the consumption of resources (e.g. Timber) as raw materials. Since these raw materials are natural resources and cannot be produced by the market, they, therefore, get depleted. (39)

These observations cite the way colonization played a part in forest destruction. Similarly, environmental historians Guha and Gadgil (1989) argue that the deforestation in this spatial and temporal moment in history led to a massive and unprecedented environmental degradation. The railways project and high economic investment enabled India to export tons of products such as tea, coffee, jute, wheat and oilseeds. The primary reason behind the British's substantial investments in this project was enabling and increasing the export of cultivated products to the Karachi port so that it could be converted into the "breadbasket of the empire" (Weil, 335 qtd. in Das 41). The demands on forest resources increased tremendously with the increase in railway construction, thereby causing extensive deforestation and depleting once an abundant forest of timbers such as teak, Sal and deodar (Guha 122). Guha provides a more comprehensive picture in *The Unique Woods: Ecological Change and Peasant Resistance in Himalaya,* stating that an ecological dimension to the study of farming and agricultural history in the subcontinent is essential to comprehend the relationship between exploitation, economics and environment. The author raised concerns of the link between ecological decline and role of colonialism being neglected by contemporary Indian historians, who have focused more on the political and social consequences of British rule instead (xiii).

On the contrary, the ecological damage and changes marked by the colonial government were irreversible, especially in the beginning of the 19th century. The timberland reduction and resource exhaustion were a clear threat to nature conservation and are a manifestation of colonial exploitation (Das 48). The forest depletion later resulted in a wave of social movements such as the Chipko movement in India by the early seventies, where peasants, women and children took the initiative against commercial forestry (Mitra 25–35).

Studies by Dreze (1990), Arnorld (1993) and Mann (1995) are well documented and recognize that silent violence such as deforestation and famines became a common phenomenon during British rule and convey the dismay of families and the unprecedented destruction brought upon the society. The tales are a horrific reflection of family breakups and human lives, damage to agronomic capital, migration rootlessness, displacement, enslavement, suicides and starvation due to food shortage that ultimately led to cannibalism (Nand 3). There exists a considerable body

of literature documenting that in the year 1770, the first most severe famine struck the state of Bengal during the East India Company's rule and claimed the lives of nearly ten million people.[6] This historical tragedy was followed by epidemics and plagues in 1918 that further decimated the Indian population in Subcontinent. The enormous loss of livestock incapacitated the agrarian economy for decades (7).

According to Blair,[7] the real reason for the lack of agricultural products, drop in harvest and starvation in colonial India was due to income inequalities between the British industrial metropolis and colonial states. The income levels of the industrial countries were higher, and European masses were capable of purchasing grains and raw food at increased rates; therefore, it was easier to import food grains. In colonized communities, contrariwise, the level of incomes was deficient and meagre. According to Nand (2011) these uneven conditions also pose essential questions such as why certain societies (for example, the industrial ones) emerge as advanced, developed and affluent, whereas others (colonial and agricultural societies) emerge as impoverished and underdeveloped out of the process of colonization and industrial revolution.

Smith[8] enquires into the critical aspects of the human condition highlighted by Das and attempted to provide answers to some of these questions and offers a profound insight into this current dilemma in *Uneven Development Nature Capital and the Production of Space.* He extends on what Edward Said argues in *Culture and Imperialism*:

> a brilliant formulation of how the production of a particular kind of nature and space under historical capitalism is essential to the unequal development of a landscape that integrates poverty with wealth, industrial urbanization with agricultural diminishment. (qtd. in Smith ix)

Said's comment reflects how British imperialism was a critical state in the actual process of consumerist, commercial and capitalist accumulation on an international scale that led to the uneven development of colonized countries. Convincingly, Said's observation leads to another critical factor in unearthing another serious issue for such an irregular development. In contemporary times, for example, the unequal development of the world economy with the polarized extremes of wealth and poverty and the rapid growth of urbanisation coupled with rising environmental contamination has enhanced. Responding to similar questions on the causes of

uneven development, another British critic and writer Charles Blair attempted to resolve this contradiction. Braham Nand explains that his efforts failed to provide a solution for such a quandary because his contentions were biased, and he was ensnared in a social environment which narrowed his vision (11). He justifies in the arguments he provides on causes of famine in India, stating that Blair was indifferent towards the main cause of the problem regarding the fundamental differences "in incomes at international level or their historical genesis" (11) that geared the problem. Rather, the natives were blamed for their miseries, while people like Blair sat comfortably in the metropolis (11-12). The irregular historical phenomenon during colonization in the subcontinent reveals how British policies and practices impacted the agriculture and sustainability of natural resources and equally deprived the local inhabitants and destroyed the habitat[9]. Even after colonization ended, the problem of environmental degradation persisted in postcolonial societies. Said observes in *Culture and Imperialism*, "In our time, direct colonialism has largely ended; imperialism, as we shall see, lingers where it has always been, in a kind of general cultural sphere as well as in specific political, ideological, economic, and social practices" (9) which is true for the current state of affairs in South Asia as well.

The review from different sources reveal colonial violence towards ecology in the Subcontinent, this shows how the past historical context is relevant to explore Pakistani environmental discourse, for example Himalyian forest consumption even today in postcolonial Pakistan remains one of the most pressing ecological problems. Shahbaz et al. notes in "A Critical Analysis of Forest Policies of Pakistan" (2007) that the unparalleled levels of degradation that Pakistan is witnessing today have their roots in the policies and practices of colonial governance and administration. Similarly, like I have stated above how cultural critics like Said anticipated decades ago how imperialism persists in postcolonial societies, several studies have been proposed to explicate this phenomenon. However, imperial forms continued that ultimately led several postcolonial critics and scholars to represent, analyze and critique forms of neocolonialism in the forms of theories converging in ecocriticism and postcolonialism as well as in textual representations which is traced in the following section.

2.2.2 The Post-Colonial Response

Given the impression that a significant amount of information has been inscribed and theorized about ecocriticism and postcolonial literature, it is imperative to bring together significant insights and results achieved by theorists, researchers and various textual representations. This is significant since it is evident from the examples of colonial practices that the incursion of Europeans into other geographical locations of the world from the early 15th century onwards appallingly lead to dispossession and marginalization of the indigenous communities and even to their genocide. The process of colonization also caused radical changes in postcolonial ecologies (Haggan and Tiffin 1). Based on these observations, Haggan and Tiffin in their collaborative work titled *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment* (2015) provide an exhaustive and the first critical introduction to postcolonial ecocriticism. Both authors whose work is known and cited transnationally have been leading the emerging field of green postcolonialism since then. Similarly, Huggan's *Greening' Postcolonialism: Ecocritical Perspectives* issued in 2004 combines these two fields and validates their relevance in a cross-cultural context. Tiffin in "Unjust Relations: Post-Colonialism and the Species Boundary" published in 2001 highlights concerns for the non-human environment – animals – foregrounding years of socially and culturally oriented work. In collaboration, they compiled works by various prominent scholars, such as Mukherjee,[10] Sharae Deckard,[11] Neel Ahuja [12] to identify troubled strains among "the burgeoning alliance" between postcolonial and environmental studies. The book attempts to view this tension by focusing on how the postcolonial anxiety is perceived in cultural, literary, political, historical and ecological ways.

In a similar vein, in the book titled *Ecocriticism* published in 2004, Greg Garrard argues that one of the critical challenges that ecocriticism is facing currently is "the relationship between globalization and ecocriticism, which has barely been broached" (178). This challenge was further taken up by Ursula Heise to provide an answer to this task to broaden ecocriticism's scope by focusing on the more transnational spectrum of works and theoretical frameworks. Scholars such as Heise and several others (Slovic and Oppermann) argue how this shift in ecocritical discourse has been influenced by global geopolitical events and competing cultural horizons (Heise, "Postcolonial Ecocriticsm" 251).[13] In the framework of these developments, environmental and postcolonial critics have provided new prospects and convergences. Many critics focus on

academic and culture-focused works, while others advocate for political and equitable social structures to engage fruitfully and critically. Others consider globalization and modernization processes to be more relevant. However, most ecocritics have sought to converge on one central idea – that environmental problems should be resolved by addressing broader issues of polarities such as wealth and poverty, underdevelopment/over consumption, colonial and postcolonial power relations and modern-day conflicts in terms of economic globalization that involve central environmental questions such as land rights/possession, energy problems, extraction and depletion of natural resources, pollution, agricultural production, exposure to risk and local versus global forms of consumption (251). Based on these core issues prevalent in postcolonial nations and communities, postcolonial critics argue that this interlacing of anxieties of environmental conservation and social justice has led scholars to explain "a productive overlap" and recommend prospects for an enriching alliance between the two critical and theoretical models (Haggan 701). However, with the rise of postcolonial theory, works in various literary genres were included in the critical initiative of the sociopolitical geography to counter the discourse on colonialism. Critics and scholars such as Edward Said (1977,1993), Gayatri Spivak (1983, 2007) and Homi Bhabha (1995) significantly marked the field with their concepts and theories.

Recent studies on this intertwining and convergence between ecocriticism and postcolonial, as Heise and other postcolonial critics have pointed out, seeks to reorient this new concept by merging different critical perspectives into a productive and meaningful dialogue. On similar grounds, Rob Nixon in his essay "Pipe Dreams"[14] on Ken Saro-Wiwa and environmental justice, joins the efforts of Joni Adamson, Mei Evans and Racheal Steins in their works on this topic in *Environmental Justice Reader*, a collection of works that develops the fundamental questions that are deeply entrenched in convergences on conflicts over larger matters of uneven development, social inequality and environmental degradation that Heise claims "shape the aspiration toward 'postcolonialism' or 'green postcolonialism'" (252).

The previous studies on ecocriticism have primarily focused on a connection and bondage with the place, bioregionalism, agrarian settings and the portrayal of nature, as the first wave of ecocritical theory has emphasized. Postcolonial critics, however, have focused more on issues of displacement and migration (O'Brien 143). Correspondingly, as ecocriticism focuses more on nationalist projects, postcolonialists prefer to locate their works in cosmopolitan and transnational

networks of connection (Nixon 235). The significant divergences between the two theoretical models of ecocriticism and postcolonialism have been documented in various anthologies; for instance, Patrick D. Murphy analyses Neruda's *Canto General* (1981) by contextualizing the work within indigenous cultures that were disrupted with the advent of colonialism and how they deal with sustainability. Similarly, Caskey Russell documents critical controversies surrounding Native American tribes and whale hunting and Laura Wright provides a re-reading of *The Bond People* (2005), a novel written by New Zealand novelist Keri Hulme (Heise, "Postcolonial Ecocriticsm" 253). The multiple reflections of the confluence between ecocriticism and postcolonialism highlight that both theoretical trajectories have witnessed various stages of critiquing, theorization, and counter-critiquing that significantly modified the primary attitudes in some scenarios. The various debates around ecocriticism and postcolonial theories have ultimately led to the inclusion of numerous ecological, political and cultural forms of resistance. European colonization in Asia and Africa; indigenous relationships in Australia and the subcontinent after the departure of the colonizers; the use of genetically modified vegetation in American agriculture and the Bhopal incident in India are some significant phenomena that over time transformed this new theoretical paradigm called postcolonial ecocriticism (Roos and Hunt).[15]

2.2.4 Aesthetic Value

To extend this argument further, several studies on postcolonial ecocriticism have also led to a significant question on the aesthetic value of these literary texts.[16] Aesthetics has played a central role in the composition of both colonial and anti-colonial thought, which requires a thorough understanding (Su 67).[17] Postcolonial studies have been initiating efforts to challenge the universalizing predispositions of modern Enlightenment European thought and, subsequently, it benefited from a more grounded investigation of the refusal to reduce postcolonial thought to a unified singular category that has been at the core of modern Eurocentric aesthetic discourses. However, in terms of aesthetic value, this would differentiate a postcolonial text from the western aesthetic model. Pablo Mukherjee provides a nuanced reading strategy for a postcolonial environmental text. Mukherjee posited that one must also pay attention to the style and forms of the postcolonial texts along with their content and themes. He considered focusing on attempts such as determining the significant topographies in a postcolonial text that can lend meaning to the resistive nature of narrative if the form of the text is itself a western import. Mukherjee

establishes and resolves this dimension via his innovative reading of *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy, *Dead Air* by Indra Sinha and *Blood on My Water* by Ruchir Joshi in *Postcolonial Environments* published in 2010. By focusing on Roy's idiosyncratic narrative style and expression, Mukherjee relates her work with what Rama Chandra Guha and Martinez-Alier have established as the "environmentalism of the poor". Through a detailed examination of the text, he explores how the "novel itself is a register of the environment of uneven historical development specific to postcolonial India" (82), thereby establishing that for the reader to participate thoroughly with this novelistic expression, it is imperative to link it with the "environmental-historical aesthetic" that Mukherjee theorizes as "eco-materialism" (82). Moreover, the way Roy strives to explicate the material conditions of "uneven development" into a "transnational literary language" cannot be described by a "simple recourse to mimesis" (Heise 255). This discussion leads one to reflect as to what makes this peculiar trait of postcolonial discourse to be what Mukherjee terms as uneven in style, which I shall briefly highlight in the discussion that follows so that it can be related and applied to postcolonial Pakistani fiction in general.

2.2.5 Style

Pablo Mukherjee defines the concept of *uneven style* as a defining characteristic of the postcolonial South Asian novel. His analysis is grounded in Indian novels and is applicable to all South Asian novels. He argues that postcolonial novels, for instance the novels of Gosh, Roy and Sinha among so many others:

> are deeply considered artistic responses to the historically specific condition of uneven development in India, a condition that cannot be understood as long as we understand the environment as a separate category to those of history and culture.(84)

In this context, several Indian novels such as those mentioned above demand that an application of the eco-materialist perspective should be considered when reading such texts that tend to view environment, culture and history intertwined and interdependent (84). Mukherjee examines Roy's use of "stylistic unevenness" and the "omniscient third-person narrator" by quoting Prasad (2004). He explains that such a narrator is:

> possessed of his/her own consciousness which gives shape to the linguistic expression and unconventional words and phrases, syntax and structure [….]. As a result, we have broken sentences, illogical statements, unrestricted sprinkling of italics, bizarre phrases, ungrammatical constructions, unconventional rhythm. (qtd. in Mukherjee 84)

For example, Mukherjee provides this phrase from *The God of Small Things* that explain the fast-rhythmic movements of the Orange Lemon drink Man's hand: *Fast faster fest*, *Never let it rest*, *Until the fast is faster*, *And the faster's fest* (103, qtd. in Mukherjee).

The unusual use of vocabulary, poetic style and italics demonstrates Roy's uneven style. Through such examples, Mukherjee directs the readers' attention towards an irregular style of writing in Indian postcolonial literature that represents a local, "vernacular culture without any effect of exoticism or estrangement" (85). Despite this unevenness, Roy has addressed more significant cultural, historical, intellectual and political scenarios that have gained immense significance in the current historical moment (85). Additionally, novelists such as Roy attempt to locate hegemonic historical narratives as a part and parcel of the governing body/state and situate counter-discourses as a form of resistance against the invisible power politics affecting the lives and stories of many poor communities who are at the margins of caste, class, creed, gender and children and all those who are "denied economic agency" (86). Mukherjee, in his article "Arundhati Roy's *God of Small Things"*, suggests that "the political unconscious should now be replaced by an environmental unconscious" that he claims is present in post-colonial texts (Roos and Hunt 10).

Similarly, *Hungry Tide* by Amitav Ghosh that is set in the Sundarbans in West Bengal in eastern India, calls to attention the regions' incessant poverty, economic impoverishment, the deplorable states of the human and non-human environments and governmental oppression and neglect that brings to the reader's attention various political factors working insidiously in the narrative. The novel is an ideal blend of ecocriticism and postcolonialism and underscores the impacts of western imperialistic hegemony reflected through the postcolonial ruling elite who are complicit in bringing about environmental and human devastation (Mukherjee 108). The novel employs mimetic techniques such as a "meta-textual commentary on the form of his postcolonial novel itself " (ibid 121). Similar to Roy, Ghosh is also profoundly concerned with the issue of exposing the neocolonial ruling elite and their complicity in damaging human and non-human

lives. Like Roy, he also employs the local cultural forms that are non-conformant with the standard rules of novel writing. It is these stylistic features or what Mukherjee terms "improprieties" (120) that enable the postcolonial novel to represent and embody its unique and distinctive historical environment, a specific feature that Mukherjee postulates is the postcolonial environment and "the signal mark of which is radical unevenness" (16).

Pakistan being a part of larger South Asian region, similarly, has its own distinctive features and topographies in written discourse. Mukherjee's theory which only focuses on Indian novel creates a gap that this study can fulfil by reading Pakistani fiction and its specific topographies as a unique and distinct form of resistance towards the Eurocentric dominant discourse. Therefore, rationalizing the relationship between cultural imperialism and the ecology of the host country leads the discussion to postcolonial Pakistani fiction in English, its critique of environmental exploitation and presentation of the environment as a historical progression of asymmetrical development and neoliberalism compounded by capitalism. A review of Pakistani fiction with environmental representation will highlight how social life evolves as opposed to the same in a submissive natural world and is significant for the present study.

2.3 Pakistani Fiction in English

Raja Masood in his article "The Pakistani English Novel: The Burden of Representation and the Horizon of Expectation" (2018) claims that the "Pakistani novel in English has finally come of age and has garnered its space within and without Pakistan" (2). Masood's observation is compounded by Claire Chambers (2011), who observes that contemporary anglophone Pakistani writers have constructed their identity and public persona with their own separate cultural identities (125). Even though the majority of early Pakistani writers have generally dealt with political, social and partition literature, there is a shift in the thematic dimension that is broad as well as probing.

Scholar and ecocritic Scot Slovic observes in *Ecocriticism of the Global South* (2016) that contemporary Pakistani discourse reflects "the ubiquitous concerns about environmental degradation and coming to terms with the reality of urban existence that are evident throughout world literature" (5). Ahmad and Karrar (2015) have also critiqued that Pakistan's rising population, demographic crisis, increasing poverty and its impact on nature and environment are mostly a result of local and transnational shifting interests of globalisation and capitalism that are

"busy transforming once predominantly agrarian-societies into urbanised repositories of surplus humanity" (59). The observation on the changing dynamics on the environment is a conspicuous ecological turn in Pakistani literature. This relationship between environment and culture in literary studies contributes in significant ways, which undoubtedly involves the use of language in creating specific effects. Furthermore, in a postcolonial context, language is an original site for struggle. Ashcroft et al. (1995) assert reality can be instituted through language; it provides the metaphors through which the materiality of the world can be known.

Similarly, observations offered by Hashmi on Pakistani postcolonial fiction claim that the content and form of the Pakistani novel has been empowered by specific linguistic and stylistic features that have advanced not only into an "indigenized Pakistani language" (48) but also turned their formal peculiarities and stylistic method of writing as sources of insight into political culture what Mukherjee calls "uneven development" (14). This type of unevenness is a characteristic feature of postcolonial nations that are a part of entwined global histories that are entrenched in the vicious claws of global capital. Mukherjee notes in the context of South Asian postcolonial geographies that:

> If imperialism is a stage of monopoly-finance capital that has divided up the world, then what we have been calling 'postcolonial' becomes the name of an even more intense form of imperialism where the globalized, cartelized, ruling classes continue an indirect control of the colonies through local intermediaries and compradors. 'Postcolonial environments' then describe the entire network of human and non-human material existence that is marked by the particular dynamics of historical capital at a specific stage and location. This being so, let us turn to the question of the relationship between this uneven postcolonial environment and its literary and non-literary cultures. (15)

Extending Mukherjee's postulation of this unevenness, the following review of various sources offers insight into environmental representation in Pakistani narratives that have roots in the imperial, historical and globalized conditions peculiar to this geographical zone. Rob Nixon recently adopted the rubric from Guha and Martinez-Alier's "environmentalism of the poor" and argued that the conditions of eco-social degradation in nearly all developing nations have a distinct environmental ethos and epistemology that is linked with the experiences of people in the

developing world. Both Mukherjee and Nixon have provided relevant analytical tools and lenses to locate ecocriticism in a postcolonial context, through which Pakistani environmental problems can be related. The thematic dimension of Pakistani novels is strongly tied to the localized version of Pakistani English. Ashcroft et al. (2002) observe that postcolonial writers adopt strategies of appropriation such as glossing, untranslated words, interlanguages and code-switching (60). These strategies are also evident in the works of prominent writers such as Mohsin Hamid, Aslam Khan, Hanif Qureshi, Muneeza Shamsie. These writers who are a part of the Pakistani diaspora switch between settings abroad and domestic and thus provide their works a broader multi-lingual and transnational anglophone framework to draw upon (Cilano 185). Huggan extrapolates in *The Neocolonialism of Postcolonialism* that:

> Indigenization- of the English language, and as an inducement to the study of other, non-European languages; as an index of continuing resistance to (global) cultural imperialism, a resistance that can also be played out in primarily 'textual' terms; and as a reminder, above all, that the work of cultural decolonization is far from over, that it represents an ongoing process of historical, but also mental, labour. The tribunal is out, apparently, on postcolonial studies, but the literatures are alive and kicking -against the neocolonial times. (19-24)

Utilizing these narrative strategies, several Pakistani writers have expressed a similar vision of a complex web of rapidly altering landscapes since they have structured their narratives to capture the representations of Pakistani society and its disrupting ecology with reference to some of the most pressing environmental issues. The following review tracks this.

2.3.1 Environmental Violence

William Cronin's impactful argument in "The Trouble with Wilderness" (1996) that "the flight from history that is very nearly the core of wilderness represents the false hope of an escape from responsibility, the illusion that we can somehow wipe clean the slate of our past and return to the tabula rasa that supposedly existed before we began to leave our marks on the world" (80) captures an impulse that still persists in Pakistani environmental degradation issues, especially the type that Uzma Aslam Khan foregrounded in her novel *Thinner than Skin*. The environmental distraught in the text is compounded by the unremitting poverty of the native Gujjar tribes;

furthermore, the hypnotic beauty of the Karakorum and Himalayan mountains is deliberately juxtaposed with the powerful militarization, religious war, transnational tourism and environmental degradation as well as government oppression and neglect.

Yaqoob writes in "Environmental Consciousness in Contemporary Pakistani Fiction" that similar to many postcolonial novels, *Thinner than Skin* merges imaginary and actual histories and geographies of the contemporary Pakistani landscape (259). The work seizes the opportunity to draw on Pakistan's vibrant, culturally diverse and magnificent landscapes that Khan describes as "vertical wilderness" in the Himalayan and Karakorum regions and metaphorically depicting a sense of environmentalism and a sense of place that intersect with external threats that regularly thwart the local landscape and its ecosystem. By doing so, Khan raises important questions regarding the forest environment, the fate of indigenous nomadic people and issues related to the conservation of wildlife and nature in the background of neoliberalism and militarism. The novel emerges as a cultural analysis of ecological consciousness and builds a bridge between fiction, environmentalism and a vision of Pakistani ecocriticism. Writers such as Khan, therefore, develop a discourse of resistance through fiction to expose and highlight the underlying economic, military and political reasons contributing to ecological degradation in Pakistan. As any serious environmentalist would do, Khan views nature through the lens of a culture that is entrenched in forces of neoliberal development, environmental injustice, as well as military conflicts – what Deckard (2015) terms as "a military zone" – transforming its organic system into "militarized waste-scapes" (35). Looking at *Thinner than Skin*, the impact of militant conflicts can be observed lurking throughout the novel since the indigenous Gujjar residents are thwarted, terrified and displaced because of an ongoing violent holy war in the Northern areas of Pakistan.

Khan also vehemently critiques the government and corporate sectors for supporting the upper or middle classes while intensifying anguish in communities that are impoverished and marginalized. For example, in the novel, she shows a gradual increase in the rate of deforestation in the valleys of the north primarily due to the cutting down of trees by the timber mafia and corrupt forest officers' complicity in perpetuating the crime. It is also an insight into the lives of subaltern communities that cannot be ignored because they serve the affluent class domestically. These indigenous tribes also suffer since they are invaded, continuously looted and threatened

by the ruling bodies in the Northern areas who "tore down the old, old trees and poisoned the Gujjar dogs and fenced off the land and charged the moon for two stems of ginger and claimed a killer was hiding in their midst" (Khan, *Thinner* 195).

The native inhabitants are caught in the monopoly of a set of power relations – the sedentary locals/high ranking government officers who are responsible for environmental and social setbacks for the improvised indigenous tribes. Mariam's mother recognizes the problem, claiming:

> It was the Angrez who invented the whole business, the whole revenue generating forest policy that bound the herders forcing them to pay a grazing fee and tree-cutting fee. Before the Angrez, they had been free to graze and chop. And the sedentary folk had been friendly. (251)

There is a historical background for the abuse of forest resources and land, which has placed immense pressure on herdsmen who are falsely held accountable for their herds overgrazing in the alpine pastures. The legacy of the colonizer "*angrez"* consequently persists. The novel makes impeccable use of Himalayan forests' historical ability to expose the deep fissures scoring contemporary Pakistan. Furthermore, she identifies the problems faced by mountain pastoralists in Northern Pakistan. The author revisits indigenous and nomadic cultures of the Himalayas and reflects on the complex entanglement of grazing rights and concerns over vanishing forest and articulates the myriad connection between regional, local and historical levels of contemporary existence. She demystifies a geographical space known for its magnificent landscape, world's most massive glaciers, one of the highest mountain peaks, rivers and valleys and shows how it is under threat. Along with them, the indigenous Gujjars who migrated from the Central Asian Steppe thousands of years ago (Khan 233) and their centuries-old culture and the livestock on which they depend are at risk. The gradually "dying indigenous breeds" and "restrictions of grazing in a diminishing forest" (215) and "felled trees hidden in water wells" (216) that are degenerating the quality of forests and alpine pastures are crucial to underlining the fact of how their centuries-old local traditions, the local environment and the actual inhabitants who are closer to land and who rely on the forces of nature for their sustenance will be unable to survive if forces such as political-religious interventions, tourist intrusions and unchecked economic and capital expansion

unscrupulously continue. The environmental core issues highlighted by Khan exemplify what Trotsky terms as "uneven development" (21), which is the peculiarity of a culture that falls in the postcolonial zone and is marked by a population of disenfranchised people inhabiting politically subservient areas who are unable to check or speak against the injustice leveled against them.

likewise, Saba Perzadeh (2019) argues that Pakistani writers like Aslam Khan and Nadeem Aslam represent post partition era with insurgency movements and wars that use environmental objectification to validate their combative ideology and represent nature as passive region meant to be violently conquered (15). Numerous Pakistani novelists address this notion by delineating a comprehensive view of such a dystopic vision. Novelists such as Kamala Shamsi and Nadeem Aslam have foregrounded the concept of ecological risk prominently by portraying ecological transformations on various levels because of violent acts like war. However, it is predominantly the global dimension of this concept that characterises perceptions of risk society that has stimulated a more encouraging ecocritical discourse (Zapf 49).

Extending the notions on war technology and the risks that it generates, Kamila Shamsie in *Burnt Shadows* explicates risk foregrounding war ecology and the horrors of war through her characters who try to relive and give meaning to their lives. The way social processes and war transform the relationship between the living and the nonliving space in local ecosystems raises important questions regarding risk analysis. The nuclear threat described in *Burnt Shadows* in the historical context is tragic since it destroys the land, people and the environment; Liam O'Loughlin terms this as "disaster cosmopolitanism" (91). According to O'Loughlin, it is a disaster because it suggests a "sudden and violent rupture of everyday life" (90) and cosmopolitan because of its ideal aspirations for global citizenship. Wedged in between these two disparate concepts is the author's way of imagining how war is responsible for rupturing the organic life support of a culture and its communities and the bonds between the living and nonliving (Makhdoom, "Devaluing Nature"). The nuclear bombing of Nagasaki and the Afghan-Soviet war and their impact on humanity and the natural world dispel the romantic notion of retreat into a blissful world of pastoral and natural beauty. The metaphoric rupturing of the earth's belly is symbolic of "disgorged hell", permeating further into the disturbed ecology. Shamsie portrays how the conflict between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union despoiled the earth with the accompanying extensive deforestation and planting landmines and "cluster bombs" (235) everywhere. According to writers who theorise risks such as

Molly Wallace (2016) and Ulrich Beck (1996), such literary expression and textuality brings into focus a distorted, exploded and contaminated landscape and calls to our attention an image of an environment that is neither risk-free nor detoxified or pure in any sense. Such a vision underlines the complexity and uncertainty of risk scenarios in a modern world of unlimited technologies. To elucidate Heise's point, for example, the nuclear turmoil inscribed in *Burnt Shadows* not only mutilated human flesh but also ripped open the earth and "did nothing beautiful". Later, the juxtaposition of the pristine beauty of the subcontinent is deliberately paralleled with the bombing of Nagasaki, thus representing a contrasting vision of a demi-paradise versus hell, a dichotomous perception of planet earth. Thus, the imagery of a devastating world supplemented with a nuclear disaster is in contrast with Lovelock's holism, thereby challenging the utopian predictions of continued moral progress and materiality proposed by William Godwin (Gerrard 93). Instead, such imagery of ecological destruction coincides more with the apocalyptic version highlighted by Rachel Carson in *Silent Spring* and that is induced by modern technologies such as nuclear energy.

Previous studies on war and violence in South Asian countries (Afghanistan, Pakistan) and their impact on ecological degradation reveal that war results in significant amount of ecological vulnerability (Taylor 471). The war on terrorism in Afghanistan that was imposed by the United States introduced extensive environmental and infrastructural damage. Decline of safe and clean drinking water, deforestation, bacterial contamination and pollution of underground water by poorly constructed landfills are a few examples to mention (473). With a similar background, Perzadeh in *Violence, Militarism and the Environment in Contemporary South Asian Literature* (2019) observes that Nadeem Aslam in *The Wasted Vigil* has drawn attention to the multifarious ways through which the environment is damaged by war either in the name of war on terror or in the name of ethnic violence within the country (112). The ceaseless onslaught of war and violence permanently scarred the Afghan region and deferred biotic processes by erasing an entire ecosystem (156). These examples of textual representations on ecological devastation brought about by the external imperial and domestic ruling oligarchy are an illustration of what Nixon refers to as violent acts that are slow and incremental. Perzadeh, in her analysis of *The Wasted Vigil,* argues how the war and its technologies are responsible for intense ecological precarity. She shows how particular ecologies are more vulnerable than others because of them being a "collateral damage of war" (152). In the background of a war-torn Afghan landscape and environmental and human precarity, Perzadeh establishes how wars generate a kind of biotic paralysis caused by fear

and extreme wastefulness deployed by technological violence (153). Similar to Shamsie, Nadeem in *Wasted Vigil* uses tropes such as landmines to demonstrate the insidious working of war technologies that pose a threat to the biotic processes as it annihilates and obliterates an entire ecosystem. While war and violence are perceived as potential threats to ecological vulnerability, pollution and contamination are themes that have been taken up by many Pakistani writers and will be the subject of the following discussion.

2.3.2 Pollution: Water, Contamination and Waste

Pollution remains one of the most significant problems in Pakistan. Writers such as Mohsin Hamid and Anis Shivani have articulated how the issue of pollution has its roots in sociopolitical conditions in Pakistan such as rapid urbanisation, poor infrastructure and neoliberal capitalism. Most contemporary anglophone Pakistani writers have profoundly critiqued the urban configurations that perceptibly have serious impacts on the non-human forms of life and environments with which they interfere. Michael Kugelman observes in Pakistan's *Runaway Urbanization*, "Long a country defined by its countryside, Pakistan is taking on an increasingly urban complexion" (2). This spatial dimension in human experience and development has rendered the modern man and his technological culture isolated from nature. Nishter et al. have documented in their article "Pakistan's Urbanization Challenges: Health" that among many other challenges in urban Pakistani society, "Health impacts due to environmental degradation, overcrowding, and pollution are some more [*sic*] pronounced in urban areas" (114).

Similarly, Pakistani writers attempt to articulate problems and issues in urbanised Pakistani society and expose the trappings of urban lifestyles, population crisis, filth-ridden cities such as Karachi and Lahore, sporadic garbage collection, waste, vehicle emission, disease and crime to highlight manifestations of a kind of "violence that is neither spectacular nor instantaneous, but rather incremental and accretive, its calamitous repercussions playing out across a range of temporal scale" (Nixon 2). Anglophone Pakistani writers, such as Hamid, Khan and Shivani explore such environmental challenges under the consequences of capitalism and neoliberal development (Yaqoob 257, Perzadeh 201). The suffering of postcolonial ecologies and their vulnerability under the influence of such forces, thus raises the question of environmental pollution and toxicity.

To comprehend how pollution as a phenomenon of slow violence is represented in various texts, factors that are responsible for environmental pollution should also be examined; these factors include toxicity, rapid urbanisation, consumption and asymmetrical development. At the same time, the stylistic function of the novel and the specific features of a postcolonial novel must also be considered to understand the concept of environment vulnerabilities such as pollution. Considering Mohsin Hamid's novel *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* and the problem of pollution, the use of tropes is equally essential for considering the environmental dilemma. Employment of compounds words such as "filthy rich" and "rising Asia" from the initial sections invokes the idea of neoliberal and global capital in the novel. Being a postmodern text, the narrative technique highlights the unscrupulous "ambivalent subjectivity needed to succeed in the current regime of capital, which, in turn, makes the novel a trenchant and refreshing critique of the global division of labor" (Raja 8). Hamid's technique of presenting the narratee "You" shows him (the protagonist) as a pastoral character, perhaps in Pakistan (the author does not specify the place). Raja Masood argues that such a technique considers the book as being "not just about how to get rich in rising Asia, but a sort of manifesto for the most disenfranchised and the most exploited constituency in Pakistan" (9).

The explanation provided by Raja is significant because it highlights the concept of uneven development as a postcolonial technique to open opportunities for reflection on the literary cultures of postcolonial societies (15). Through such narrative practices, Hamid exposes the role of cultural elites and government agencies who run the country and their complicity in implementing environmental policies that are incongruent with contemporary living conditions. The diminishing role of governmental agencies in providing social justice to the public is manifested in Hamid's use of the water imagery in the novel. To grasp this dilemma the thematic significance of water in the novel needs to be established. Water is an essential pre-requisite of all life on earth. Hamid is troubled over water, perhaps because the social significance of water is a lived experience for many contemporary Pakistanis who must walk miles to get fresh drinking water for daily survival (Khoso and Ansari 35).

The water concern in the novel further raises fundamental questions about political, social and economic associations, motivating the readers to re-examine the entire network of their shared connections. In the same way, Sharae Deckard in "Water, Waste, land: Environment and Extractivism in South Asian Fiction" examines main strands of ecology in Hamid's novel showing how hydrological crisis and the urban ecology in Pakistan is a reflection of a dystopian vision of privatization and resource exhaustion (14). This appalling picture criticizes the over-extended hydraulic regimes on which urban water consumption rely, "draining resources from the rural hinterlands to supply urban elites, portraying a system of water distribution characterized by enclosure and asymmetry" (12). Hamid's narrative thus serves as an index, revealing how the water supply crisis is economically and politically controlled through its uneven distribution. Hence, he portrays a picture of a decaying landscape through water imagery and neglected water network system that is highly contaminated and is symptomatic of the lack of futuristic vision for environmental protection in a country where inadequacy of potable water is a very pertinent problem (Rahman et al. 339). Coupled with poor water delivery systems is the rise of a toxic, unhealthy and disease prone environment. The "city's neglected pipes are cracking"(98), the contamination of "underground water mains and sewers mingling, the taps" draws attention on threats to human health caused by pollution (*Filthy Rich 99*-100). Hamid alludes to the cause of sickness being drinking water that is left unchecked in cracked pipes.

Deckard further observes that these epidemiological images reflect urban ecology in a dire state of water crisis, which is expressed in the imagery that explains the cause of pollution in the novel. Even water in the villages is contaminated by initiatives such as "Green Revolution agriculture" and is "diverted for the consumption of elite urban consumers" only (14). The recurrent images and references to water; stagnant water, bottled water, water in cracked pipes, water contaminated with faeces is hence an oblique plea for potable water and all these images in the narrative contribute to making water a pervasive visual metaphor. Water, which otherwise is a symbol of life and fertility is transformed into a deadly "risk-scape" metaphor (Sarveswaran 114). Water contamination is one of the central anxieties of the story. As the novel transitions from the rural to urban sphere, the issue of scarce clean drinking water intensifies and is attributed to the over vaulting population that is result of constant migration from rural to urban areas in search of a better life. In the Pakistani scenario, the environment suffers from pollution that has roots in political and economic matters, thus complicating the relationship between nature and culture.

Michael Rubenstein's insightful analysis "Life Support: Energy, Environment and Infrastructure in the Novels of Mohsen Hamid" (2017) addresses issues such as social disparity, infrastructure, water supply, sanitation and waste disposal in Pakistan as a major concern for the authorities" failure to provide social justice to its people. Deckard also observes that in South Asian fiction symbolic economies of water, contamination and land mediate political questions around property rights, agronomy, urbanisation, and resource extractivism (14) which depicts not only the unevenness of resource distribution but a postcolonial technique of envisioning a narrative style of resistance to the plunder of ecology and lived experience (16).

Likewise, in Anis Shivani's *Karachi Raj,* the characters are alienated from the natural beauty or hygiene. Umaira et al. observe in "War on Terra and Eco-Critical Discursivity" that "the sanitation in *basti* is something unbelievable for the inhabitants living in the paved and planned housing societies" (342). The socially deprived areas in *Karachi Raj* not only represent the poor of Pakistani communities and their troubles but also offer a glimpse into the environmental chaos resulting from widespread government negligence, which is a result of:

> the unequal distribution of resources, including wealth, education, and health facilities; the misconceptions about the use of new technologies and doubts about the scientific findings; and ignorance, illiteracy, rigidity, sectarianism are the elements through which nature has been portrayed in the novel. The writer depicts nature regarding the deterioration of environment and exploitation as well as mismanagement of natural resources. (Umaira et al. 342)

Both Hamid and Shivani are sensitive to the workings of capitalism, and their works capture the growing sense of alienation between the two social structures in Pakistan. The crises of water pollution and falling infrastructure in these novels, especially in the more impoverished communities of the Pakistani metropolis expose the underlying poverty associated with uneven development defining postcolonial Pakistan. These are some of the insights on the existing literature on Pakistani ecocriticism and themes that contribute to highlighting human nature relationship. However, there are some limitations to the existing studies on the environmental representation in Pakistani fiction and are subsequently addressed below.

The critical views and analysis on environmental themes discussed by scholars who have contributed to voicing their opinion in defining Pakistani ecocriticism also leads to questions around the environment that are under-explored. Most of the Pakistani writers and the subsequent critiques on their works have highlighted and analysed the over whelming power of waste and squalor, bad infrastructure and violence in Pakistani environmental context. There are negligible views on attachment towards flora and fauna[18] which is an important area of critical studies in ecocriticsm. While Umaira et al. have emphasised on "unequal distribution of resources" in chalking out environmental contamination, they have overlooked the larger dimension of connecting Pakistan with its land and nonhuman environment. Rahman (2011) critiques Uzma Aslam Khan's environmental awareness in her article but neither does she, nor Perzadeh (2019) have mentioned the role of aesthetics as a postcolnial feature that may be used to explore the ecological dimensions in their works. Similarly, Yaqoob (2016) provides a detail survey of Pakistani environmental consciousnesss but the representation of nature in terms of artistic registers as Pakistani cultural and alternative postcolonial perception remains unexplored. Rose, et al, in "Women vs Androcentrism: An Ecofeminist Perspectives of Qaisra Shiraz's Novel *The Holy Women* have critiqued ecofeminism but the scholars have presented a limited vision on the attachment with the land or the ecosystem or the non-human environment in a postcolonial context. Postcolonial literature, especially the one that is written in the coloniser's language, requires a framework to interpret literature and cultures. Mukherjee (2010) contents that we need to think about shapes, forms as well as the contents of cultural texts that express and determine the certain relationship with their ecologies (59). Based on the readings that contemporary Pakistani fiction focuses on the material ecologies of maldevelopment then it also forms a necessary horizon for some "artistic registers" (163) that can be read as a form of resistance. If maldevelopment in Pakistan is shaped by former British colonialism and present neocolonialism, then the novels' various cultural expressions should be noted simultaneously. These artistic registers are expressed in the form of a cultural representation specific to a certain society; dance, classical music, folk music or for example the "bus decoration" (Khan 125) in *Trespassing* are also significant features to establish a link with environmental dimensions. For example, the vehicle painting/decoration in *Trespassing* does not only show the cultural art of Pakistan, it also shows Salamat's relationship with the environment. His dislocation from the sea enables him to take temporary refuge in the art which not only represents a certain environmental mood but through the use of Khan's aesthetic

tool like these, the story also comments on a social and political milieu of Sindh. The absence of critique on such aesthetic traffic limits the postcolonial discourse.The postcolonial text does find appropriation of dominant tools and technologies for the sake of self-representation (Ashcroft 6). The probing and examination of such stylistic techniques of Pakistani writers work can generate new dimension and an argument in postcolonial cultural production which would be a potential area to investigate in the future.

Another, feature that has received limited critical attention by Pakistani scholars is the translation of Urdu works and its connection with ecocriticism. Ecocricts and postcolonial theories as it has been discussed earlier are engaging the styles of "unevenness", silences and erasures and collaborations among ecological imaginations around the globe (Adamson, Mukherjee). It has also been reviewed how Anglophone Pakistani writers are engaging with the multifarious themes on environmental degradation. However, the ecocritical and environmental debates in Urdu language and translations of Pakistani works are scanty in terms of ecological theme and content. Bill Ascroft (1991) contents that in cross-cultural writing, through translation literature "something can also be gained" (17). With that focus, my argument in this review has been that a new and different space for examination under the rubric of ecocriticism and postcolonialism can be launched from the less travelled area of Urdu literature and translations studies in Pakistani literature. One also realises that through "translation poetics" and close reading of translated works of Pakistani writers, one might unearth many nature themes in the framework of postcolonial textuality (Ashcroft).

However, even though Pakistani literature is regionally and linguistically diverse, (Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Baluchi, Pushto common languages are spoken in Pakistan) one discovers a potentially quiet front in this area, which is evident through the number of publications, reviews, books and literature available on this subject. Renowned writer Shahid Hameed (translated *War and Peace* into Urdu) notes that "Translation, which is a tool of interaction between two nations, cultures and civilizations is not being given its due importance in our country".[19] Of course, there are many reasons regarding the status and infrastructure of translating, writing, production and consumption, the reason is also because of the lack or absence of official interest on the part of government bodies such as *The Pakistan Academy of Letters*. Not only that, Pakistani literature in English that has gathered international fame in the past recent years is also not available to a

readership in the Urdu language ("Lost in Translation"). Hence, while it is undeniable that there are some marvelous works of Pakistani writers that deal with the environment and human relationship, it is also true that their message is not being heard in the literary circles.

While anglophone writers have a focus on ecological themes to highlight the precarious condition as manifested in the examples, it also raises questions how other diasporic writers and works in National language Urdu have manifested this emerging environmental concern. This calls for the inclusion of such a body of literature to be reviewed to address environmentalism further and is reviewed in the following discussion.

The previous literature in this review has dealt with only Pakistani writers in the English language. Which leads us to significant questions such as the role and position of translated works, where do diasporic writers stand in eco-centric literature, especially when Pakistani Anglophone writers are writing in the colonizer's language itself ? Moreover, whether the critiques have ignored such writings? Could enquiries into these be potential areas of research? What is the role of Urdu literature in the existing and emerging field of ecocriticism? These questions pose a lacuna in the existing eco-literature and require attention. Considering that Urdu is the national language understood by the majority in Pakistan and is the embodiment of cultural transference, then it is vital to consider its role in environmental debates to underscore its relevance in Pakistani ecocriticism. Moreover, because as Jalal has pointed out:

> Urdu folklore has maintained stronger ties with the soil than the idiomatically more structured products of elite poetry…Folklore leans towards the celebration of collective activity…is an indication of how individuals relate to a social collectivity, locally and regionally based, without being overwhelmed with religious differentiations. (Jalal 16, qtd. in Deen 2)

While Jalal emphasizes the relevance and importance of Urdu in Folklore, Senior Advisor (SDPI), Ahmad Salim[20] remarked that in Pakistan:

> there is dearth of research material and environmental literature in Urdu, which is a reason that common man is indifferent to environmental issues and debates on the subject. (SDPI 4)

Considering the remarks by Ahmed Saleem, it is evident that more literature is required to raise environmental consciousness so that it can reach a larger audience. Furthermore, in translated works of Urdu by Francis Pritchett, Saadat Hussain Manto's name is of considerable relevance. Although the voices of Anglophone Pakistani writers do address environmental dismissions yet in the postcolonial context, the question of translation becomes significant, especially world literature, as David Damrosch (2003) expounds when he defines world literature as "intimately linked to translation" (212). Urdu Literature and translated works of Pakistani writers in that context can also contribute to raising environmental consciousness and should be considered as potential areas of future research.

To conclude, the reviews and discussion on the Pakistani environmental discourse and a closer look at various texts and debates reveal that contemporary postcolonial Pakistani writers illustrate several dimensions and shades of their society and its changing environmental dynamics. The writers have critiqued the shaping and reshaping of Pakistani culture and society under the influence of consumer capitalism, the impact of various types of risks that people confront in their daily lives. The review indicates that while Pakistani fiction has been critiqued from an environmental perspective yet the question of the use of language, and the stylistic variations and topographies have not been dealt with by critics as a form of a postcolonial resistance. Hence this leaves a gap in the previous study and enables the present study to intervene. However, the discussion on Pakistani writers' response towards ecology and environment is a significant undertaking because it is essential to recognize that Pakistani postcolonial environmental conditions are different from American materialism. I think that such a comparison would help bring out cultural specificities better. Moreover, by pitting the two discourse types against each other may help my study by contextualizing this information and might help enhance the cohesiveness of my subsections. Therefore, the following section presents a detailed review on Western discourse that reshaped American environmentalism with the subsequent rise of capitalism in the west.

2.4 Review on the main Debates in Western Environmentalism

While South Asian geographies are significantly influenced by specific former colonial policies and complicity of ruling elites in perpetuating environmental degradation, the western hemisphere contrarily has significant historical depth that inspired modern science and technology, and American materialism which has played an instrumental role in advancing detrimental ecological consequences. The essential argument that I want to develop in this chapter is how American environmentalism is different from South Asian environmentalism in terms of material realities grounded in historical philosophical thought and the changing dynamics of capitalism. Comprehensive overview of Euro-American environmental philosophy concerning the most prominent voices in the western Anglo-American ecological thought with counter arguments seeks to demonstrate how the two paradigms differ in conceptual representations. The focal point of this section is on how capitalistic consumption in American culture has led to environmental degradation and its demonstration in modern American fiction in English. Therefore, the following section will proceed how capitalism in the west impacted the environmental discourse.

2.4.1 Critique of Industrial Capitalism

Previous studies on American discourse show that it is not surprising that the transformative and metamorphic influence of early industrialization became evident towards the end of Romanticism in the eighteenth century and started manifesting in American fiction as a critique of modern capitalism (Hay 4). It was also the beginning of an "ecological impulse" that later spread and was articulated in expression (4). The connection between Romanticism and ecology have often been paired and recognized in the scholarship on Romanticism in the works of naturalists and ecologists. Recently, critics such as Jonathan Bate (*Romantic Ecology*), Karl Kroeber (*Ecological Literary Criticism*) and Kate Rigby (*Ecocriticsm*) have significantly contributed to the subject. Being the age of European expansion in terms of colonization and technological innovation, it eventually ushered in the industrial revolution that further led to well-formed capitalist economic systems towards the closure of the century (Cloudsley 335).

Robert Hay argues in *Main Currents in Western Environmental Thought* that Romanticism came into existence as a horrified reaction. Moreover, since Romanticism lacked a single transparent "philosophical core", it extended differently in different territories of the Western world (7). With the dawn of the industrial revolution, this period culminated in political, social and economic consequences in full force. In the English hemisphere, socialists such as John Ruskin and William Morris were positioned in the romantic tradition and so were the politically conformist lake poets (such as William Wordsworth and Samuel Coleridge). Romantic poets such as Wordsworth and Coleridge always juxtaposed civilization and nature, elevating the human spirit, locality and nation, asserting these fundamental values as the "moral basis of nationalism as in accord with nature" and intertwined nature worship with nationalism (Somerville 63, qtd. in Hay).

American Romanticism or transcendentalism, on the other hand, emerged in North America in the 1830s providing tremendous stimulus to the religious, cultural and intellectual life of New England. Ralph Waldo Emerson, as the exponent leader of this romantic philosophical thought, focused on higher Reason of intuitive thought. Opposed to the pragmatic and scientific rigor of the Enlightenment principles, Emerson believed that one could attain oneness with God through Reason. His Romanticism thus asserted a sovereign and supreme individual who is nearly godlike and claimed that the purpose of nature is to serve as a connecting medium between an individual and the higher spirit.[21] Emerson supported individualism, which is in contrast with the contemporary ecologically informed environmentalism (Hay 8). Henry David Thoreau followed Emerson, and his ecological sensibilities transformed American environmentalism in a newer direction.

The Enlightenment age in America evolved into a new system of ecologically informed environmentalism, which criticized the domination of anthropocentricism and was popularized by prominent writers and activists such as Thoreau, Leopold and Carson among many others. They challenged anthropocentrism, and in doing so, challenged capitalist attitudes towards the natural habitat and the environment. Anthropocentrism is the assumption that the human race is superior to all other forms of existence and life forms that exist in the world and manifests itself in the general prioritization of the human self-nurturing interest over ecological misuse for circulation of capital. Furthermore, the American ambition and desire for development and capital accumulation

manifested in the exploitation of the land and self-centered attitudes of humankind (Kuper 267) that had historical roots and date back to centuries-old philosophies on the nature-human relationship. At the beginning of the 14th century, with the first cannons that were shot in Europe, the ecology was immediately impacted, and thousands of laborers were sent to the mountains and forests for more Sulphur, potash, iron, metal and charcoal with unavoidable consequences of deforestation and erosion. In the middle ages, approximately 1285 metropolitan cities in England such as London were already facing a critical smog problem – an early form of air pollution resulting from coal burning. With the surge in population growth, the cancerous growth of irregular urbanism and the deposits of garbage and sewage, assuredly none other than the human species was responsible for fouling its nest in such short order (White 1204).

While the historical roots of anthropocentrism and capitalism cannot be drawn to a single origin, the concept is present in several significant texts and philosophical insights throughout human history. Notably, the concept of anthropocentrism can be traced in the passages of Genesis,[22] and in ancient western philosophical works such as Aristotle's *Poetics*[23] (350 B.C.E). Similarly, Gary Steiner describes the importance and implication of anthropocentrism in Western philosophical thought. Furthermore, Steiner observes in *Anthropocentrism and its Discontents* (2010) that western philosophy is dominated by the idea that humankind is higher in rank to all other forms of existence (38). He lists prominent thinkers and influential figures such as St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, Descartes and Kant as examples of scholars who have advocated the dominance of humans over nature. Later, Adam Smith's theory on the *Wealth of Nations* examined the ecology through an economic perspective with an anthropocentric filter and influenced Western thoughts to a significant extent (Kuper 6).

Correspondingly, the founding texts of Euro-American environmentalism such as the works of American pioneers for example Henry David Thoreau (1854), Aldo Leopold (1949) and Rachel Carson (1962) recognize and critique a similar egotism and self-interest that they claim encourages individuals to act for their benefit, irrespective of the cost on the environment. This is why Thoreau analyses commerce and industry in *Walden.* The discourse in *Walden* criticizes urban spaces such as towns and bigger cities bustling with steam engines, cutting through territories, deforming woods, bushes, meadows and timber as examples of how humankind raked nature of its intrinsic values and roots (Kuper). Nurtured by the works of the pastoral imagination in

Thoreau's *Walden* is the recognition of the ecological consequences that result from humanity's political, socioeconomic and cultural arrangements. Throughout *Walden*, Thoreau observes the interactions between humanity and its surrounding habitats. The observations in *Walden* disconcertingly correspond to Marx's representation of the environment and nature in a capitalist background:

> the subjection of nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalization of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground. (Marx 23, qtd. in Kuper)

Similarly, Thoreau's use of stylistic devices such as metaphors also underscored the oppressive nature of the market economy that had infused into American society at an accelerated pace. The industrial revolution in America, by this point in time, was already ensnared by the inherent inequity within capitalism and thereby intensified it. Henry Thoreau and like-minded transcendentalists resisted the status quo and responded. Through his observations and experiences at *Walden*, he contested anthropocentric motives and advocated for the preservation of nature (Buell). In doing so, he condemned extreme consumerism, disregard for wildlife and nature and consumer-oriented economic activities based principally on self-interest. His censure served as a condemnation of the core principles of the market economy. Thoreau held such an economy as a means of intense and substantial environmental squalor and a declining appreciation for the natural world among the population in America. While Thoreau critiqued American culture for its capitalist inclinations, Garber's examination led to a significant acknowledgment that supplemented the fact that Thoreau's *Walden* shared the postcolonial sentiments of his period in America. Frederick Garber (1977) observed in his article "Thoreau's Redemptive Imagination" that his discourse was immersed in the rhetoric of the Empire as well, which had an overbearing impact on Thoreau's immediate surroundings (Paryz 100). Similar to Henry Thoreau, Aldo Leopold's work is popular for their contemporary value and significance in American environmentalism. Leopold's book *A Sand Country Almanac* published in 1949 and Arne Naess' (1973) subsequent conceptualization of deep ecology as a philosophy and an environmental movement advocated for a shift in reversing conventional thinking about environment and nature. Naess, who was primarily influenced by Leopold, deduced some essential concepts from the North

American context propounded on by his predecessor and viewed them as a global phenomenon which were in essence "uniquely American" (Guha, "Radical." 314, Mukherjee 24). While Leopold in *Sand Country Almanac* (1949) argues that the community of all living organisms is essential for a healthy habitat, he also recognized the adverse impacts of a capitalistic economy on the habitat and claimed that extreme human interference into the natural world threatens the overall health of all lifeforms (Leopold 13–14). Contrary to Adam Smith's theory in *Wealth of Nations* of conceiving land as a "source of revenue and wealth" (540), Leopold offered an idea of a land ethics that encompasses margins of communities that includes all organic biotic forms such as water, soil, animals and plants collectively termed as the "land" (2). Leopold's notion of land ethics lays the foundation for a harmonious and balanced relationship between human and natural communities. His philosophy of keeping the market-oriented economy in place facilitates a consciousness that is ecologically aware, advocating for a balanced environment that is indispensable for humankind to act not as a subjugator but as a community member.

Postcolonial critic Mukherjee counter critiques Leopold and states that despite his radical views on nature conservation and arguments against rising capitalism in North America, the ecocritic carried a blend of contradictory attitudes towards nature (22). Leopold's idea on nature conservation echoed the vision of Sierra Club and the core philosophy of Earth Day. He focused on the harmonious and balanced nature that included all forms of biotic communities – plants, animals' insects – but never mentioned the men who worked on the fields he admired so much. He omitted the presence of men who toiled the farms and grew the corns. His admiration was selectively focused on crops…fields and he did not acknowledge the presence of these men and Leopold declares them as "hollow men of modernity colonized by the virus of the marketplace" (qtd in. Mukherjee 23). Leopold in *Sand Country Almanac* appeals for a wilderness that will perhaps serve as an instruction for those who may one day wish to see, feel or study the origins of cultural inheritance (188; 23). Considering these grey areas in Leopold's nature paradigm leads to the presumption that nature is an object that will be reserved only for glorification in poems and lyrics intertwined with sublimity and harmony. Mukherjee critiques Naess for applying Leopold's unilateral generalized criticism of industrial capitalism and growth as a condition that was representative of the entire world and that overlooked discrepant human conditions in different parts of the world (25). Mukherjee contents that:

> Leopold and Naess both start from a criticism of modern capitalism – that in Europe and north America its expansive drive had reached the stage where human existence was toxic for both humans and non-humans. Yet, the cures they suggest were to be applied in an undifferentiated manner to the whole world; this despite the fact, as Naess himself notes, that capital and modernity did not penetrate Asia, Africa and Latin America in the same way as it did north America and western Europe. Was the relationship between humans and the environment in these disparate areas of the world the same as that in North America and western Europe and to be cured by the same medicine? In short, can the condition of North America and Europe ever be used as shorthand for a global condition? (25)

As Mukherjee pointed out, this observation reflects a Eurocentric western imperialist model. Moreover, that nature could accommodate only the best or the solitary depicts a world that is selective. This is also contradictive because nature is also considered as something free from the threats present in human civilizations. Such a dichotomic vision embedded in deep ecology raises several fundamental questions. If according to the central tenants of deep ecology, everything in the biosphere is connected with everything else, then to what extent can we decipher an image of nature that is without humans? Second, how is it possible to visualize metropolitan urban landscapes that make much of modernity? Capitalism has predominantly rendered various biotic lifeforms (human and non-human both) vulnerable due to urban conformations. Therefore, the fundamental bias found in the environmentalism of deep ecology is the anti-urbanism that does not accommodate any discussion on issues such as these (Mukherjee 26). It was in response to such theoretical lacunas that American environmentalism took a new turn parallel to deep ecology that remained prominent in the 1960s. Leopold died in 1948, leaving behind his land ethic with the American public who kept its spirit alive throughout these years. However, it was not until the 1960s that environmentally inspired social and ethical philosophy started deviating at a mystifying pace and a new paradigm emerged with radical environmental criticism of capitalism and ecological contamination.

2.4.2 Technological Skepticism in American Environmental Thought

Contemporary American environmental movement returned after decades when the political spur in the 1960s and 70s suggested new threats in the form of pollution and population growth. However, the modern American movement met with discontinuation with the ideas of predecessors such as Leopold, Thoreau and Muir and instead of a unified development over time, it is generally traced to the publication of *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson in 1962. Although the central argument in *Silent Spring* was to address the destruction of wild and natural life forms, Carson also aimed at demonstrating the culpability of toxic pesticides and its impact on endangered habitats. Carson's critique of the American pesticide industry led to environmental policies to protect water and air and ultimately ensure the health and safety of humans and non-human environments. Her insightful reflections into the indiscriminate use of the poisonous chemical dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT) to control nature lay the foundation for a radical ecological criticism of capitalism (Foster and Clark 59-60; Empson).

In *Silent Spring*, Carson's disapproval of the use of the pesticide DDT challenges capitalist conceptions of the natural habitat. Her contention that the unregulated control of insecticides "have put poisonous and biologically potent chemicals indiscriminately into the hands of persons largely…ignorant of their potential harm" (Carson 15) illustrates the implications of dynamic shifts in ecological debates about the intensification of agricultural activities that create risks and hazards that cannot be easily repaired (Carson 14). Her informative debates on chemicals highlight how "modern ways of life have evolved" generating new ecological and health hazards (100) and thus providing North American environmentalism and the world a new dimension to reflect upon environmentally insensitive economic activities that complicate consequences of anthropocentric activities on the natural environment.

Along with Carson's critique of the unrestrained consumption of agricultural pesticides in the 1960s, the American environmental thought was further intensified with widespread social pessimism – an attitude that according to Leo Marx was grounded in technological disasters ("Technology" 237). From this moment onwards, modern American environmental movement gradually transitioned into a phase that foreshadowed apocalyptic fears and risks originating from technological disasters such as the Chernobyl nuclear disaster in Ukraine (1986) and the Three Mile Island accident (nuclear reactor meltdown) in Pennsylvania (1979). The American culture

saw a period of "technological pessimism" that Marx refers to as a sense of anxiety and threat that emerged with the development of machine technology (237). He contested that though the contemporary world is marked by technological innovations in science, medicine, aviation, engineering, nuclear energy and space exploration, yet the term "technology" attributes to widespread and immense gloom in the world that makes its implications paradoxical (238).

The most predictable answer, as it is evident, lies in the specific episodic events in the last several decades that witnessed a series of enormous disasters: the nuclear arms race, nuclear bombing of Hiroshima, American war in Vietnam, Chernobyl accident, Bhopal disaster in India, oil spills, global warming, acid rains and greenhouse effect that have eventually resulted in ozone depletion (Gamber 17). A close reflection on these phenomena reveals that each of these environmental concerns is closely intertwined with the use or misuse, malfunctions or unanticipated consequences or use of new and powerful technologies. It is the same fear and anxiety that has been expressed in novels such as *Underworld*, *White Noise* by Don DeLillo and *Gain* by Richard Powers.

Though, it can be observed that in privileged and industrialized geographical regions such as North America and the rest of the western world in general, technological progress in medicine has eliminated or controlled several diseases, enhanced the quality of life and reduced premature death rates. On the contrary, in several parts of the underdeveloped world, these very accomplishments have set off an alarming and devastating growth rate in the population with severe implications. Hence, the dual nature of technology may generate a grim perspective that may raise the question of whether this is a reflection of optimism or pessimism. To answer this conflicting dilemma, Leo Marx writes:

> The cultural modernism of the West in the early twentieth century was permeated by this technocratic spirit. A distinctive feature of the technocratic mentality is its seemingly boundless, unrestricted, expansive scope —its tendency to break through the presumed boundaries of the instrumental and to dominate any kind of practice.) The technocratic spirit was made manifest in the application of the principles of instrumental rationality, efficiency, order, and control to the behaviour of industrial workers. As set forth in the early twentieth century theories of Taylorism and Fordism, the standards of efficiency

> devised for the functioning of parts within machines were applied to the movements of workers in the large-scale factory system. (18)

Marx's analysis in the historical context of the progressive worldview, the transformation in the representation of technology from simple mechanical identifiable objects such as locomotives to scientific, intangible and ostensibly "neutral systems of production and control" revealed a significant shift in modern American environmental thought (237). Despite the various historical contexts, periods and ecological consciousness manifested in American environmental traditions, capitalistic conceptions of the natural world have been challenged. Today, writers such as Bill McKibben and Barbara Kingsolver continue to resonate the concepts of the American environmental visionaries Henry Thoreau, Aldo Leopold and Rachel Carson. With the addition of climate change research, debates over the environmentally insensitive economic activities of corporations and large-scale agriculture have reached new ground and are louder than ever before. With that also came an awareness of chemical contamination and modern American fiction, especially after the 1960s. The 1970s mirror an idea of what Deitering calls an "ontological transformation" ("Toxic Consciousness"197) of the human existence, especially with the publication of Carson's *Silent Spring*.

2.4.3 Toxic Consciousness in American Fiction

Deitering writes in her essay "The PostNatural Novel: Toxic Consciousness in Fiction of the 1980s" that contemporary American novels are littered with references to garbage and trash and signal a "fundamental shift in historical consciousness, a shift from a culture defined by its production to a postindustrial culture defined by its waste" (196). Deitering traces what she terms as "toxic consciousness" in the American novel and demonstrates how the fiction written in the 1980s underwent a fundamental change and witnessed a new phenomenon. She states:

> that the sites in which we dwelled-nature, our bodies, our homes-were becoming utterly changed as a result of environmental contamination . This phenomenon was intensified by new cultural attitude toward nature that placed it under the hegemony of culture. Consequently, our inherited conceptions of these dwelling sites became quickly obsolete, and our previous notions of nature, the body, and home were reconfigured. (*Waste Site* 4)

The novels of John Updike, Paule Marshall, John Gardner and Saul Bellow have been explored extensively by Deitering, who reviewed how their writings replicates the fundamental ontological shift that was readily experienced and expressed during the 1980s. Similarly, Deterring also places *White Noise* in the category of those works that in the last several decades have made the traditional wasteland a more prominent literary trope, especially in works that tend to point to multiple types of real waste – garbage, toxic substances, landfills, industrial waste, nuclear waste and henceforth that actually constitue a significant part of the contemporary "landscape" (196–203). However, in the 1990s, fiction writers such as Maria Veramontes, Richard Powers and Ozeki continued with various depictions of a diseased nature, human body and inhabitancy on environmental contamination and environmental injustice. Deitering demonstrates in *Waste Sites* that American fiction written during these periods suggests that environmental contamination received critical attention, "both in absolute terms and in the extent of disruption to American culture" (v).

Furthermore, the term "toxic consciousness" was used by Deitering for the first time for critiquing American dystopic fiction. She argued that the fiction of the 1980s reflects "our complicity in postindustrial ecosystems, both personal and national, which are predicated on pollution and waste". She argues:

> in so much as they provide representations of a post-natural world of a culture defined by its waste, and of a nation that has fouled its own nest, these novels do much to raise the environmental consciousness of the society that sees itself in the mirror. (197)

Novels such as Don DeLillo's *Underworld* (1997), Richard Powers' *Gains* (1998) *,* Toms Barbash's *The Last Good Chance* (2003)*,* Jonathan Franzen's *Strong Motion* (1992)*,* Steve Amick's *The Lake, the River, and the Other Lake* (2005) and Edward Abbey's *The Monkey Wrench Gang* (1985) are just few examples in American fiction that anticipate this toxic consciousness. This type of environmental perception encourages the focus on the detrimental effects of unbound technology and pollution. Correspondingly, Heise writes in her deeply informed essay "Toxins, Drugs and Global System" that in the field of ecocriticism, a significant amount of work established during the 1990s in American literary studies assumes that the physical and the natural worlds are endangered and that some human activities threaten nature and jeopardizes human health and life (748). She, however, focuses her argument on a risk that is aligned with exposure to chemical substances. She identifies American writers such as Richard Powers and Don DeLillo

as being engaged with risk theory and with the narrative problems posed by such engagements. Moreover, how the risk associated with chemical exposure and pollutants has become so all-encompassing also emerges from the work of historian Thomas Hughes, who analyses modern technology in depth. According to his arguments, what has transformed the modern society and the American society in particular is not so much the result of technologies and devices such as the telephone, electricity or the automobile "as [is] the creation of large-scale and extremely complex techno-economic system by means of which these devices are produced, distributed, and managed" (qtd. in Heise 759) but the technological hardware, according to him, is only a small part of such networks that include transportation, communications and information systems as well as institutions and people with their set of legal, organisational, social and economic structures. Hence, such large-scale systems and networks into which technologies are structured and rooted can no longer be easily controlled or understood, and therefore, generate risks and potential harms whose origin cannot be easily traced or managed (760).

This idea is not alien to contemporary American fiction; for example, such perceptions formulate the basis of Richard Powers' *Gains.* Hugh explains in one of his analysis citing the works of sociologist Charles Perrow, whose proposition of "system accidents" in the 1980s indicated how the technological apparatus and technological system are so complex that even experts are unable to understand their loops and connections, and, therefore, are unable to predict the latent dangers within. For example, nuclear technology is one such complex technology that is prone to system accidents. Perrow demonstrates this phenomenon by analysing in detail the Three Mile accident. Finally, according to him, technologically advanced systems that are vulnerable to such accidents put humanity and contemporary society at risk of the most unpredictable hazards.

Heise notes that sociologists such as Beck, Hughes and Perrow have analysed risk, which is a consequence of intricate social and technological systems. Keeping in view the concepts of this sociologist on the unpredictability of technology, *Gain* foregrounds aspects of risk and elaborates on the theme of chemical exposure in certain ways that are comparable to DeLillo's novel. *Gain*, as compared to *White Noise*, is more global and outlines nearly 150 years in the development of a multinational pharmaceutical company that manufactures everything ranging from cosmetics, detergents, pesticide drugs and fertilisers to synthetic material. In the novel, the concept of global networks and systems is significantly stronger and more complex as compared

to *White Noise* (Heise). Nevertheless, both the novels are presented with characters in different environments who are fraught with several risks of different types; Heise writes, "one of the challenges for the characters is to gain awareness of these riskscapes and find ways of living and dying within them" ("Toxic Bodies" 177). In both the novels, toxicity associated with chemicals becomes the most devastating and damaging type of risk and function as agents that help in eradicating the boundaries between body and environment, the private and public spheres and technologies that are beneficial as well as harmful (Heise 760). It is within the parameters of such territories and realms that the uncertain nature of risk perception and assessment play themselves out. Heise argues that as far as the narrative patterns are concerned and the manner in which the story is aesthetically developed, DeLillo's novel attracts the reader's attention more because of the way it translates these uncertainties into an uneasy satire. Powers' novel moves beyond the local and individual to a more global scenario, thereby:

> representing complex and global techno chemical systems a source of risk is one of the challenges that faces contemporary narrative, and no canonical form has yet emerged in response. It may well be that such a narrative architecture will have to rely on more experimental forms of storytelling, and perhaps even on the resources of new narrative media such as the multiple links of hypertext. What shape narrative innovation will take in the risk society is the uncertainty that literary critics face at the turn of the new millennium. (773)

On a similar note, Andermatt argues that human-caused environmental disasters have remained a recurrent theme in the American fiction of the 1980s. Denise Giardina depicts in her novel *Storming Heaven* the dangers of industry to human health. Contrary to Edward Abbeys' novel *Monkey Wrench Gang* that brings into picture the destruction of the Southwest desert, Denise's novel reveals the conflict between the coal mining industry and small-town landowners that is responsible for larger environmental problems. Andermatt digs deep into *Storming Heaven* and argues that the most common threat of contamination and pollution emerges in the form of destroyed landscapes because of the overcutting of trees and water pollution caused by the mines and opines that the coal mining industries' forceful occupation of land is responsible for the collapse of the communities living nearby (Andermatt 77-80).

The critiques and analysis of American novels written at the turn of the twentieth century and the period that followed indicates an increasing interest and concern with the pervasive problem of toxic waste, especially after the horrendous consequences of the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island.[24] The toxic consciousness that is a peculiar mark of the fiction of the 1980s, as Deterring demonstrates in "The PostNatural Novel" provides various representations of pollution and contamination and offers insight into the American culture's shifting relation to nature and to the environment at a time when the proximity of the environmental collapse was already in the public mind and imagination (196). According to Deitering, observations on the American culture's implicit complicity in the postindustrial ecosystem – both national and personal – are grounded on waste and pollution. She asserts that the period of the late twentieth century was a time when the American public started perceiving themselves as inhabitants of a culture defined by its waste and is subsequently reflected in the American novels written during this period (198).

A critique of the American eco-discourse that has framed writers' changing perceptions of the environment underscores how the American culture has transitioned from Thoreauvian nature writing to one that is Anthropocene and apocalyptic, thereby shaping a tradition that has a long history of environmental writing with its own distinctive historical, social and material conditions. However, as it is evident that although conservationist like Leopold and Naess both criticized the spread of modern capitalism especially in North America and Europe arguing that human existence has become toxic for both the humans well as the nonhuman environment. Yet, the remedies that the both conservationists suggested were only application in an undifferentiated manner to the entire world (Mukherjee 25). This differentiating pattern has origins within Naess's claim in itself, he admits that capital modernity did not invade other nations like Asia, Africa and Latin America in the manner it did in western Europe and north America. Thus, leads to another significant question: are the ecological conditions in these transgeographical locations of the world same as those in the North and whether these ecological problems were to be cured with the same medicine? In brief it led to the question whether the conditions in the Western world can be taken as representative of the entire world (25). Mukherjee asserts that in this context Anglo-American leading environmentalist and their philosophies present a "first-woldism" that is rooted in imperialist model and does not cater for the environmental problems in of the global South which need to be assessed from a different historical and political perspective.

2.5 Conclusion

In view of the previous literature, this chapter frames the development of the existing criticism on academic study in the American and Pakistani environmental consciousness. The chapter also draws on previous studies, revealing how British imperial policies and practices impacted the environment of the subcontinent and influenced postcolonial territories. In the backdrop of these crucial factors, the chapter discussed how Pakistani postcolonial ecocriticism explores the symbiotic relationship between ecology and the human and non-human environments in the works of writers such as Mohsin Hamid, Nadeem Aslam, Kamala Shamsie and Uzma Aslam Khan. The chapter also highlights how Euro-American environmentalism is different from postcolonial geographical territories such as the subcontinent. In Western environmental accounts at least, the wilderness idea is dominated by Euro-American nature writers and conservationists within the historical-cultural context of male-controlled colonialism and wilderness narrative and hence becomes symbolic of colonialism that has been an instrument for the exclusion and omission of people and their legacies from the land (Cronon 1996; Adams and Mulligan 2003). This erasure in western environmental discourse thus represents a conceptual problem. The chapter also discusses the role of capitalism in the American culture and its impacts on the environment that has been discussed with reference to American fiction in English. The literature review underscores and highlights how the two paradigms are conceptually and ideologically different, owing to the fact that they belong to different geographical zones with distinct ecological problems. The point of departure from earlier works is this work's justification of why the dominant American discourse and fiction that highlight the North American context of deep ecology and its criticism of industrial capitalism cannot be projected as universal to interpret the situation and dilemmas of the entire world. I contend that Pakistani fiction writers' works deserve attention in their prominent deviation from such Eurocentric and American ideologies. Postcolonial nations have a radically different environmentalism and should therefore be interpreted accordingly.

Although, the focus in this chapter was on various Pakistani and American environmental discourse, but the review is not meant to be an exhaustive definitive look at both types of paradigms. Rather, I examined and reviewed a few representative sources and texts in order to suggest that when we begin exploring the differences that shape various cultural and literary representations of environment, we reveal the challenge they present to traditional American environmentalism, culture, and unearth the rich ground they offer us in which to root new, more diverse conceptions of ecology and nature. On a final note, after a comprehensive review of secondary sources, I have acquired clarity how my work is situated within this study and is a point of departure from earlier works. The literature review provides more clarity about the selected theoretical framework and research methodology that is taken up in the next chapter.

NOTES

[1] Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin. "Green postcolonialism." (*Interventions*, 2007) 9.1:1-11. https://doi.org/10.1080/13698010601173783. Date Accessed: 5/20/2019.

[2] For example, such as environmental determinism, transcultural diffusionism, mapping and exploration.

[3] See, Edward Said. “imaginative Geography” N.p., Web. 17 Jun. 2019, also see, Edward Said. "Imaginative geography its representations: Orientalizing the oriental." *The Cultural Geography Reader*. Routledge, 2008. 369-376.

[4] Term borrowed from Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha. See for example "This Fissured Land: An Ecological History of India. Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha. Berkeley: (University of California Press, 1992.)

[5] Pallavi Das, “Colonialism and the Environment in India: Railways and Deforestation in 19th Century Punjab.” (*Journal of Asian and African Studies*:2011), vol 46,pp 38–53.

[6] Reports of the Committee of Secrecy appointed by the House of Commons of the British Parliament on the State of the East India Company – 7 December 1772 to 30 June 1773; The Economic History of India Under Early British Rule, (London: 1950) 23, 90. Web. 1st June 2019.

[7] In 1874, Charles Blair's recollections in "*Indian famines: Their historical, financial and other aspects* draw attention to a critical problem in Indian colonial history on famine and disasters that erupted because this devastating phenomenon. His chronicles point towards the forgotten chapter in Indian political history. Cited in Brahma Nand, “Nature and Causes of Famines in Colonial India” (2011)/ https://www.academia.edu/37240800/Nature.

[8] Neil Smith. *Uneven development: Nature, capital, and the production of space*. University of (Georgia Press, 2010). Web. 17 Jun. 2019 0. https://books.google.com.pk/books.

[9] For an in-depth study of how British colonial rule and causes of famine and undevelopable in India consider Brahma Nand, "Nature and Causes of Famines in Colonial India." (2011).

[10] See Mukherjee’s article in this book, *Arundhati Roy: Environment and Uneven Form.*

[11] See Sharae Deckard’s “Jungle Tide, Devouring Reef: (post)colonial Anxiety and Eco critique in Sri Lankan Literature (32).

[12] See, for example, *Rhetoric’s of Endangerment* (118).

[13] For example, the rise of China and India as rapidly advancing as economic powers; conflicts over transnational agriculture; Rise of environmental NGO’s and issue pertaining to global warming, are few examples. See article by Ursula Heise, “Postcolonial Ecocriticsm and the Question of Literature” (Virginia Press: 2010): 251.

[14] For a detailed study about social justice see Rob Nixon’s essay “Pipe dreams” in which he critiques the neo-colonial politics of mineral rights in Niger Delta. Moreover, it also criticizes the transnational companies like Shell and Chevron pipes that dumped poison into the land, water outlets, and bodies of Ogoni people of Nigeria. This example of social injustice led Saro-Wiwa Nigerian activist to take the life of protest. Rob Nixon writes that Saro-Wiwa saw himself as part of an old tradition he termed as the "recolonization" of “Ogoniland by the joint forces of the oil companies and the Abacha regime, which together had transformed the Niger delta into a Bermuda triangle for

human rights". Rob Nixon, "Pipe dreams: Ken Saro-Wiwa, environmental justice, and micro-minority rights." (*Black Renaissance* :1996): 39.

[15] For a more grounded and detailed explanation on the subject see, Roos, Bonnie, and Alex Hunt, eds. *Postcolonial green: Environmental politics and world narratives*. (University of Virginia Press, 2010).

[16] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guatari in *Towards a Minor Literature*, offer an understanding into the specificities of postcolonial radical texts through the literary experience of Franz Kafka: "a minor literature does not come from a minor language; it is rather that which a minority constructs within a major language" (16). Subsequently, this defined as a principle feature of postcolonial texts, what Kafka terms as linguistic "Deterritorialization" (16), where the employment of language stands as a critical variable. Their observations are supplemented by the reductive ideas presented by Fredrick Jameson about the literature of the third world countries. These notions have been challenged and debunked by many postcolonial scholars, for a detailed study see, "Francophone Moroccan Literature: From the Postcolonial Lens to an Aesthetics of the Text." (2013) written by Aicha, Ziyane.

[17] John Su, J. "Amitav Ghosh and the aesthetic turn in postcolonial studies." (*jml: Journal of Modern Literature* 2011): 65-86.

[18] Shazia Rahman has expressed this connection (Human /nature) in her article, "Karachi: Pakistani Eco-cosmopolitanism".

[19] See, article "Herald Exclusive: Lost in translation". https://www.dawn.com/news. (July 2011).

[20] "Environmental Literature in Urdu can be More Effective for Awareness". Tuesday, 28th SDPI. Aug 2012. https://www.sdpi.org/media/media_details766-press-2017.html.

[21] Among many Romantics, it was a notion that nature is a manifestation of God, and Emerson is a prominent example of this philosophical expression, 'Within these plantations of God', Emerson writes, 'the currents of universal beings circulate through me, I am part and parcel of God. (nd 311).

[22] This passage from genesis is generally quoted to trace the anthropocentric roots of western philosophy: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:26).

[23] Aristotle's script *On the Soul and Politics* usually advance anthropocentric ideals. He writes: "After the birth of animals, plants exist for their sake, and… the other animals exist for the sake of man, the tame for use and food, the wild, if not all, at least the greater part of them, for food, and for provision of clothing and various instruments. Now if nature makes nothing in vain, the interference must be that she has made all animals for the sake of man" (13).

[24] The Three Mile Island Unit 2 reactor, near Middletown, Pa, partially melted down on March 28, 1979. This has been reported as the most serious accident in the US commercial nuclear power plant operating in history. The accident caught everybody's attention all around the world. The American fiction writers particularly in 1980s started showing an increasing concern with the pervasive problem of nuclear waste, a concern which Cynthia Deitering terms as toxic consciousness in contemporary American fiction. For details see *The Ecocriticism Reader*. Ch. on Toxic Consciousness in Fiction of the 1980s.

CHAPTER III
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In view of the research questions formulated for this study, the following methodological and theoretical perspectives are adopted to examine the selected texts. In the present chapter, I explain these perspectives and argue that they provide a necessary analytical platform for both ecocritical and postcolonial theory, as well as offer appropriate analytical tools for the analysis and interpretation of the texts. The strategy and analytical framework selected are based on the geographical specificity of the texts, which in turn enabled a literary, historical, and theoretical focus. In this context, the methodology demanded a research approach and theoretical framework that would facilitate an ecocritical reading with a simultaneous focus on a postcolonial context. This would allow works of fiction that have a distinct historical, cultural, and political milieu to be analyzed.

Discourses are not stiff or immutable spaces but exist with permeable boundaries and borders. Therefore, it was equally essential that I account for what it means to be "postcolonial", which varies radically in dissimilar geographies. To contextualize this fundamental question with reference to Pakistani discourses, I utilized Pablo Mukherjee's postcolonial theoretical formulation as outlined in *Postcolonial Environments* (2010). Although it is difficult to adhere to essentialist philosophies in the context of Pakistani geographies and environmental discourse reflected in fiction, I utilized the postcolonial concepts promulgated by Rob Nixon to establish the role of power structures that are sensitive to cultural and political debates in the context of the environment. Furthermore, I utilize a bricolage of theoretical lenses (postcolonialism and ecocriticsm) in this study. I use ecocriticsm as an umbrella term to denote a conceptual framework for analyzing selected texts, thereby underscoring environmental concerns and the role of fiction in bringing about ecological awareness and consciousness. The rationale behind combining theoretical underpinnings from Buell's notions on "toxic discourse" and Heise's ecocosmopolitan study is to facilitate an ecocritical comprehensive understanding of the diversity and complexity

of the selected fictional texts, in a more local context as well as a planetary one. Furthermore, the paradigm offered in ecocosmoplitanism is helpful for understanding how other species and cultures are linked within the "imagined community" of planet Earth. Heise's argument, interwoven around ecocriticism and environmentalism on the one hand and globalization on the other, is insightful for examining nature and its connections with other living forms. Therefore, it provides a suitable "dynamic model of scalar simultaneity, a local global interpenetration applicable to other contexts" (DeShield 2). Toxic discourse and ecocosmoplitanism are relevant analytical platforms for understanding how Pakistani and American works of fiction endorse such environmental sensibilities. The purpose of this review is to highlight the diverse texts under study to carve out an appropriate methodology for their analysis and interpretation.

3.2 Theoretical Framework: Theories Relevant to Ecocritical Textual Analysis

3.2.1 Ecocriticsm: In *The Future of Environmental Criticism*, Lawrence Buell underscores that:

> Broadly defined, ecocriticism—which is also denoted to as "environmental criticism" and "green studies" in certain quarters—is an umbrella term [...] used to refer to the environmentally oriented study of literature and (less often) the arts more generally, and to the theories that underlie such critical practice. (138)

Buell's definition of the term "ecocriticism" set parameters for studying literature in the context of analyzing environmental representation in texts from different literary genres. In American literature, the environmental movement began as pastoral exploration and wilderness narratives, including major American writers such as Henry Thoreau, Aldo Leopold, Arnold Naess, and F. Scott Fitzgerald, and culminated in the first Earth Day in 1970. From then on, the concept of environmentalism became a crucial trope for examining ecological issues, revolving around what Leo Marx critiqued as being "the machine in the garden", a metaphor for technology, in disrupting the American pastoral myth. This time in American history, especially the 1960s and 70s, was characterized by the pervasive social and political unrest of the era. This raised a more permanent local and global concern and gave way to a method to check humanity's blind faith in progress and technology (Love 3).

Over the decades that followed the 1970s, studies on literary criticism shifted away from the New Criticism and conventional 'myths' and 'symbols' that dominated American Studies in the 1930s, such as R.W.B Lewis and many others. In *Practical Ecocriticsm*, Glen Love explains that literary debates and perspectives admittedly responded monumentally, calling attention to socially embedded conflicts within class, race, and gender; however, a dearth or lack of concern seemed to exist for literary expression that addressed the increasingly stressed natural and ecological systems in which these social dissensions were playing out (3-4). In response to this growing conflict in increasing environmental distress, literary studies found a new paradigm that emerged in the notion that literary works subscribed to human as well as nonhuman contexts, to culture as well as nature, and emerged as a new critical proponent during the 80s and 90s. The crucial lesion between culture and nature intensified with the recognition that the world's population was rapidly increasing (Erhrlich). This was catalyzed by the threat of nuclear war, increasing air and water pollution, toxic waste, species extinction, global warming, deforestation and urban sprawl are becoming global phenomenon. All of these factors contributed to a renewed interest in environmental issues.

These core developments led to various publications and studies, which gave rise to a new paradigm in literary criticism. From this starting point, the history of ecocriticism began with an ontological shift in the hermeneutics of ecology when it was first used by William Rueckert in his article *Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism* (1978). This article is generally considered the first phase of ecocriticism in North America with a focus on Anglo-American literature and "discursive" ecofeminism. However, thematic analyses exploring nature in literature actually began much earlier. David Mazel, in his account *A Century of Early Ecocriticism*, charted the history of ecocriticism as a harbinger through focusing on American and British publications and covering the period between 1864 and 1964. By analogy, ecocriticism negotiates with literature and the environment how man's interaction with his natural environment is reflected and represented in literature (Tosic 43). This was a unique combination with an obvious interdisciplinary blend, combining humanistic discipline with natural sciences. Because ecocriticism is not limited to any literary genre, its domain remains extremely broad. In academia, ecocriticsm is influenced by and an offshoot of the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment which began in the US and has now spread to other countries such as the United Kingdom and Japan. In Glotfelty's introduction to *The*

Ecocriticism Reader (1996), which is generally recognized as the first seminal and important anthology of American ecocriticism, she defines ecocriticism as follows:

> What then is ecocriticism? Simply put, ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from a gender conscious perspective, and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production and economic class to its reading of texts, ecocriticism takes an Earth-centered approach to literary studies. (xix)

In doing so, Glotfelty established a link between the natural world and human observer. Furthermore, she wrote that ecocriticism "takes as its subject the interconnections between nature and culture, specifically the cultural artefacts of language and literature" (xix). With "one foot in literature and the other on land", ecocriticism is the study of the "relationship between literature and the physical environment" (xviii) to understand our relationship with the physical natural world in an age of environmental destruction and apocalypse. Glotfelty identified three principles to consider text ecocritically, which are essential for analyzing a text from an ecological perspective through comparing its development with the developmental stages of feminist criticism (xxii-xxiv). These three principles are listed as follows:

1. Examining images of nature to raise consciousness by exposing and identifying stereotypes. This stage is concerned with representations and how images are portrayed in canonical literature. (xxii)

2. Exploring and recuperating discourses in genres of nature writing that manifest awareness. Examples are an extension of nature writing from Whites' *A Natural History of Selection* (1789) to North American writers such as Thoreau, Muir, Burrows Leopold, and Carson.

3. Developing theoretical frameworks to draw on a spectrum of theoretical paradigms to raise primary questions about the symbolic construction of species. Glotfelty provides the example of ecofeminism as being one of the new theoretical paradigms in ecocriticism, where the interconnection between the oppression of women is linked with the dominance of nature (xxiv).

Although these three principle markers are essential for analyzing and critiquing a text from an environmental perspective, they owe more to the ecological tradition of "deep ecology", in which culture and nature are discrete entities. In addition, in *The Ecocriticism Reader*, Glotfelty identified some significant questions that are generally asked when conducting an ecocritical study, such as "How is nature represented in this sonnet?", "How has the concept of wilderness changed over time?", and whether cross-fertilization between literary studies and environmentalist discourse is possible, especially in relation to other related disciplines such as philosophy, history, psychology, and ethics. Garrad indicated that such an analysis affirms a "political mode of analysis", as the comparison with Marxism and feminism suggest (*Ecocriticsm* 16). Ecocritics predominantly connect their cultural analysis distinctly to an environmentalist perspective that has a political and moral agenda (16). Furthermore, Raymond William's emphasis on the entanglement between culture and nature provides literary ecocriticsm with a social and ecological dimension. This paradigm in literary ecocultural criticism attempts to read culture in the light of an essential progression between history and environment. Starting with an exclusive focus on Romantic works and poems, nature writing, and wilderness narratives, ecocriticism broadened its horizon by paying attention to a wide range of cultural processes, as well as to complex negotiations between nature and culture. Perhaps the broadest definition of ecocriticism is the entanglement of the human and nonhuman worlds throughout the course of historical and cultural history, including the examination of the word "human" itself (Glotfelty xii). Therefore, utilizing ecocriticism as a mode of analysis, this study reflects environmental trends by providing space to both cultural and literary modes of ecocritical investigation. In this thesis, focusing on Pakistani and American literature and culture, I attempt to explore how literary critical tools can facilitate an ecocritical reading of texts. Recently, a connection was coalesced in this exciting ecocritical frame to foster new studies that understand the critical nexus between the environment and dynamics of place in a more planetary frame. This new critical concept takes ecocriticism from local to a more global level, and it is discussed in the following subsections.

3.2.2 Eco-cosmopolitanism

> The task of ecocriticism with a cosmopolitan perspective is to develop an understanding and critique of these mechanisms as they play themselves out in different cultural contexts so as to create a variety of ecological imaginations of the global. (Heise, *Sense* 62)

Ursula Heise, in a *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet* (2008), articulates the necessity of developing an inclusive relationship with "place" in an increasingly deterritorialized world. In theorizing this framework, she attempts to resolve the conflict between "an ethic of proximity" (33), what British sociologist Anthony Giddens terms "the dissociation of culture from place"[1] caused by globalization. Ecocosmoplitanism asserts that neither attachment to a place ("the local") nor a utopian view of the planet as a whole ("the global") will demonstrate how to ethically articulate and inhabit the theories of our place in the world. To reconcile this tension, the concept of cosmopolitanism was proposed by Heise to address the "the challenges deterritorialization poses for the environmental imagination" (10). The ecocosmopolitan paradigm accommodates the innumerable ways humans are situated within global, ecological, technological, economic, and social networks.

What is cosmopolitanism? The word itself comes from the Greek etymology *kosmos,* meaning world, and the prefix *polis*, meaning city. The concept is usually traced back to the pre-Socratic idea of a "world community of peace" (Brennan 4). Critics such as Timothy Brennan regard anti-imperial movements as the first to criticize the rhetoric of cosmopolitanism, the leaders of which considered it a "negative utopia" (4). However, around 1997, a "world community" conveyed the idea of the adoption of "American-ness" worldwide, substituting the term colonialism with globalization and maintaining similar disparities through "the reliance of the overdeveloped world on cheap labor, higher rates of exploitation, and extraction of raw materials" (Brannan 5). Similarly, at the start of the new millennium, David Harvey argued that "Cosmopolitanism is back" but with many "nuances and meanings as to negate its putative role as a unifying vision for democracy and governance in a globalized world"(529). By contrast, for Heise, the notion of cosmopolitanism is a global interconnectedness that reaches "towards the more than human world" (61).

Heise argues for eco-cosmopolitanism, which is derived from connections between ecocriticism and recent theories of transnational identity. In ecocriticsm, this new horizon has attempted to create a new hermeneutic zone, to an extent that Homi K. Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* terms "the new languages of theoretical critique" (30). This signified a trajectory in the direction of new conceptual and critical dimensions. Plurality and multiplicity in ecocriticism allow specific ideas to be revisited and rethought in environmental perspectives; one example is the formulation of the term "eco-cosmopolitanism". Heise argues for "the urgency of developing an ideal of eco-cosmopolitanism, or environmental world citizenship" arguing that it is "imperative to reorient current US environmentalist discourse, including ecocriticism toward a more nuanced understanding of how both local, cultural and ecological systems are imbricated in global ones" (Heise 59). The re-emergence of cosmopolitanism has taken root in literary spheres, embodying an alternative path and breaching an arch between identities such as ethnocentric nationalism and exclusive adherence to multiculturalism (210). The concept of eco-cosmopolitanism is situated in the very idea of cosmopolitanism, which originates from a focus on planet Earth rather than on a particular locality.

Many contemporary writers refer to cosmopolitanism as a vision suggesting global democracy and world citizenship, whereas to some writers it is a path towards new possibilities that could help shape new transnational frameworks, thereby generating social links. However, some groups have invoked cosmopolitanism as a type of post identity politics that tends to overlap interests to challenge traditional and predominant notions of identity, belonging, and citizenship. Some of the questions posed by the cosmopolitan outlook are whether we can live peacefully together as humans and what we share collectively. This was emphasized by Ulrich Beck; the growing awareness of ecological risks such as climate change and global warming might be fostering a sense of a globally shared collective future. Beck is hopeful, as are many others, that a cosmopolitan attitude will spread. He highlights that risks such as environmental degradation and toxic contamination have turned the entire world into a "community of fate" (Beck, *Cosmopolitan Vision* 13). Similarly, eco-cosmopolitanism provides a critical platform for analyzing the relationship between the imagination of "the global" and the ethical commitment to "the local" in environmentalist thought and writing. Drawing upon the constant and continual appearance of place-oriented discourse in the 1970s, which foregrounded land ethics, dwelling, and bioregionalism, Heise claims that environmentalist discourse in American culture has been

dominated by the essentialist rhetoric of place and a profound attachment to locale as a means of overcoming alienation from nature. One of the gaps created by an extra emphasis on locale, in terms of environmentalism, is that it fails to recognize the colossal role and dynamics that global networks political and cultural information can play in present-day society (*Sense* 34).

The dimension of "environmentally oriented cosmopolitanism" foregrounds how "a sense of political, economic, technological, social, cultural, and ecological network shapes daily routine" (1). It was initiated with the concept of globalization, which remained a prominent idea in the late 1990s as the fundamental concept around which theories and ideas of contemporary politics, culture, and society in the humanities and social sciences are structured (4). Because globalization is beginning to surpass the debates of poststructuralist critiques that gained popularity in the 1980s and 90s, such as those on essentialist nation-based identities, new paradigms instead have emerged. Theories of creolization, hybridity, migration, mestizaje, diaspora, borderland exile, and deterritorialization provided alternative models to nation-based identities, which were primarily essentialist. Towards the end of the 1990s in emerging debates on globalization, newer concepts such as critical transnationalism, and the renewed concept of cosmopolitanism began to gain critical consideration. The alternative critiques to globalization have underpinned the significance of regional local and "national identities as a form of resistance to some dimensions of globalization", causing a theoretical impasse to ensue (Heise, *Sense of Place* 5).

Similarly, historian Dipesh Chakrabarty observes that environmental issues are related to global relations (1-2). This may require debates around the present context of the Anthropocene to engage with both globalization and environmental concerns such as climate change. This is because when the global impact of climate change is experienced at a local level, the relationship between global and local becomes more complex. Furthermore, it could question the tension between global and local, which could open new templates for examining narratives from different cultures. According to Heise, the essential goals and concern of an ecocosmopolitan project should be as follows:

1. To reach beyond the "ethic of proximity" to investigate by what means and methods groups and individuals in specific cultural contexts have been successful at envisioning themselves in quite a similar concrete manner as being part of the global biosphere (62).

2. Eco-cosmopolitanism should not only be focused on the valuation of sensory perception and physical experience. Instead such an approach should bring the value of highly mediated and abstract knowledge into its sphere, which would lend greater support for understanding biospheric connectedness. For example, various types of computer images from different regions of the world have played a significant role in formulating the cultural imagination of world ecology. Such cultural traditions and templates that provide this vision of connectedness, for example, are more significant than "factual information of environmental issues" (63). For that reason, allegories, stories, and images about 'the global' should be considered through paying attention to traditions and cultural sources; thus, an innovative understanding of global ecology can be acquired. One of the best examples for explaining this phenomenon is John Klima's innovative work *Earth.* The striking feature of *Earth* is its ability to electronically display the entire planet as well as its minutest details. He claims that *Earth* is:

> a unique geo-spatial visualization system, culls real time data from the Internet and accurately positions it onto a three-dimensional model of the Earth. Viewers are able to travel from layer to layer by zooming in and retrieving image and data for specific regions. Networked 'Earth' repeats all the online reviews by positioning satellite and indicates a best guess as to where that viewer is in reality located on the planet. (Klima)

Metaphorically, such information, techniques, and formal structures can be used to investigate eco-cosmopolitanism. An ecocosmopolitan investigation should be able to trace the narrative and metaphorical templates in visual as well as rhetorical realms, thereby helping to shape the perception of global ecology. Heise provides examples of how Western Europe and American societies have negotiated connecting to the imagination of the nation and the local simultaneously. For example, in the novel *Stand on Zaniar* (1968), John Bruner focuses on how media technologies' transforming impacts can encounter various cultures, leading to an optimistic view of how humanity might be able to establish a global community. Other examples are David Brin's *Earth* and the poem *Overpopulation and Art* by John Cage, which present a cosmopolitan vision similar to *Stand on Zanzibar* by converting ideas into lyrical form and narrative templates .

They do this through combining elements of allegory, epic, and collage while describing different societies, relying on "ecological and informational networks for their subsistence" (Heise 71). They are only a small subcategory of a much bigger group of cultural strategies and tools, through which global systems have become much more easily conceivable, perceivable, and experienceable over the last four decades as an immensely complex set of environmental and ecological systems (74).

In the works of fiction of Khan and Smiley, eco-cosmopolitanism and related concepts prove beneficial for analyzing temporal and spatial relationships. Both writers recognize how profoundly interwoven local and global networks are. Like Smiley, although a relationship with locality has a primary place in Khan's novels, she recognizes that the local and global networks are operating simultaneously. Khan introduces new ways of dwelling in the local by envisioning our understanding of the global. For example, in *Trespassing,* she underscores relations between the human and nonhuman world in the framework of various types of nationalism and religious fundamentalism as well as the global economy (Rahman 261). As this aspect is discussed in detail in Chapter 5, I shall briefly underscore the relevance of this paradigm for interpretation by stating that Khan creates a Pakistani form of eco-cosmopolitanism through thinking beyond the local space, rooting her characters in the planet instead of other forms of national or religious identities(Rahman). Furthermore, Heise's reinvention of the term eco-cosmopolitanism intends to unite cosmopolitanism with an entanglement to an ecology of a certain place. She argues that it:

> reaches toward what some environmental writers and philosophers have called the 'more-than human world'—the realm of nonhuman species, but also that of connectedness with both animate and inanimate networks of influence and exchange. (61)

From a South Asian perspective, as Rahman argues, such a vison underscores the inhabitants' connection with topography and the land that was fissured during the partition of India and Pakistan ("Ecocosmopolitan Praxis" 189)[2]. When eco-cosmopolitanism is observed against the greater backdrop of partition, Rehman notes that it not only encompasses a connection with the nonhuman landscape but is also simultaneously connected to "the effects of global economy and global Islam on the lives of ordinary people and, more specifically, women" (189). Similarly, when writing about immense ecological challenges such as global risk as a result of bombing and militarism, Khan recognizes that what we face is a "truly transnational risk scenario" that "poses

a challenge for narrative and lyrical forms that have congenitally focused above all on individuals, families, or nations, since it requires the articulation of connections between events at vastly different scales" (Heise 205). Eco-cosmopolitanism thus revises how the spatial and temporal scale of the local and global intermingle, as well as the continuum between the present and future. This is particularly relevant for larger scenarios such as risk, which may compel us to rethink future possibilities. In light of these definitions, the concepts of eco-cosmopolitanism make it possible to use these perspectives to explore how Khan and Smiley reach beyond the "ethic of proximity" to create more global and cosmopolitan connections in their novel. Similarly, related to ecocriticsm and eco-cosmopolitanism is the idea of toxicity, which is relevant to the present study in terms of how toxic scenarios are defined in various cultural contexts; therefore, toxicity requires attention.

3.2.3 Toxic Discourse

To extrapolate how we can better shape and extend the ecocritical framework that incorporates toxic discourse as its foundation, recognizing toxic implications and their effects on the human body and environment is essential. Thus, engaging in what Buell terms "toxic discourse" is equally significant for keeping up with rampant ecological degradation and toxicity. Toxic discourse is relevant to the present study because it recognizes that nature as the physical environment that humans inhabit is not an entirely harmonious biotic economy but where nature has greatly been modified by technology (Buell, *Writing* 4). Therefore, this model helps to consider how contemporary American and Pakistani novels foreground the lived experiences of people in contemporary societies who are threatened by various types and forms of toxic risk scenarios.

Likewise, in her article *Toxins, Drugs, and Global Systems: Risk and Narrative in the Contemporary Novel*, Heise notes that immediate attention to risk theory and toxic discourse can be helpful for understanding the environmental contamination that is a recurrent theme in contemporary literature. Similarly, Cynthia Deitering, in her essay *The Post Natural Novel: Toxic Consciousness in Fiction of the 80s* published in *The Ecocriticism Reader,* suggested that the 1980s established a "toxic consciousness" in post natural novels. She contested that this toxic consciousness seeks to focus on serious environmental concerns; for example, the *Three Mile Island Catastrophe* and Green House Effect are of particular significance. Until the beginning of the twentieth century, toxicity remained an element of the strained relationship between nature and humans and was only partially recognized. Additionally, the issue of toxicity has been a crucial

element in ecocriticism; it has not been so much welcomed within the field as compared with the aesthetic values of nature per (Douglas and Wildavsky 221). These scholars argue that a need exists for ecocriticism to focus on growing environmental issues, especially in light of humanity's ability or inability to adjust and survive in a seriously contaminated and poisoned environment. Buell defines this as an "expressed anxiety arising from perceived threat of environmental hazard due to chemical modification by human agency" (*Writing* 31).

The threat of toxification has always been felt, not only since the Industrial Revolution but also since the ancient Greeks and Romans [3]. In the contemporary age, its urgency is felt worldwide after such terrifying episodes in history as Love Canal[4] ,Three Mile Island, Bhopal, and Chernobyl, Buell argues:

> This modern mantra lists both actual incidents and their subsequent history in the postindustrial imagination that have ensured that the environmental apocalypticism. triggered by Hiroshima and Nagasaki would outlast the cold war. Even the worlds privilege enclaves' manifest symptoms of what social theorist Ulrich beck has called 'the risk society': a condition of 'immiseration' characterized by a 'solidarity from anxiety, deriving from the inability- even with science's assistance-to calculate the lethal consequences of everyday life'. ("Toxic Discourse" 642)

As a result, among nonprivileged communities, toxic consciousness is awakened dramatically. In the wake of the Love Canal catastrophe in the U.S., a large-scale antitoxic campaign and movement were spurred. Initially on a small scale, this movement broadened to the creation of national networks with approximately 5000 community groups. According to Buell, this is a type of rhetoric that deals primarily with a special type of risk, mainly chemical contamination, which emerges mostly from the white bourgeois in movements such as environmental justice and middle-class environmentalism; furthermore, it predominantly focuses on minority, poor, and suburban populations. Similar to deep ecologist Bill McKibben in his book *The End of Nature*, Buell essentially calls out human history for exploiting the entire biosphere. Furthermore, he views polluting institutions such as American agriculture with respect to capitalism, which contributes to nature's decay and death. Buell's notion of toxic discourse is a special toxic rhetoric that he deals with by closely examining Racial Carson's *Silent Spring* in

relation to a variety of other texts beginning from the late Industrial Revolution to the present (29). Buell outlines the following four basic rhetorical devices or "topoi" in toxic discourse:

1. A disordered pastoral discourse, which he explains as a "mythography of betrayed Edens" that is usually escorted by a person's "awakening consciousness" to the way a primeval environment was polluted (37).
2. An overall image of a contaminated world nearly engulfed by toxins.
3. The ethics and passion of the poor and marginalized community against the elite and politically powerful.
4. Gothic elements that are usually observed in the dramatization of polluted landscapes and deformed bodies, especially in what he describes as a Virgilian tour of the "underground" carried out by the elite, is today a place transformed by the understanding that the underworld is a place inhabited by nearly everybody. This is a reference to sanitarian reformers' succession into the slum conditions of an unhealthy lifestyle. Buell demonstrates how the nineteenth-century rhetoric of the urban sanitarian movement resurfaced, with a twist in contemporary toxic discourse, especially the publics responses to becoming conscious of the dangerously contaminated environment in which they were raising their children (*Writing* 44).

Buell recognizes that the crisis in the modern world we face today can be traced back to the nineteenth-century writings of the elite, as well as to some remote literary resources about the blight of urban life ("Toxic Discourse" 646). He asserts that various dimensions of toxic discourse that may seem real have their roots in the strong traditions of cultural risk perceptions (647). This is exemplified by urban proliferation and growth in overcrowded cities and metropolises. Such traditions, in Buell's view, invoke pain and suffering steeped in unpleasant and threatening unhealthy conditions along with their social conflicts. These afflictions are experienced more in urban slum dwellings and their experiences rather than in rustic and rural experiences of depletion and scarcity. However, the shaping and filtering of information about risk by such rhetorical perceptions and traditions mean hypothesizing certain casual occurrences, making some situations credible and others less so, making some appear more hostile than others, and chalking out similar series of future events that are seen as equally crucial for both ecocritics and risk theorists (Buell).While articulating his notion on toxic discourse, Buell focuses on selected real-life cases

as well as references from literary texts. In most texts he analyses, the fear of chemical adulteration at a specific site is ever-present, a concept that is further linked at times with a paranoid vision of an entire planet infested with toxins that no one can escape or protect him or herself against. Buell traces an overall picture of toxic consciousness and unfolds the impacts by examining narratives on chemicals and toxins. Buell analyses Carson's *Silent Spring,* which focuses on toxic contamination, in relation to a variety of other texts from the time of the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century and onwards. These texts include George Marsh's *Man and Nature* (1864) as well as documents of European colonists, which provide first-hand experience implicitly mentioning the ecosystems threatened to date (*Writing* 39). According to Buell, this vision of pollution and widespread sporadic contamination on a global scale ceases to function as a counter model to the previously established environmental conceptualization of planet Earth as a complete and holistic Gaian-style system of balances and harmony:

> Toxic discourse calls for a way of imagining physical environments that fuses social constructivist with environmental restorationist perspectives…[T]he nature that toxic discourse recognizes as the physical environment humans inhabit is not a holistic spiritual or biotic economy but a network or networks within which, on the one hand, humans are biotically imbricated (like it not) by *techne.* (*Writing* 45, italics original)

Buell's observation suggests that the specific type of environmentalist discourse he theorizes as being toxic discourse opposes the basic pastoral vision of ecology, which is viewed fundamentally as balanced ecological systems and harmonious networks of nature capable of self-regulation. Such discourse presents a view of nature in opposition to the Wordsworthian longing for a return to a naturally harmonized world; however, it is informed by descriptions of deformed, polluted, and exploited landscapes and bodies as an imaginary counter model. Rather, such a vision entails a genre that pertains more to apocalyptic narratives than an alternative to Lovelockean holism, which continues to play a significant role in contemporary environmentalism from the 1960s onwards. Therefore, toxic discourse is relevant to the present study for underscoring how toxicity is defined in Pakistani and American cultural contexts. Although ecocriticsm and its related approaches provide a comprehensive ecocritical theoretical paradigm for investigating the relationship between texts and their representation of the physical environment in terms of

complex ideas such as toxic discourse and eco-cosmopolitanism, it is equally essential to ground ecocriticism in postcolonialism for an in-depth comparative analysis.

3.3 Contextualizing Postcolonialism

Critics and scholars have argued in favor of an interchange of interests between ecocriticsm and postcolonialism, a convergence constructed on the relevance of hegemony in comprehending the concept of place and specific global zones adopted by environmentalists (Huggan and Tiffin 19). Postcolonial theorists such as Upamannyu Pablo Mukherjee, Graham Huggan, and Hellen Tiffin argue that it is essential to pay attention to colonial legacies and how the presence of such a phenomenon can be offered by postcolonial discourse and provided to green studies (42). On a related note, ecologist Ramachandra Guha published an essay titled *Radical American Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third World Critique*, in which he developed an argument against adopting "deep ecology" as a universal or global stance and warned of the dangers inherent to such a biocentric view (Cilano and Deloughrey 72). His argument was based on an observation that ecological movements such as deep ecology, which foreground a biocentric perception and worldview, "[indicate] a lack of concern with *inequalities* within human society", and furthermore, how such realties are historically and socially produced (76). In the context of environmental movements in India, his analysis provides a unique vision, arguing that postcolonial and developing countries such as India, "with an ecological diversity comparable to the U.S., but with a radically dissimilar cultural and social history" (76), require a different lens for ecological analysis. His critique provides a basis for postcolonial ecocriticsm. Differentiating the environmental conditions of the U.S., and India as two examples from distant geographies, Guha argued in "A Third World Critique" that:

> Deep ecology is uniquely American, and despite superficial similarities in rhetorical style, the social and political goals of radical environmentalism in other cultural contexts (e.g., West Germany and India) are quite different; second, that the social consequences of putting deep ecology into practice on a worldwide basis (what its practitioners are aiming for) are very grave indeed. (76)

His insights into the differentiating ecological patterns in distinct geographies underscore an entrenched reality that resides in cultural and political considerations while simultaneously articulating different environments. Guha contends that the distinction between anthropocentrism and biocentrism is bolstered by the rhetorical synthesis of indigenous religious and Eastern traditions, especially in their intuit biocentrism, which is positioned as both affective and spiritual and counters the nihilistic temporal rationality of the West (74). That is why, Guha contends, deep ecologists base their methodologies on orientalist perceptions to rationalize their argument for the assumed universality of their position, which is unrelated to historical traditions (74). He asserts his stance through concluding his critique of deep ecology by stating that Western ecologists ought to think more critically about the impact and role of imperialism in understanding the environment. By doing so, he calls for new ways of understanding how capitalist consumption in the supposed "First" and "Third Worlds" might be assessed and reconfigured for human and ecological sustainability (Cilano and Deloughrey 72). Keeping the ontological differences between the environmentalism of these two worlds in sight, I considered the theoretical stance of three important postcolonial scholars, whose insights provide a framework that helps to interpret the environment in a postcolonial context while simultaneously being mindful of the ecocritical paradigm. These insights merit closer scrutiny and raise the question of a "green turn" in postcolonial criticism.

3.3.1 The Postcolonial "Ecological Turn"

> Postcolonial ecocritics Graham Huggan and Hellen Tiffin (2012) advocate that postcolonial literary theory with a green turn challenges "continuing imperialist modes of social and environmental dominance" (2) and yet, "preserves the aesthetic function of the literary text while drawing attention to its social and political usefulness, its capacity to set our symbolic guidelines for the material transformation of the world" (13).

Furthermore more, these theorist also observe that the new philosophical and methodological shift, generally known as the ecological turn in postcolonial criticism, has provided a materialist edge to this emerging field, which seeks to engage with issues related to the ecological crisis with a more global dimension (19). It may appear obvious that ecocriticsm and postcolonialism are caught in a web of contradictions. Postcolonialism is generally viewed as anthropocentric, concerned with issues of social justice, displacement, and hybridity. Ecocriticsm,

by contrast, is more biocentric, with a predominant focus on conservation and emphasizing the pristine beauty of nature and "belonging" (Huggan and Tiffin, qtd. in Nicholas 245). Ecocriticsm and deep ecology have been dominant in Anglo-American literature on nature preservation displacing millions of native people; however, postcolonial scholars argue that social and economic issues are of greater significance for human betterment and should be addressed first (245). In view of such challenges, Huggan and Tiffin signal pairing these two distant epistemologies. By including different writers' works from various parts of the globe, they attempt to enunciate the space between ecocriticsm and postcolonial studies (Cilano and Deloughrey; Huggan and Tiffin; Nixon). In their full-length book titled *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment* (2015), Huggan and Tiffin attempt to reach a global response to significant issues—nature, culture and humans, and social connections. Similarly, Mukherjee asserted in *Postcolonial Environments* that "eco" and postcolonial studies have attempted to discover means and methods of cross-fertilizing each other through dialogue, and only a powerful materialist articulation of their positions would enable this exchange between society and culture to be more meaningful (73).

Extrapolating the cohesion between these two fields, Huggan and Tiffin (2010) elucidate some significant issues in this paradigm and offer a postcolonial ecocritical "way of reading" a text (13) simultaneously. Blurring the boundaries between ecocritical and postcolonial models, they demonstrate how through mutual solidarity, these two paradigms together can challenge "continuing imperialist modes of social and environmental dominance" (2). This shift provided an ecological turn to postcolonial discourse with a focus that:

> rather than applying an ecocritical lens to postcolonial texts (or vice versa) – the authors present readings that are postcolonial and ecocritical at the same time. They interpret postcolonial texts, by authors such as Arundhati Roy, J. M. Coetzee, Jamaica Kincaid, Amitav Ghosh, and Zadie Smith, as equally important environmental works. (2, qtd. in Nicholas 24)

With a similar focus, **Pablo Mukherjee** grounds his argument around the concept of "**Eco-Materialism",** which "historizes nature and naturalizes history" (59) as well as formulates a framework that would enable the interpretation of literature and culture. Building on the scholarly works of Raymond Williams' *Ideas of Nature* and Sebastiano Timpanaro's *On Materialism*, Mukherjee locates a materialist philosophy that develops conceptual elements of what he terms "eco-materialist aesthetics" (63). Timpanaro, in his astute and discerning study *On Materialman* (1975), described materialism as an acceptance of the priority of nature over the "mind", "of the physical level over the biological level, and of the biological over the socio-economic and cultural level, with an understanding of conditioning which nature (always) exercise on man" (34, qtd. in Morris 33). Following Marx, Timpanaro argues that humans are characterized both as "biological" as well as "social beings" (*On Materialism* 10). Taking this postulation and Raymond William's theoretical cues (that modes of interaction link the environment and humans—a move that is dynamic and discriminated called labor) as a ground for conceptualizing postcolonial environments. Mukherjee contends that both ecocriticism and postcolonial criticism have engaged with the issue of mimesis, and their engagement with materialist thinking has been overwhelmingly powerful, thereby creating a dim conceptualization of the environment and culture as such. Considering this a shortcoming, Mukherjee suggests that both postcolonial and cultural ecocriticism should correct this inherent weakness, arguing for a synergetic revival of this frame of reference (60). Materialism as a philosophical stance is a derivative of Europe pre- and post-Enlightenment and has occupied an uneven present in both environmental (eco) and postcolonial paradigms. Through forging compliance between these two approaches, Mukherjee presents an argument developed from debates surrounding "culture, representation and textuality" with roots in cultural geography (60), thereby presenting an aesthetic tool for interpreting postcolonial and ecocritical criticisms together.

The aesthetics of eco-materialism begin with the discussion and debates of Williams and Timpanaro, which focused on the fundamental harmony of humankind and ecology, as well as history and nature, differentiated through labor of all types (Mukherjee 63). In this debate, humans and all nonhuman life forms are positioned on a homogenous but "differentiated evolutionary continuum" (64), formulating a perception of a "dynamic universe" in which all forces of matter, humans, animals, and nature beat with the same pulse. Marx and Engels, whose thoughts were embedded in their reflections on the mode of relationships between history (the human existence)

as well as the ecology of which these modes were an integral part, took materiality to another level (65). Marxist analysis of capitalism always captured the notions of labor and the environment that were at the heart of materialism, offering insights into how commodities that result from capitalism are always composed of both human and nonhuman elements (Marx, 43 qtd. in Mukherjee 66). Therefore, Marxist theories on capitalism harboured a strong conceptual presence of the environment. As Mukherjee observes, based on materialist and Enlightenment philosophical underpinnings, Marx and Engels stipulated an alternative path for interpreting the current state of capitalism, which is accountable for colossal environmental and economic disasters worldwide (67). This was the crucial aspect that was lacking in modern Western Euro-American philosophical and political thought, and this required reconciling.

Furthermore, postcolonial studies have welcomed some materialist premises such as "weak anthropocentrism", which finds its assumptions in the postcolonial efforts to decenter the (European) subject (ibid 68). However, what postcolonial theory lacks and must pay more attention to is the identification and positioning of:

> The new and interconnected global elites who have allied themselves to these allegedly (and in reality, very far from) vanquished transatlantic male rulers of the world; nor is there much attention paid to the relationship between the cultural labours of these new elites and those of the members of the rest of the stratified society that they dominate. Postcolonial theory has been notoriously shy of making any systemic interpretation of the very historical conditions it has claimed as its own interpretative zone. (68)

Such theoretical premises are required to bring postcolonial theory to a level where an entanglement of material realities with the environment can be forged to resist the global spread of ecological catastrophes. The material realities that Mukherjee explicates are further theorized in connection with cultural geography to tease out which elements are missing in postcolonial criticism and can be addressed further for fruitful postcolonial ecological criticism. Mukherjee argues that the larger concepts around land, space, place, and landscape have been emblems of ideological and material realities in cultural geography, occupying central debates in the field. These concepts enable and extend the discipline of cultural geography to promote a focus on the representation of matter, for presenting a vital aesthetic discussion on the idea of representation itself (70). It is this debate, argues Mukherjee, that is required by ecocritical and postcolonial

studies to further conceptual cues in the two fields. Therefore, through amalgamating language and matter, the traditional problem of representation (mimes) can also be transformed and resolved with the apparent distance between the performance of representation and what is represented (72). Notably, cultural geographers have paid special attention to the necessity of stipulating and differentiating the undesirable and generalized notions of "postcoloniality" and "environment", because "the contested character of environmental meaning is geographically nuanced". In addition, as a construct through global environmental rhetoric and agendas, the environment is differentiated locally (Eden, qtd in Mukherjee 72). Although postcolonial studies have utilized images related to space such as location, exile, and mobility, they have brushed aside the notion of "material geographies". To rectify this missing link, Allison Blunt proposes a challenge to the duality of the spatial and temporal realities of colonial and postcolonial realities, which she does by paying attention to the flow of capital and knowledge production that occurs between colonial and postcolonial spaces (73).

These are some of the internal debates within cultural geography and eco-materialism that can help both ecocritical and postcolonial studies foster more nuanced and balanced approaches towards postcolonial ecological criticism. Similarly, Rob Nixon's contribution to the field is immense because he makes environmentalism and ecocriticism more aware of imperialism (past and present), as well as of related global injustices. Through doing so, he moves to address a blind spot in postcolonial literary theory—**the importance of slow and incremental environmental violence** for conceptualizing how imperial relationships (especially in the modern world) have often shaped and continue to shape the world at large through oppression in various ways. This was termed "**slow violence**" by Nixon, a phenomenon that is slow and gradual in effect, and it is discussed in the following section to underscore its relevance to the present study.

3.3.2 Slow Violence

Regarding economic globalism and its impacts on human and nonhuman environments, in *Slow Violence and Environmentalism of the Poor* (2011), Rob Nixon provides another position for conveying environmental values, advocating that writers should also focus on dramatizing scenarios that resemble "slow violence", which humanity commits against ecology and the environment and may not be readily visible (4-5). Nixon argues that narratives should not only depict apocalyptic scenarios disrupting ecology but also narrate the **causes** of an erupted apocalypse, such as **free markets and capitalism under neoliberalism**, which work gradually and imperceptibly. Readers will then be surprised to perceive how the environment suffers because of "slow violence", which "occurs gradually and out of sight, it is the violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all" (Nixon 2). This kind of slow violence is attributed to a particular behavior that works overtime, as opposed to direct and fast violence (3).

Like Ramachandra Guha, Nixon perceives economic and cultural differences between environmentally oriented thought in the Global North and South. Other counter views exist. For example, Thornber perceives resemblances that foreground communities as a shared humanity. Where Nixon emphasizes a class divided by social differences, Thornber sees a world crisis shared by all humanity. Whatever the differences, critics and writers should suggest a way to be open to causes of the environmental crisis. Nixon argues that it is essential for writers to provide figurative shape to threats that are formless when devising stories and plots with threats that have fatal consequences. Similar to Edward Said, Nixon urges writers of fiction to dramatize such slow violence:

> Politically and emotionally, different kinds of disaster possess unequal heft. Falling bodies, burning towers, exploding heads, avalanches, volcanoes, and tsunamis have a visceral, eye-catching and page-turning power that tales of slow violence, unfolding over the years, decades, even centuries, cannot match. (*Slow Violence* 3)

Nixon provides an example of this type of discourse in *Animal's People* by Indra Sinha. The novel dramatizes a subtle type of slow violence against a backdrop of a catastrophic poisoning event that causes severe injuries to a town's population, resulting in the victim's slow death connected to the after-effects of the disaster. Sinha's approach is remarkable because she uses the aftermath of the most devastating gas leak catastrophe in India, Bhopal in 1984, and "throws into relief political violence" which is both close and distant unfolding temporally and spatially (Nixon 48). The novel not only depicts an environmental catastrophe but also brings into view the role of neoliberal globalization from the perspective of an impoverished social untouchable. According to Nixon, neoliberal ideology cannot be divorced from the workings of slow violence because it is evident in Sinha's novel. Nixon highlights the essential features of such a neoliberal ideology that should not be disregarded when evaluating the causes of environmental degradation.

Furthermore, Nixon argues that ideal ecocritical and postcolonial scholarship is interdisciplinary, transnational, and comparative (245). According to Nixon, the broadening of the ecocritical field to encompass ethnic and race-oriented American writers cannot be rendered as a significant diversification (244) because "American text" continue to be "universalized in ways that postcolonial texts are not " (245). American ecocritical discourse has a crucial role to play—and we believe an obligation—to critique local exploitation of the environment and global abuse committed in the name of U.S., national and corporate interests (Nixon 245). With his principle conceptual framework in the notion of slow violence, Nixon revisits the traditional assumption that violence is explosive and immediate, yet on the contrary, he redefines violence as being not instantaneous, but instead imperceptible, whose catastrophic consequences are suspended for years or decades or even centuries (3-4). Nixon's conceptual framework emphasizes the temporal diffusion of a slow violent act and can alter the way we respond and perceive to many social crises; however, it is particularly relevant to the strategic and deliberate challenges posed by environmental disasters. In *Slow Violence,* Nixon forges a relationship between environmental justice and postcolonialism to illuminate the idea of environmental risks in the new millennium. In an interview with Nixon by Asley Dawson regarding his book, Nixon explains the mode of environmental vulnerabilities confronted by communities in the global South:

> Critics of neoliberalism—and capitalism more broadly—have been voluble on the subject of geographical outsourcing (of jobs and environmental damage in particular). There's a powerful tradition of such critiques, stretching back to Robert Bullard, to the roots of the environmental justice movement in the U.S. and beyond. Clearly, geographical outsourcing often perpetuates and exacerbates inequities between nations in the global North and the global South as well as between affluent and impoverished communities within a given nation. In the standard formula, capitalism internalizes the profits and externalizes the costs. I want to complement this well-established critique of often-racist geographical outsourcing with a detailed critique of temporal outsourcing. In particular, I want to ask: what does the environmental map look like if we keep in view, simultaneously, the fallout from geographical and temporal outsourcing? ("Interview" Dawson)

Nixon argues that the above-mentioned ontological conditions are essential markers for probing the material and discursive dimensions of violence across various geographical landscapes, playing a substantive role in works of fiction from an environmental perspective. Nixon's notions regarding slow violence are significant to consider when interpreting Pakistani English fiction to highlight how neoliberalism and the ruling structures in Pakistan are complicit in perpetuating environmental degradation. While these theoretical lenses are selected that guide and shape my comparative study, the following methodology is adopted for the analysis and interpretation of the selected texts and is discussed in the following section.

3.4 Research Methodology

Regarding the texts' manifold facets, they are examined and interpreted for the issues guided by this study's research questions, which are provided in Chapter 1. Therefore, a **qualitative methodology** is employed. According to Polit and Hungler 1999 (18), a qualitative study is structured around a non-statistical data and methods which claims that a "qualitative method is especially useful for exploring the full nature of a little-understood phenomenon" (108). Similarly, the concept that qualitative research goes beyond the hard statistical or hard data (Grahame 4-10) has been useful for the analysis of the selected texts. There is no field work or gathering of data, instead literary textual analysis of selected American and Pakistani writers is

carried out to investigate the environmental representation in the texts through the intersection of literature, culture and the physical environment (Gladwin).

The appropriateness and relevance of this methodology owe much to the researcher's choice and is dictated by the aims and objectives of the study, the means and methods of collecting and analyzing textual data. Martiz and Visagie (2006) claim that proper qualitative research methods pay attention to the type of tools and procedures used and the research process employed and provide a description of the strategies used where textual analysis is one of the tools that can be used appropriately in qualitative research methods (26). One of the essentials of qualitative analysis is an expectation of a plurality of experiences and therefore diversity. To sketch a more diverse and comprehensive view, multiple narratives can be used about an area of interest. Qualitative analysis is also significant because, it places humans as participants at the center, and seeks to focus on characteristics like meaning, context, history, culture and biography (Soltis 124). Therefore, qualitative methodology is significant for the study because factors such as history, culture and context are utilized to carry out a meaningful analysis. As the qualitative methodology provides a rationale and the philosophical assumptions underlying the study, the following section explains the method chosen to action the methodology.

3.4.1 Research Method and Procedure

It is imperative to highlight here that the selected texts are creative and imaginative texts produced by four different writers and it is not possible to determine, verify or describe these texts by any positivistic methodology. The research obligation is not to find any fixed or absolutely final answers to the problems and questions raised in the texts, rather these need to be construed and examined in their historical, geographical and cultural contexts. There is a requirement of a method which may help know the meaning-making processes and inform systematically about the discourses that are produced in different locations and times as method provides procedures and expectations about one's "ontological or epistemological views" (Wisker 67). This comparative study aims to examine critical questions related to postcolonial and ecocritical discourse and power relations as they appear in the texts therefore the most suitable method used to explore these issues is textual analysis and the approach used to further textual analysis in rhetoric as utilized by Greg Garrad (2004).

3.4.2 Textual Analysis

Since the "purpose of cultural criticism is to understand the texts, or rather to read the cultures in the texts" (Belsey 171), therefore, the specific method used is textual analysis. The rationale to select textual analysis is obvious, because it discusses what the text has to say about the subject under consideration, to whom it is said, why it is said and what effect it creates. This method is vital for this study because meaning in a text subsists in certain relations like between people or inscribed in images or sounds which may include shapes and pictures as well (163). Moreover, since the study is **transgeographical** in context and involves a study of different Pakistani and American cultural world views, therefore, to make sense of different worlds the approach for the study is post-structuralist emphasizing that:

> all these cultures do indeed make sense of the world differently: and it is impossible to say that one is right and the others are wrong. In a sense, people from different cultures experience reality differently. (McKee 9)

With this primary assumption, the second step for a close textual encounter and intertextual reading of the texts in textual analysis is taken up and the following questions are raised for an in-depth comparative analysis:

- Are there any historical and cultural differences presented in the texts?
- If so, what historical and political differences does it present?
- What elements in the texts serve as metaphors that highlight the deeper meanings embedded in the narrative?

By reading and analyzing texts by posing such question as a researcher is to arrive at the certain emphasis the writer is intending at for instance the disparate relations of authority and power (Haggan ix). For example, reading closely *Moth Smoke* and *Trespassing* reveals how power relations are embedded through an intertextual reading[5] of the texts. Moreover, according to Belsey, "there is no such thing as 'pure' reading: interpretation always involves extra-textual knowledge" (163) which is derived from secondary sources such as internet, bibliographies and the library. Hence, critical concepts and issues raised are interpreted from different works of critics in the field of environment and humanities, journals, theories from disciplines, and various publications to arrive at a more nuanced and subtle shade of ecocriticism. Apart from journals,

books on postcolonialism and American environmentalism are consulted to arrive at multiple meanings. This method of reading various texts then is helpful to gather information that leads to saying something new and may serve as a contribution to knowledge (Belsey 164).

As Belsey notes that "any serious textual analysis depends on a grasp of how meaning works" (167), based on this observation my intention is to interpret the selected texts by engaging in how they generate meanings, in the forms of "sounds or images" (167). The use of metaphor, trope and images then help to identify such relations. For this I employ **rhetoric** criticism as a **tool** and an approach for the analysis of the texts. Robertson Andrew (1983) in Practice *of Rhetorical Criticism* notes that rhetoric is a systematic approach used for describing, interpreting, analyzing and determining the persuasive power of meanings entrenched within texts. It is because "rhetoric, throughout its history has been associated with words. Words, whether spoken or written, listened to or read, have been central to its development" (Andrews ix). Since words, in the form of images, and metaphors play a significant role in the exploring the underlying meanings, therefore, I utilize the rhetorical analysis as a tool to serve the following significant functions:

1. Enlighten the motive of a persuasive message
2. Helps in understanding, social, cultural and historical contexts is employed as a form of social criticism to understand society (Andrews 4, my paraphrasing).

These Basic steps are involved in applying rhetorical analysis:

1: Selecting Texts: Four texts are selected for an in-depth analysis (*Moth Smoke* (2000), *Trespassing* (2004)*, White Noise* (1985)*, A Thousand Acres* (1991)).

2**:** Choosing a specific type of rhetorical criticism: I utilize *contemporary rhetoric* which tends to incorporate a range of theoretical, philosophical, and interpretative perspectives that can be used to explore and analyze the persuasive impact of the texts under discussion. (These theoretical perspectives are discussed in the theoretical framework of the study in section 3.2)

To explore all the possible avenues in ecocritical comparative study, American and Pakistani texts in English read and analyze using literary critical tool- the environmental debates as examples of rhetoric (Garrad 19). For example, the use of "airborne toxic event" in *White Nosie* and the "poisoned pastoral imagery" in *A Thousand Acre* are examples of "apocalyptic rhetoric". The application of rhetorical analysis thus allows to examine how these writers use words, images and metaphors to influence or inform the reader, and what effects it creates. In both the novels the

authors have combined the way of imagining environmental/nature with modern day ways of imagining a threat derived from "hysteria" in *White Noise* and "tragedy" in *A Thousand Acre,* with a perception to displaying certain normative claims about contamination and pollution (Garrad). Thus, rhetorical analysis of these texts help reveals how these texts are constructed in order to achieve certain social (for example *White Noise*) agro-political results (*A Thousand Acre*).

Similarly, in *Moth Smoke* and in particular in *How to Get Filthy Filth in Rising Asia* (2013) the symbolic and metaphoric representation of water and waste, acquire a political dimension around issue of urbanisation and resource consumption/extractivism (Deckard 1). The symbols and metaphors pertaining to non-human environment, "silkworm", "sea" "water" become symbolic of larger meanings in the text. Similarly, images like these; "shrimp factory" and "foreign trawlers" are analyzed as an insignia of exploitation and neoliberalism. This is done so to a achieve a certain fine-drawn revision of the idea of environmental exploitation and injustice itself. Therefore, to read Pakistani and American English novels as rhetoric has an edge for an implicit socio-political critical practice that Terry Eagleton sets out in these words:

> What would be specific to the kind of study I have in mind…. would be the kind of *effect* which discourses produce, and how they produce them. Reading a zoology textbook to find out about giraffes is part of studying zoology but reading it to see how its discourse is structured and organized and examine what kind of effects these forms and devices produce in particular readers in actual situations, is a different kind of project. It is, in fact, probably the oldest form of literary criticism in the world, known as rhetoric. (qtd. in Garrad 20 emphasis original)

Garrad emphasizes how reading and analyzing culture (text) as rhetoric, as examples of reproduction, production and transformation of extensive metaphors can help generate meaning in a text (20). This is how I have applied rhetoric as research tool and strategy to analyze texts by examining metaphors images and symbols, which have some social as well as political implications in the American and Pakistani culture. The central image of discourse and text types emerging from literature review in chapter two, four and five explicates that the works of different writers are not simple plain, coherent and neutral images; but there are disparate debates within them which help to form a certain image. Their production has emanated from different environments of socio-cultural and historical experiences that shape complex interdiscursive

cultural articulations. Every implicit /explicit power relation and specific cultural expression is a process and an event which cannot be investigated and analyzed only by a single interpretative/stylistic or model/method. As Paula Saukko (2003) observes that "research methodologies are never 'objective' but always located, informed by particular social positions and historical moments and their agendas" (3), and therefore calls for an extended methodological perspective which engages the textual meaning on socio-political and linguistic levels. Therefore, by utilizing relevant interpretative approach, I attempt to explore the various dimensions of environmental representations/dilemmas to expose the complexities that are inherent in the construction of transgeographical ecosensitivity for specific purposes.

3.4.3 Application of theoretical lenses

After having established what method is useful and suitable (textual analysis), this section briefly discusses how the bricolage of theoretical lenses are applied on the texts for a deeper and profound interpretation. Since the study aims to explore the meanings in Pakistani and American fiction in transgeographical context, therefore the best possible approach to interpret the textual data is through applying a bricolage of theoretical lenses that I have discussed in the section 3.2.1 The concept "bricolage come from the work of Denzin and Lincoln (2000), who used the term in the spirit of Claude Le´vi Strauss (1966) in *The Savage Mind* " (Kincheloe 1-2). This method of analysis is considered useful because it is aware of the discursive practices in which text is embedded and the context in which the text operates (6). Secondly, the discourse cannot be annexed from power relations and the struggle to create meanings and specific voices (7), therefore the followed steps are taken into consideration while utilizing the bricolage of theoretical lenses.

Postcolonial theoretical lenses-application justification

- Pakistani fiction in terms of its **themes, context, historical** and **material realties** is different from that of American fiction in English. Therefore, it takes "postcolonial" to be "the condition of a particular stage in the global unfolding of historical capital: especially postcolonial environments are marked by "radical unevenness" (Mukherjee 13). In view of this stark difference in all South Asian novels, Mukherjee claims that postcolonial text ought to be read in a certain way by focusing on historical, cultural material and political discursive force embedded in the text.

- Considering this ontological difference, I apply Mukherjee's concept on postcolonial style what he calls ***uneven style*** to understand "uneven environments" in Pakistani texts; *Moth Smoke* and *Trespassing* to chalk out their singularity and difference. Mukherjee's concepts on postcolonial and eco-materialism are therefore applied to denote meanings and connotations in the texts. On a related note, another important thing differentiating these two literary styles (Pakistani and American) is the fact that Anglo-European culture was (and is still) characterized with a written tradition, having its own conventional literary canons and standards rooted in the long history of whose most central landmark was Renaissance. Thus, Europe and the West claimed a control and mastery over the richest of world's literatures giving way to a cherished written literary tradition. As against it, the history of South Asian culture has essentially its own artistic registers, basing upon historical specificity, legends, folklore, stories and political realities.

- Nixon's "**Slow Violence**" is utilized for postcolonial Anglophone texts to understand how environmental degradation as well as free markets and capitalism under neoliberalism work quietly out of sight in the form of slow and incremental violence in postcolonial communities.
- Postcolonial theoretical lenses are significant because they provide means to explore texts as a **response** and a **challenge** to the dominant Euro-American discourse as well as a resistance to the prevailing hegemonies.

I have also drawn **insights** and **inspiration** from the following sources for an in-depth comparative study:

Shazia Rahman's "Karachi, Turtles, and the Materiality of Place: Pakistani Ecocosmoplitanism in Uzma Aslam Khan's Trespassing" (2011) is referenced and extended to build on an ecocosmopolitan exploration in Pakistani context.

Jahanara Kabir's "Deep topographies in the fiction of Uzma Aslam Khan (2011) to draw on the pre-Islamic/ cultural and historic references in the text in context of Pakistan.

Scott Hicks, "Jane Smiley's A Thousand Acres (1991) and Archival Reimaginations of Eco-Cosmopolitanism," (2013) is used to reference ecocosmoplitanism for a comparative analysis in an American context.

3.4.4 Ecocriticsm – application

- All the four texts are discussed from an ecocritical perspectives, which is used as an umbrella term to denote a human nature relationship.
- Two recent ecocritical paradigms- toxic discourse and eco-cosmopolitan are utilized for an in-depth analysis of various environmental dimensions.
- *White Noise* and *Moth Smoke* are explored and compared in the light of toxic discourse.
- *A Thousand Acre* and *Trespassing* are explored and compared utilizing eco-cosmopolitan lens for a local and cosmopolitan connections in the texts.

3.4.5 Limitation and Difficulties

Since Pakistani textual and literary style is unique and different from that of American discourse in terms of their collective history of colonization, exploitation and anguishes as nation and their individual experience of being a part of a culture which has been subject to political and economic exploitation for so long. Thus, their collective anguish and individual anger is intertwined in the fabric of their fiction which comparing to the Anglo-American literatures is a very recent and late development. Hence any comparison between them is difficult to draw as they constitute two different realms of experience and thought. Therefore, selection of texts, and choice of the theoretical lens were a daunting and challenging part of the comparative study. Postcolonial theory is vast and so is ecocriticsm. Combing the two paradigms was a major challenge and required selection of lenses for an in-depth and relevant discussion.

In brief, these are the steps and procedures that I have followed in carrying out the textual analysis of the selected texts in the light of the theories mentioned. The logic and rationale for a bricolage resides in the fact that the zones which are marked by extreme form of under development have specific stylistic and formal particularities about cultural combination and thus require different lens for interpretation when comparing with a western discourse.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I sought to outline the present study's conceptual and methodological framework and overall research methodology. It outlines the research type and methodological considerations. To answer the formulated research questions, the study employs a qualitative approach because of its exploratory and analytical nature. Furthermore, it is imperative to contextualize relevant approaches in postcolonial literary theory as well as how they can be utilized alongside ecocriticsm. A postcolonial framework is necessary to underline that social and political reasons are accountable for much of the environmental crisis in South Asia—pollution, degradation, and urbanisation. I suggest that these theories are useful for formulating a conceptual framework to understand contemporary environmental concerns in a globalized political world; furthermore, they are useful for demonstrating how issues related to imperialism and ecological devastation can be analyzed in different cultural texts. Therefore, a reading of these selected strands of thought allows the importance of ecocriticism to be highlighted and brought into sharper focus. The method and theoretical framework discussed are applied to the selected texts and are explored in the chapters 4 and chapter 5.

NOTES

[1] Giddens argues that alienation of humans from their selves has reached a new level of globalized world of wars and markets, and because of unprecedented migration of people. These phenomena lead to "placelessness" which he terms as "dissociation of cultures from place", this also leads to the detachment of mankind from their bodies. See, Heise *Sense of Place*, 12-25.

[2] Christopher Shield argues that Heise's ideas on eco-cosmopolitanism is useful in analyzing other contexts as well such as postcolonial other than a critique on US- based environmentalism. See "The Cosmopolitan Amaranth: A Postcolonial Ecology." *Postcolonial Text* Vol 10.1 (Open Humanities press, 2015).

[3] See, for example, J. Donald Hughes's Hughes, *Environmental problems of the Greeks and Romans: Ecology in the ancient Mediterranean*. (JHU Press, 2014), 129.

[4] Love Canal tragedy is one of the most appalling environmental crises in American history. It can't be taken as an event in isolation, argues Buell, because it can happen anywhere again. A Lower middle-class subdivision on Niagara fall, N.Y was built on previous waste dump by Occidental Petroleum Company called Hooker Chemical Company. Residents claimed of fatal consequences in the form of defective childbirth rate, and illnesses that were environmentally induced.

[5] According to the theory of textuality, as Belsey observes " a text is made up of multiple writings[….]entering into mutual relations', including relations of 'contestation'" (176).

CHAPTER IV

NATURE'S ABSENCE: ECOCRITICAL READING OF *MOTH SMOKE* AND *WHITE NOISE*

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I argue that the texts *Moth Smoke* and *White Noise* employ what Lawrence Buell terms a "toxic discourse": a discourse and method of writing that facilitates ecological awareness through images and symbols of toxified habitats, landscapes and bodies. The centrality of this paradigm to textual representation in *Moth Smoke* by Mohsin Hamid and *White Noise* by Don DeLillo attests to the complex anxiety associated with the changing relationship between the physical environment and the human body. This analysis also offers ways of conceptualising how the consequences of globalisation, neoliberalism and capitalist consumption have played a part in transforming individuals and their habitat in the Pakistani context. In the American novel, conversely, the treatment of hegemonic ideology justifies the presence and progression of the late capitalist world and maps the altering geography of 20th-century America.

I pay particular attention to social injustices as instances of what Mukherjee (2010) conceives as "uneven development" in *Moth Smoke*, that often leads to environmental deterioration in a postcolonial context. Simon Estok (2013) claims that although environmental issues "affect all people and defy boundaries of nation, creed, race, ideology, gender, sexuality, class", the scale of environmental disasters in the eastern hemisphere of the world is more fracturing (220). Many territories and regions in South Asia are also at a greater risk of air and water pollution, excessive urbanisation and environmental degradation brought about largely by economic exploitation, the neoliberal free market and global economic forces. Therefore, with a simultaneous focus on similarities and differences, this chapter adds an ecocritical dimension to the readings of the built and natural environments of the texts. Environmental complications such as urbanisation, lack of appropriate waste disposal measures, filth and garbage coupled with damaged ecosystems are manifestations of environmental degradation in *Moth Smoke.* All these interrelated variables and

processes aggravate existing risks depicted in the novel and develop new kinds of ecologically threatening disasters. Similarly, the pervasive fear of chemical risks and hazards related to drugs and toxic consumption offers a critique of modern American society in *White Noise*.

Based on these principle observations, this chapter explores the ramifications of capitalism on the socio-economic and environmental spheres. The forces of technology and consumption connect profoundly with the changing dynamics of contemporary environmental problems. The chapter also examines what Sander Russel (1996) terms a lack of "sense of nature" and a "lack of acknowledgement of a non-human context" (183) in contemporary American fiction with reference to *White Noise*. A detailed textual analysis is carried out to understand how Hamid and DeLillo present built and natural environmental complexities in the contemporary world, exhibiting ways of imagining from an environmental perspective.

4.2 Toxic Discourse: *Dusty Plains of the Subcontinent* [1]

Jay Paul writes, "in *Moth Smoke*, Mohsen Hamid analyses contemporary Lahore through a "post-post-colonial" framework, one less interested in foregrounding the persistent effects of British colonization than dramatizing how economic globalization has transformed Lahore and the characters populating his novel".[2] This contemporary novel is truly an allegory of such a Pakistani society. The condition of this cultural materiality is marked by the rise of globalisation, where individuals and society are entangled culturally, economically and socially. Economic margins are being liquefied by transnational corporations, cultural products and merchandises are streaming through a worldwide system of interlinked metropolises; the international consumerist system describes, systematises and chiefly controls the lives of many people around the world. This inexorable correlation between the global economy and society is reshaping cultural and social life in South Asian countries, and with this restructuring, the uneven ways in which individuals, geographical landscapes and values cohabit are being revisited by many Anglophone writers. One such example is *Moth Smoke.* It is this emerging global culture that Hamid displays in the novel by exposing the profound and deep ramifications of a global system under the yoke of neoliberal development and the impact on both the human and nonhuman environments. The forces such as these work slowly and imperceptibly in postcolonial environments and societies which is generally termed as "slow violence" by Nixon. As a postcolonial novel, it is also very significant that the

writing technique of the author be given credence because it is the style that differentiates the South Asian novel from the dominant Euro-American one and is discussed below.

Narrative style

Before I begin the discussion of how the process of global capitalisation has impacted individuals and their habitats through the lens of toxic discourse, I want to commence the analysis with specific examples of the culture and nature of postcolonial environments. Mukherjee argues that one of the characteristic features of a postcolonial text with environmental implications is its "singularity" (69). Such a novel does not follow "slavishly" the developments of other forms of novels from other traditions (French and British novels for instance). The singularity and sophistication of these novels are marked by their "material conditions", and "novelists perform a kind of revolutionary jump-fusing [of] the form of the 'classical' western European novel with local and regional styles, forms and subjects" (70). Providing examples from Trotsky's observation of the "cultural consequence of uneven development as part of the general historical law", Mukherjee invites us to consider taking a fresh look at the postcolonial cultures of the world. He contends that postcolonial regions with "radically uneven development and unspeakable poverty" produce specific contemporary cultural forms (80). Drawing on Trotsky's theory of "unevenness", Mukherjee argues that Trotsky's vision:

> draws our attention to the correlation between stylistic moves and the uneven penetration of capitalism into the spatial and physical spaces of postcolonial societies. It enables us to set up a comparative framework where different texts produced across a diverse range of zones and times may reveal their stylistic and formal homologies as clues to understanding their historical and material conditions. (80)

Extending this idea of "uneven cultural development" (80), which provides us with one of the conceptual tools for establishing an ecocritical framework in postcolonial texts, one can argue that *Moth Smoke,* then, is an emblem of such a cultural form placed within the broader trajectory of historical progression of capital and an "uneven world" (Mukherjee 79). Therefore, if one looks at the stylistic and aesthetics features of the text as well as its thematic dimensions, the specific environmental conditions in *Moth Smoke* can be mapped out.

Defining the story's setting in the city of Lahore in Pakistan right from the beginning in *Moth Smoke*, Hamid sets up a postcolonial environment by presenting a culture fractured by economic divisions and corruption infused with dust and pollution. Set during a scorching summer in Lahore, the novel traces the disintegration of its protagonist Daru Shehzad. Parallel to Daru's self-destruction of is yet another facet which Hamid alludes to: the ubiquitous environmental burden manifested in the form of toxicity due to the polluted society of Lahore, including the smoke (cigarette smoke, atmospheric smoke, smoke rising from burnt garbage), drugs and urbanisation. The story focuses on the reversion of the protagonist Daru, a banker who is seen struggling to make ends meet. The loss of his job and his illicit love affair with his friend's wife Mumtaz drive him towards a tragic fate. Set against the background of nuclear conflict, with the first atomic tests in Pakistan, the human and the environment are presented as exploited and deformed. In *Moth Smoke,* Hamid addresses and exposes the consequences of polluted landscapes and bodies which cannot be considered risk-free or in any type of harmony. He does so by employing the **narrative conventions** of **multiple narrative voices**, numerous points of views providing the reader with no single perspective. *Moth Smoke* is not a single-voiced, author-centric narrative rather appears to be a dense and thick blend of multiple voices – each reflecting its own subjectivity. **Stylistic features** such as **images, metaphors,** and **linguistic choices encode** contemporary experiences and the environmental dystopia equally. Hamid, comments in an interview with *The Guardian* about his writing process:

> If the novel was special because it allowed writers and readers to create jointly, to dance together, then it seemed to me that I should try to write novels that maximised this possibility of opening themselves up to being read in different ways, to involving the reader as a kind of character, indeed as a kind of co-writer.[3]

In *Moth Smoke*, this contact between reader and writer takes place in the form of the reader mediating the suggestions offered about the central character. Moreover, as the writer switches between multiple narrative voices the thematic threads also intensify offering the reader various dimensions of life experiences in contemporary Pakistan. The text's critical depiction of entrapped human life between two opposing worlds of "uneven development" introduce opportunities for reflection on the literary cultures of postcolonial way of life where the gap "between the development and the underdevelopment is most extreme" (Trotsky; Mukherjee 16). The insecurity

and the greed of the wealthy, the relations of power, wealth versus poverty in *Moth Smoke* lay bare the damaging effect on the environment and the impoverished equally. For example, Ozi out bursts this reality stating:

> you have to have money these days. The roads are falling apart, so you need a Pajero or a Land Cruiser… The colleges are overrun with fundos… so you have to go abroad… The police are corrupt and ineffective, so you need private security guards… People are pulling their pieces out of the pie, and the pie is getting smaller, so if you love your family, you'd better take your piece now, while there's still some left. (45)

This piercing observation needs no further explanation regarding the asymmetrical and maldevelopment in the country and a violence that is silent and slow that provides figurative shape to threats that have fatal consequences (Nixon 14).

Likewise, regarding the narrative style in *Moth Smoke* Anita Desai (2000), notes that the writers use of "digression" is also a literary device that lends an authorial voice on the prevalent social and economic condition of the state, for example, the speeches of sceptic Dr. Julius Superb and the unpersuasive Murad Badshah. Superb is an instructor of economics with an inordinate impact upon a generation of scholars ready for Marxism with discussions such as the one he provides on excessive "air-conditioning", referring to it as the great division between the "haves and the have-nots" (Desai par.4). Likewise, Badshah is the possessor of a rickshaws who is battling against the newly introduced "yellow cabs" that are attesting superiority in "the Darwinian struggle for survival", but he is also skilled in delivering weighty and wise speeches on topics such as fat, on economic disparities, on atomic test and hence forth. Murad's role is essential to the design of the novel as "Mephistopheles, created for the purpose of tempting our antihero, Daru, into crime; but as the instrument of evil he needs to be more believable" (ibid. par.6).

Then, there is a profusion of sprinkling of metaphors, images, and similes. The use of allusions which are both literary as well as historical gives the narrative a base of difference from the American text, as the difference lies more to what William Van peer terms as the :extra-literary forces" determining the direction of literature, because "literary studies swim with the tide which is largely driven by extra-literary forces" (Peer 3). These strategies are useful tools in exploring the large implications in the text by uncovering the nuanced social conditions of a postcolonial

culture. The narrative style which is unique and utilises theoretical notions of Lawrence Buell's "toxic discourse" to underpin the sprawling toxic scenarios in *Moth Smoke.*

Since the text is explored by tracing the toxic consciousness in the novel, Buell's study of toxic discourses as a kind of environmental rhetoric alludes to the question of how narratives reinforce environmental and ecological risk, constructing a relationship between places and the planet at large. Fear of environmental despoliation and pollution of a specific place, as Buell claims, is bonded to a vision of the earth, which seems paranoid, infested by poisons that no human can escape or protect. This vision of pollution, Buell notes, results in a counter-model to the popular environmentalist conception of the earth as a holistic system of balances and harmonies. Therefore:

> Toxic discourse calls for a way of imagining physical environments that fuse social constructivist with environmental restorationist perspectives--[T]he nature that toxic discourse recognizes as the physical environment human inhabit is not a holistic spiritual; or biotic economy but a network or networks within which, on the one hand, humans are biotically imbricated (like it or not), and within which, on the other hand, first nature has been greatly modified (like it or not) by *techne*. (*Writing* 45, emphasis original)

This incredible observation by Buell analyses how environmentalist rhetoric has turned its back on the basic pastoral vision of ecology, which perceives the ecological system as a series of balanced and harmonious networks. One can argue that longing for a return to such a harmonious world of nature has been paralysed by anthropocentric endeavours that have led to the destruction of the environment. In reading *Moth Smoke,* one witnesses such a counter-model to a balanced and harmonious landscape. The landscape of the novel is rather deformed and polluted by the very inhabitants that occupy it. The cities are represented as inhabitations of pollution, darkness and disease, seemingly in junction with the anti-urban point of view that defines traditional ecocriticism. In order for us to understand toxic implications in the form of various contaminants and widespread pollution in the form of toxic waste, it is also important to explore the cause and effect of these phenomena. Rapid irregular urban growth and unchecked consumption (drugs, energy and technology) embedded in uneven capitalisation are the dominant operating variables affecting the postcolonial environment in *Moth Smoke*. Thus, the combination of the narrative

style and the toxic implication gives the text a unique blend of theory and criticism to explore the environmental dimension in the text which is discussed in the following section.

4.2.1 Toxic Risk

On a broader scale with regard to environmental risks, *Moth Smoke* conveys two aspects contributing to the relationship between the human and environment: external and internal environmental risks. The external hazards are reflected in the self-destructive protagonist Daru's excessive smoking the expulsion of toxins and chemicals from the smoke and the effects of nuclearization in Pakistan, which Hamid alludes to many times in the novel. In addition, the historic city of Lahore is depicted as being enveloped by smoke and smoulder, a foul reek and vehicle exhaust amalgamated by the heat and dust poisoning the environment. On the other hand, the internal risks to the human body caused by pollution and the perversion of the physical environment are equally devastating for the psychological and spiritual health of the people who occupy these urban spaces. The title of the novel *Moth Smoke* also represents the effect of the environment on the body and the soul. The moths of the novel's title whose fatal destiny is to be reduced to smoke by their fascination with the candle flame parallel the situation of Lahore's environment as a macrocosm and Daru's own physical world as a microcosm. In both situations, one can witness self-consumption due to the environment. The moth burns in the candle fire, and Daru burns himself in the self-created, polluted, unhealthy and spiritually devoid environment. Rather than being characterised by tranquillity, freshness and an environmentalist yearning to hold nature in deep reverence, Daru's relationship to the natural world and his environment is infested with death and disease (Makhdoom and Yaqoob). The portrayal of humanity's relationship with nature in *Moth Smoke* is unlike the Wordsworthian cry for nature as being moral and transcendental and is rather devoid of any ecological spirituality. Daru's own words echo this truth when he describes the most cherished time of the entire summer:

> All my life the arrival of the monsoon has been a happy occasion, ending the heat of high summer and making Lahore green again. But this year I see it as a time of festering, *not rebirth*. Without air conditioning, temperatures are still high enough for me to sweat as I lie on my bed trying to sleep, but now the sweat does not evaporate. Instead, it coagulates like blood into my peeled scabs of dampness that cover my itching body. Unrefrigerated, the food in my house spoils overnight, consumed by *coloured molds* that spread like

> *cancer*. Overripe fruit bursts open, *unhealthy flesh oozing* out of ruptures in the sickly skin. And the larvae already wriggling in dark pools of water will soon erupt into swarms of mosquitoes. (211, emphasis added)

The imagery of "stagnation", "infertility", "sickness", disease and environmental decay portray an environmental dystopia. To describe such a linguistic framing of an environmental crisis, Buell introduced the concept of toxic discourse to signify discrete cultural depictions of environmental threats and risks. The threatening images used to explain Daru and his diseased body, such as his "swollen flesh" and "dead skull", serve as a metaphor for the decay of society at large damaged and poisoned. The inhabitants of *Moth Smoke* are enveloped by a biosphere of invisible toxicity, reflecting the novel's toxic discourse and the topoi of total contamination that arouses readers' disgust and fear (Makhdoom and Yaqoob 260).

The imagery of the decaying city is emphasised many times throughout the novel. Readers are constantly reminded of how the relationship between human and non-human life forms is overshadowed by environmental events, such as the rain, which as Daru explains, does not facilitate rebirth. Rather, in the rain, Daru can "smell the dead grass that lies under the dirt down the street" (230). More grotesque is the intensity and gravity of the pollution that surrounds the city of Lahore. An overcrowded metropolitan city entrenched in dust exhausts human bodies and "radiate[s] out" (85) heat and sweat that are "damp and smelly". Furthermore, Daru is not reluctant to acknowledge, "I know I'm in the right place by the smell, and by the faces floating in the great womb of the drug, content to stay there until they die" (217).

Still more spectacular is the toxic "smoke" and foul smell of burning rubbish that permeates the atmospheric space of the entire neighbourhood. Daru explains, "in the morning, the smell of something burning brings me out of the house…neat moulds of rubbish in front of the neighbour's houses smoulder, trash smoke rising only to be beaten down by the rain" (216). Moreover, he describes the smell like the burning of "plastic in the heaps", which comes out in the form of "smoke coming out of fissures in the black heart of a trash pile, like a stream from the cooled crust of lava" (216). Daru's frustration with failed attempts to conceal the contagious environment prompts him to realise that "the stench released is unbearable, like burning skin". As he walks inside the confines of his bleak house:

> the smell stays with him, on his shoes, his clothes, 'it lingers even after he showers, even as he dumps his clothes in a tub of soapy water'. It clings to him. (216)

In such a polluted environment, interspersed with fumes of smoke and drugs, the absence of a natural environment is felt strongly. Throughout the novel, artificial, built air-conditioned life is neatly juxtaposed with the stench, filth and waste scattered across the streets of Lahore. The novel describes "dirty water" that "stretches across the road, hiding potholes" (217), depicting the city's fragile infrastructure and provides a microcosm of one of the core issues of uneven resource distribution- water. The situation is also reminiscent of the water crisis in *How to get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* by Hamid. It draws one's attention to water which is thematically significant in terms of providing basic condition of human and non-human life, but it also refers to the politics of water. Kevin Watkins in United Nations report observes that: "Exclusion from clean water and basic sanitation destroys more lives than any war or terrorist act" (27, qtd. in Mukherjee 164). The imagery of such an ecological meltdown and unbalanced environment is like a syndrome. Unlike Khan's *Trespassing,* readers do not witness the healing power of nature on the character's mind and soul. Instead, the contaminated environment and the inhabitants display an intense sense of alienation, culminating in a devastating and pernicious effect on the character's mind. It is possible that the author is implying that an environment left unchecked can severely damage the internal system of the human body and spirituality. Hamid emphasises the opposing effect of unhealthy environments on his characters, highlighting certain conditions for his narrative. By juxtaposing corrupted nature with a poisoned atmosphere, the narrative generates a feeling of human decay. The characters in the novel are living in constructed artificial environments, which aid in the development of paranoia and frenzy. The central characters of the novel reflect the perverted environment that they have generated and are thus products of.

For example, Daru is engulfed by the smoke of his tobacco and drugs, and his physical features speak to his health. His best friend and rival, Ozi, son of an upper-class wealthy businessman is trapped in corruption and atrophy. Ozi is culturally sick and corrupt to the bone; his life begins in air-conditioned rooms and ends in enclosed party halls. Murad, an English graduate, leaves his environment more perverse with his "stinking sweating lumpy body with layers of fat on it" (1). From an ecocritical standpoint, all these references point to a fundamental belief in ecocriticism. As proclaimed by Glotfelty, "everything is connected to every other thing",

reflecting humans' essential connection with the environment. Similarly, Sue Ellen Campbell (1996) also argues in her article "The land and language of desire" that "ecology insists that we pay attention not to the way things have meaning for us, but to the way the rest of the world- the non-human part-exists apart from us" (124-136). Hamid's vision does not separate environmental and ecological rhetoric from rhetoric about society, culture and people, exposing how the attitude and patterns of behaviour continue to contaminate the "dusty plains" of Lahore.

Yet, these pervasive environmental toxins cannot be examined in isolation. Daru's failed life and his failure to pursue western education form part of the larger context of economic and social life, which is characterised by distress for those who are culturally marginalised and socio-economically oppressed. Material, social and economic relations are so tightly connected that they lead Daru to drug consumption – chemical modification so perverse and poisonous that Buell frames it as toxic discourse. Environmental toxicity is strategically represented through a juxtaposition of Daru's personal failure with the larger economic and political systems that Neil Smith describes as follows:

> The logic of uneven development derives specifically from the opposed tendencies, inherent in capital, towards differentiation but simultaneous equalization of the levels and conditions of production. Capital is continually being invested in the built environment in order to produce surplus value and expand the basis of capital itself. But equally, capital is continually withdrawn from the built environment so that it can move elsewhere and take advantage of higher profit rates … The pattern which results in the landscape is well known: development at one pole and underdevelopment at the other. This takes place at a number of spatial scales. (xv)

Smith's argument about the projection of a biosphere under neoliberal capitalism reflects a segregated physical environmental fissured between unequal production and consumption of capital in the text (Mukherjee 83). Such vast structural patterns work in a silent and latent manner, a widening gulf between poor and rich, "neoliberal order of austerity measures" are a form of what Nixon terms as a "form of covert violence" in its own right (28). It is also notable that the cause of irregular distribution alienates the characters from their natural environment as they drift into depression and anxiety as well as sickness of the body and mind. Similarly, the use of drugs, also

results form a conceptual abstraction for escape and refuge, culminating in environmental negligence. Connected to the asymmetrical development that is responsible for Daru's financial and economic condition is the notion of nature, whose absence in the lives of the characters reflect the situation of environment in Lahore and Pakistan in general.

4.2.2 Nature's Absence

Another significant characteristic of the text is the absence of nature, which is linked to the consumerism of capitalism. Both DeLillo and Hamid in *White Noise* and *Moth Smoke* depict a consumer society and people who are "alive but do not *live*".[4] Gladney and Daru, the novels' narrators and protagonists, are like most the postmodern individuals who are trying to identify meaning in survival amidst chaos and a meaningless, existential lifestyle. Tragically, both protagonists cannot call out to the sky because there is nothing out there; their world and sky have endured a loss of depth. As Sander Russell (1996) observes, in both the novels, one fails to find concrete implications for signifiers[5]. For instance, the sky outside is no more than a blanket of polluted layers of dirt. Everything outside is "dulled by a layer of dust" (95). For Gladney in *White Noise*, the sky is paradoxically beautified because of the contaminated air. For Daru in *Moth Smoke*, however, "the sun is completely blotted out by a dirty sky" (99). Daru's world is one of air-conditioned bedrooms, and the people he meets are also living in a world of waves, radiations and electronic appliances scattered around them. Hamid effectively delineates an artificial environment in contrast to the natural world of greenery, which might be expected to serve as a source of joy and fulfilment for the people of Lahore. However, instead, what one sees in *Moth Smoke* is a contemporary society comprised of youth like Jamal who like to "stare at a computer screen" with "various pieces of high-tech equipment scattered about the room, connected by the wires and plugged into an enormous surge protector" (92). The description does not stop here. Broadly speaking, contemporary Pakistani society in the metropolitan industrial city of Lahore is depicted as compartmentalised into an air-conditioned pseudo-artificial world and another half of the world that is impoverished. The atmospheric dust and fumes due to excessive use of air-conditioners point to the rich population's energy consumption and power generation, harnessed by "privatization and the boom of guaranteed-profit, project-financed, imported oil-fired electricity projects" (Hamid 86). The narrator's description of privatisation and the influx of imported goods in contrast with the displaced poor who make up more than half of the population

indicate two crucial factors: the workings of neoliberal development in Pakistan and the relationship between the citizens and the state.

As the narrative develops various realms of social-cultural-political and environmental entanglements, it also draws attention to what Dagamsheh and Downing observe as "the critiques that social movements have made and exposed the ideological contradictions between the utopian promises of neoliberalism promoted by the international financial institutions (IFIs) and the material inequities that it produces" (141). The dynamic forces of the globalised world can be observed in the background of the novel. The massive gaps between the upper and the lower classes in Lahore as well as between the people and the environment are sickening because of globalisation. In the novel, globalisation serves as a metaphor for culpability in contemporary Pakistani civil society and for an economy that pursues continual consumption.

Furthermore, *Moth Smoke* implies the "technological hubris"[6] (Bundy), which suggests there is little safety in the unrestricted use of technology. The impact of modernity and technology is assimilated into the immediate physical environment, which Hamid indicates many times. This underscores Buell's dictum that environment and place are at power with social and cultural ideological entities, which cannot be ignored or taken for granted. It is also worth noting how the author presents the modern individual in contemporary Pakistani society as gradually receding into the shadows of technology. Shortly after the rhetorical description of the rich and their dependency on air-conditioners, Hamid re-iterates this critical view through the persona of a rickshaw driver, Murad Badshah:

> AC's, on the other hand, he considered unnatural and dangerous. Your pores will get out of shape if you rely on AC's for your cooling, he would say. It's fine as long as you stay in your little air-conditioned space, but one day you might need to rely on your body again and your body won't be there for you. After all, fortunes change, power blackout happens, compressors die, coolant leaks. (104)

Social stratification in *Moth Smoke* is directly connected to the availability of and access to technology and luxury like the 'AC". While luxury and technology provide status and comfort, they also bring health hazards, which Murad the rickshaw driver recognises more than the overly consuming elite. However, in contrast to the poor, like Jamal the rickshaw driver, the elite are

detached from the natural environment, which is a result of their "estrangement" from the world around them. The wealthy in the *Moth Smoke* therefore ironically gain "independence" by alienating themselves from their physical surroundings via the consumption of drugs. Air conditioning represents energy consumption. These two prominent tropes create a fissure between the characters and their environment. Air conditioning points to the class hierarchy in Pakistan and represents class division based on access to a global service offered only to the elite:

> Aurangzeb loved ACs with a passion unrivalled by his love for any other species of inanimate object. He insisted that his father install central air-conditioning in their new house, that the system be supported by a dedicated backup generator, and that he have a master remote control for the entire upstairs portion. He was never happier than when his bedroom was so cold that he needed a heavy blanket to avoid shivering in the middle of summer. Consequently, he liked it to be so warm in winter that he could comfortably sleep naked without as much as a sheet. *Aurangzeb, more than most men, sought to master his environment*. (105, emphasis added)

Moreover, through the lens of pot-smoking upper-class Pakistanis, Hamid also extrapolates the "unnaturalness" of mankind as a species. The dusty plains of the subcontinent could be converted to mirror the climate of Sweden if one had the power and the capital to buy an air-conditioned lifestyle. Not only that but, the effects of surplus consumption also promote accumulation of waste, which Deitering refers to as a "toxic consciousness"[7]. Hamid devotes many pages to the description of man's senseless and aimless dependency on air conditioning to underscore the shackles humans have put around an existence devoid of the natural environment. He argues that the "unnaturalness" of the elite is linked to their desire to detach themselves from the environment and become what Pieter Lemmen's describes as "outsider[s] of nature" (118).

Besides environmental degradation and contamination, *Moth Smoke* also engages with the notion of technological risk, which is linked to the advancement of modern technology and its impact on the imagination of the writers in describing people and the environment. Contemporary concepts of risk in the novels include the consequences of humans' deployment of technology and its impact on the human and non-human environment in the growing field of ecocriticism. The writers frame their apprehensions in terms of "uncertainty", suggesting that "our collective

actions have brought us into uncharted territory" and that there is an impending and irreversible threat or risk in the chain of events leading humanity into a future that is profoundly different to what we have witnessed before (Mossner 2014). This question of risk is a notion theoretically propounded by Ulrich Beck (1992). Authors like him assume that we are living in an epoch that has largely been altered and determined by human activities generating all types of environmental risks and disharmony. According to Beck, the novelists also play a key role in examining the two sides of risk, which he refers to as 'chance and danger' (5). Many Pakistani novelists like Hamid address this notion by presenting a comprehensive view of dystopia. When viewed alongside risks in the form of large-scale technologies, the toxic discourse articulates what Buell refers to as "a threat of hegemonic oppression" (*Writing*, 38, 40, 42-44). More generally, this oppression can be described as public versus corporate or governmental greed. In this case the corporate greed is symbolised in the form of neoliberal development and the insatiable appetite of elite for consumption.

Furthermore, awareness about ecological and technological risks is increasing across the globe, whether unconsciously or consciously. The impact and consequences of risk-generating activities are addressed in Pakistani fiction, especially with regard to uranium and hazardous waste, such as the risks presented in *Trespassing.* In addition to issues related to the environment and its relationship with humans, *Moth Smoke* also features an important part of Pakistani history: nuclear testing. The backdrop of nuclear testing in the novel can be interpreted in many ways. The present study, however, only considers its relevance to Pakistani ecology. For the Pakistani nation, the underground atomic testing represented a heroic attempt detonation of the first nuclear weapon in response to India. However, this uranium enterprise did not come without ecological and environmental consequences. With the increasing risk awareness that has gradually reshaped the imagination of the world at large and Pakistani fiction in particular, one could argue that the text subtly attempts to reveal risk factors associated with the nuclear detonation. When the protagonist is informed about India's uranium testing, he inquires, "How do you know? Everyone knows outside. There is mayhem outside". People outside seem worried: "the shopkeeper looks edgy, and the boy who brings me my drink does not' smile. Probably tense about a nuclear thing" (85). Although it was just a test by the Indian government, people in Pakistan thought India intended to attack. The risk of the nuclear threat to both humans and the non-human environment is seen as risk of annihilation:

> You know the first place they would nuke is Lahore
> Islamabad
> No. Lahore
> What about Karachi?
> and about Peshawar? (Hamid 80)

Many scientists are now of the view that we are all living in a new geological epoch, the Anthropocene. With the advancement of nuclear technology, humans are indulging in changing the earth's support system. According to recent studies, nuclear weapons pose the single most devastating threat to the ecosystem. Alan Robock,[8] American metrologist, has warned that "nuclear weapons are the greatest environmental danger to the planet from humans, not a global warming or ozone depletion" (55). Although there are no apparent explicit ecological threats portrayed by Hamid, the reader cannot overlook the tone between the lines, which suggests the gravity of the subject. For example, the climate of Lahore during nuclear testing is expressed in the following words:

> It was a summer of great rumblings in the belly of the earth, of *atomic flatulence* and *geopolitical indigestion*, consequences of the consumption of sectarian chickpeas by our famished and increasingly incontinent subcontinent. Clenched beneath the tightened sphincters of test sites and silos, the pressure of upper heated gases was registering in spasms on the Richter scale. *Lahore was uneasy* and *Imodium* in short supply. (63, emphasis added)

It would not be incorrect to say that such linguistic expressions consolidate an aura of environmental uneasiness. In a climate of geopolitics, "summer of great rumblings", "belly of the earth", "atomic flatulence" and "geopolitical indigestion" (70), are all related to a political and ecological vocabulary that would best explain the biospheric disturbance created due to the uranium industry. There is unease on two levels. The summer is unbearably hot and fosters diseases like diarrhoea. "Imodium" (98), a drug used to control the illness, is out of stock. The detonation of Pakistan's first atomic weapon outpaced every other country in the production of uranium warheads. People are rejoicing as this is a proud moment in the history of Pakistan, but the stockpile of nuclear weapons comes with a price.

The environmental impacts of the nuclear tests are enormous. Paradoxically, at one point at the closure of the chapter, when the author describes the climate of Lahore, he also brings the nuclear testing into perspective. Murad Shah announces, "They say the atomic test released no radioactivity into the atmosphere. Each a huge gasp smothered unsatisfied" (100). It seems as though Hamid is laughing at the very prospect of believing that the underground testing in Pakistan brought no radioactive release and was just a 'huge gasp', choking that went unsatisfied. Later in the novel, he justifies this statement by giving examples from nature about how climatic changes became abnormally different after the detonation. At one point in the novel, Murad Badshah observes, "This, nuclear race/test is no joke. Poor people are in trouble" (134).

The economic impact of the test on people might be real, but on another level, the statement reflects how in the context of poverty, people of underdeveloped Baluchistan in Chaghi experience government neglect and oppression in the form of environmental risk. The site of the testing received the least attention from the government. As a result, common hazards and symptoms such as skin diseases and thyroid gland damage were observed as the test was left unrecorded. Shah Meer Baloch observes that the day of detonation, known officially as a "great day of Greatness" for the nation of Pakistan, was in fact for many residents of Chaghi a "black day". He highlights:

> The people of Fiji suffer from the same kinds of diseases as the residents of Chaghi, and yet scientific data is lacking on the impacts of the nuclear tests on Chaghi and nearby places. It is the time for the state to allow national and international researchers on the ground to report the facts. [9]

Similarly, the "nuclear monsoon" (212) is juxtaposed with Daru's nostalgia for his childhood monsoon: "However, this year I see it as a time of festering, not rebirth". Climatic change has affected the physiology of his body as Daru finds his "blood coagulating" due to the enormously high temperature that year. Fruits are described as "overripe"; mould is described as spreading like cancer. In fact, the "entire city of Lahore is uneasy". Daru describes the monsoon lightening he witnesses after the test:

> waits for thunder's echo, for a wave of heat that burns Lahore with the energy of a thousand summers, a million partitions, a billion atomic souls split in half. (211)

The description poignantly ends with a telling remark: "It is, after all, our first nuclear monsoon" (211). A series of descriptions reflect Daru's observations about sudden climatic change and its consequences for the people and the environment, reflecting his interaction with the environment.

Furthermore, *Moth Smoke* reflects an urban bioregion that is inherently devastated and risk prone. Daru's life is surrounded by an artificial set-up of what may be considered a hybrid form of an urbanised environment. It is described as hybrid because the natural world that Daru recalls when he reminiscences about the seasonal and atmospheric changes of the past is now coupled with his artificial surroundings. He is described monumentally unsatisfied and unhappy. The lethargy and unhappiness that he experiences does not alone stem from his physical environment. Instead, the reader is also led to believe that there is another agent at work: the social environment of his postmodern existence. Hamid sets up the distinction between Daru's social and physical environment as a false dichotomy, effectively illustrating Ross's concept of an urban ecosystem. This setting and construct create what Ross describes as an image of the city as a massive biological organism (Bennet 17).

The rhetorical descriptions of the physical environment in the novel also reflect the contemporary reconstruction of place or "spaces", allowing the reader to interpret both the artificial as well as the natural as deformed aspects of the urban environment in *Moth Smoke*. In this distinctly hybrid ecosystem, the undesirable aspects of urbanisation, like excessive traffic smoke, pollutants, garbage-ridden streets, petrifies and disables the natural environment. This debilitating dystopic vision parallels the ways in which the upper social class impairs Daru and his friend Ozzie, who are blind to the difference between natural and artificial environments. This blindness perhaps prevents characters like Daru and his friend from connecting to the meaningless existence that surrounds them. Moreover, the protagonist suffers from crippling social anxiety. The polluted environment lacks vitality, just as Daru himself lacks vivacity. By drawing such connections, the author suggests that interpersonal and environmental entropy are interdependent. It seems impossible for one to transcend a world of what Rozelle describes as "growing material uncertainties" (13) while at the same time ignoring pessimistic, risk-prone and degenerating environmental change. The significant risk that threatens society and its ecology is that of waste

management and garbage in *Moth Smoke*. One can infer that for Hamid, risk is embedded in the artificiality engulfing the elite. The risk is of various types and forms. For example, risks include the loss of human appetite for the natural; loss of consciousness of a healthy lifestyle; and rising environmental pollutants as result of energy consumption. These risks are perceived as dangers in an environmentalist context. Such environmental risks also point to a lack of social and environmental sustainability, revealing the author's recognition of what Mizruchi describes as "culture's dialectical role in a world of risk" (112). These are some of the dimensions of eco-sensitivity one discovers beneath the layers of *Moth Smoke* when one reads the novel with attention to the environmental implications that inform ecocriticism in a postcolonial context. Accordingly, the following discussion tracks how the notion of toxic discourse and nature is represented in *White Noise* in the context of a late- capitalist world of consumerism in America.

4.3 *White Noise*

"Pastoral has become central to our contemporary society, mutating from an elite cultural form to the popular pastoral of consumerism" (Hess 71). In a similar context, *White Noise* written in 1985 is an example of American neo-pastoral literature that builds on one of the dominant themes in the novel- "toxic consciousness". Wellman (2011) argues that early modern pastoral can inform present-day arguments and debates within the bourgeoning field of ecocriticsm and environmental humanities (14). Contemporary writers, and critics have adopted the term "postmodern pastoral" to describe literary genres and works of art that cope with the relationship between humans and nature in an epoch of environmental crisis.[10] While this term does not mean exactly the bucolic agrarian society, it does refer to moving beyond the traditional pastoral so that the realities of contemporary society may be addressed (35). Terry Gifford notes that:

> Ecocriticsm may be the frame of our age, informed with a new kind of concern for "environment", rather than "countryside" or "landscape" or the bucolic, but we cannot pretend that there have not been changes in our knowledge, attitudes and ideology.(147)[11]

Similarly, *White Noise*, when seen in this light, typifies nearly all of the neo-pastoral themes in terms of western theological perception, destruction of the biospheric ecosystem and the expectations of an apocalypse (Ashford 24). The following discussion is explored with a focus on environmental themes like toxic consciousness (which is generally viewed as an apocalypse) and

consumerism in America. The 1980s saw a fundamental shift in American fiction as the world saw a drastic shift in human speculation after the consequences of nuclear accidents (Deitering, "The PostNatural Novel" 196). The terms "toxic waste" and "toxic consciousness", often used by Heise and Buell in the *Sense of Place* and *Writing for an Endangered World*, have taken up new meanings in recent fiction, serving predominantly as cultural metaphors for fears and an unpredictable, unsafe future. These terms represent an ontological split in the collective perception of the reality. The distorted post-industrial ecosystem, at both the individual and national levels, has gradually become grounded in waste and pollution, as Harold Fromm articulates in "From Transcendence to Obsolesce". He makes the claim that nature has been disposed of by man with the rise of industrialism in the West (33). The 1980s also represented a period, where inhabitants' perception of waste and environmental pollution transformed ontologically. *White Noise* by DeLillo is one of the most prominent examples of this transformation and is analysed in the following section. However, before I commence on the main theme on environmentalism in the text, a brief overview of his style is required.

The entire text on *White Noise* is written from the main character, Jack Gladney, of the novel. The reader always gets Jack's viewing platform on all the various events that ensue throughout the text. Written in postmodern narrative technique of transition from a first-person subjectivity to third-person objectivity, it displays what Frank Lentricchia calls a technique that is "integral to the American experience" [12]. By narrating a story through the eyes of Gladney, the readers understand the modern mass culture, DeLillo's chosen theme, as Gladney does; one experiences the similar misperception and disillusionment that Gladney does, and one shares in the protagonist's estrangement of himself from his experience. This is how DeLillo creates a metafictional document and, in this manner, the storyteller's state of mind becomes a mimetic replica of anyone in the reader's temporal and spatial reality. The text creates multiple synecdoches and visual effects due to the writer's use of language, metaphors and images that fill up the pages with long, energetic lists, for example, in the opening page, DeLillo writes:

> The roofs of the station wagons were loaded down with carefully secured suitcases full of light and heavy clothing; with boxes of blankets, boots and shoes, and books, sheets, pillows, quilts; with rolled-up rugs and sleeping bags; with bicycles, skis, rucksacks, English and Western saddles, inflated rafts. (*White Noise* 1)

The lists perform a stylistic function. This abundance of linguistic outburst at the beginning of the text, with excess and diversity, and the irresistible selection of words, foils a cumulative idea in the text about the extravagances of consumerism in American society.[13] Similarly, DeLillo's use of symbolism adds to the rhetoric of the central concept in the novel, how everything wraps around symbols and signs, for example in the form of jostling lists Murray a character in the novel voices that:

> everything is concealed in symbolism, hidden by veils of mystery and layers of cultural material … Energy waves, incident radiation. All the letters and numbers are here, all the colours of the spectrum, all the voices and sounds, all the code words and ceremonial phrases. It's just a question of deciphering, rearranging, peeling off the layers of unspeakability. Not that we would want to, not that any useful purpose would be served. This is not Tibet. Even Tibet is not Tibet anymore. (36)

Thus, DeLillo's talent for linguistic dexterity unite to tell the readers something more about the reality hidden in layers of meaning, something uncomfortable about transience and something reflective about the way we deal with it. It is in this manner that the reader locates meaning in the symbolism of the words used by the writer. Therefore, this unique technique and the absence of a single coherent plot in the novel enables the readers to discern how the post-industrial period of American society has gained unprecedented development in technology and science that has simultaneously introduced threats and risks to modern man. Among various types of risk that the writers account to in the novel, the following discussion tracks how DeLillo intertwines the concept of chemical and technological risks and informs everyday life in America in much more ordinary ways and calls for a toxic discourse.

4.3.1 Environmentalism in *White Noise*

White Noise seeks to explore a local risk scenario of chemical contamination, which, according to Susan Mizruchi, is one of the central issues in American environmentalism and contemporary American culture (110). DeLillo examines this central theme by employing techniques such as hyperbole and satire in a world of media representation of risk and pollution. *White Noise* was published in 1985 a few months after the toxic and deadly gas accident that took place at a Union Carbide plant in Bhopal. The accident killed nearly 2,000 people, and several thousand were wounded. The Bhopal accident is significant for the analysis of *White*

Noise, as it finds parallels in an essential event in the middle of the novel (Heise, "Toxins"). In the novel, a toxic gas explosion, an "airborne toxic event", occurs in the American Midwestern town of Blacksmith, where the protagonist, history professor Jack Gladney, resides with his family.

Just as Hamid's *Moth Smoke* is written against the backdrop of nuclear tests in Pakistan, *White Noise* references the Bhopal toxic gas accident (in India). Consequently, both of the narratives raise questions about risk perception and portray what Ulrich Beck (1986) calls a "risk society" in specific cultural contexts[14]. Building on Buell's conceptualisation of toxic discourse, both novels foreground a connection between the toxic implications that generate environmental risks and criticise industrial capitalisation. *White Noise* raises questions about how the concept of environmental risk can have important implications for the analysis of American literary narratives, especially in context of chemical toxins. The modern environmental movement in North America has received much recognition, particularly with the publication of *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson. Through her insightful investigation into chemicals and their abuse in the form of herbicides in American agriculture and households, Carson underscores the link between damage to humanity and the natural environment. Drawing on Buell's notion of toxic discourse, this analysis of *White Noise* highlights how various technologies (chemical, drugs, everyday household technologies) pose toxic threat to human and non-human environments.

DeLillo demonstrates how the contemporary individual is trapped unconsciously within a web of scientific and technological innovation, referred to as "techno-sensibility", by virtue of which we experience gratification, humour as well as anxiety (Martins 88). Thinkers like Frederick Jameson and Jean Baudrillard have reflected on this dilemma of the modern individual's existence by discussing one of the most predominant predicaments of a postmodern person: "the modernisation process is complete, and nature is gone for good" (*Postmodernism* 4). In *White Noise* and *Moth Smoke*, one observes this reality as one realises people are vanishing and moving into the stratospheres of radiations and waves for tangible referents with a sense of self and definite unitary meanings (Jameson 18-25). In the first half of the book, DeLillo portrays a family immersed in various forms of consumption. If we look at consumption from a broader perspective, it ranges from consumption of food to the medicine, drugs and technologies like television and media. The role of consumption in the narrative cannot be underestimated from an ecocritical

perspective; it plays a crucial role in escalating the contemporary individual's desire for detachment from the natural environment and attachment to the un-natural world of technologies and emissions (Fromm 34). For example, Jack's wife Babette seeks comfort in drugs and medicines to overcome her fear of dying. Her husband Jack shares a similar apprehension and relies more on technologies at home. Their relationship with the outside world is nearly non-existent or perhaps nearly negligible. For example, in *White Noise*, the reader is reminded only once about the existence of nature throughout the narrative. Jack wonders whether the "glorious sunsets" (169) are brilliant due to the circulation of industrial wastes in the atmosphere. After the toxic spill, ironically, the sunset becomes even more remarkable, described as "unbreakably beautiful", as Jack perceives it (170). The lack of a relationship with the naturalness of the environment becomes evident when the characters take a quick break on the expressway to see sunset. As Sanders notes, "the sunset interests them because a release of toxic gases from a nearby plant has poisoned it into Technicolor" (182-202). According to Sanders, this utter lack of appreciation for and connection to "nature" is an important part of the novel.

However, Sanders fails to perceive the missing link between the toxic gas and what might have caused its presence in the atmosphere. Cynthia Deitering places *White Noise* in the category of novels that specifically engage with different types of waste, namely garbage, toxins, landfills and industrial waste, which form a great part of the modern perception of "landscape" in American fiction (Reed 57). While Sanders views *White Noise* as absolutely "antinatural" in scope, Deitering considers the serious implications of the writer's intentions in the novel. According to her, the narrator of *White Noise* is diverting the reader's attention towards environmental awareness by highlighting toxic contamination in the atmosphere as a premonition of larger social and ecological disasters. The novel, therefore, highlights the foci of toxic discourse: "an awareness of total contamination" and "a world without refuge from toxic penetration" (Buell 645). The toxic gas in the novel assumes an important thematic dimension and becomes a symbol of the "betrayed Eden". Reed observes that DeLillo's novel can be stretched farther if one investigates the more serious social and economic factors generally highlighted by environmental justice ecocritics. He contends that Deitering's analysis of Don DeLillo's novel overlooks questions about the cause and nature of toxic contamination. More important, in doing so, Deitering misses the question of how toxic contamination is related to "the whiteness of the world depicted in *White Noise*" (257). Reed notes:

> 'Noise' in technical jargon is that which distorts communication. And the 'white Noise' that is the background or subtext of U.S. culture includes a racially coded distortion of environmental reality. The whiteness of the world in DeLillo's novel is one studded with privilege and the capacity to bury consciousness of toxicity along with other signs of human vulnerability in a wholly simulated environment. The sunset whose observation Sanders mocks is part of an ecosystem of commodified representations paranoid most directly in tourists flocking to photograph "the most photographed barn in America." The commodification of this picaresque rural America is merely an extension and condensation of an ideology of the picturesque that has pervaded European and American apprehension of "nature" since the late eighteenth century. (257-258)

Reed's observation points to an important dimension in the novel. He advocates for a deeper reading of the text, highlighting the hostile and widespread consequences of corporate capitalism. Secondly, and most notably, are the unmentioned dynamics of race and class that perpetuate the toxic process. The systematic insulation of the upper class and the elite from the turbulent effects of neoliberal capitalisation in America have played a tragic and vicious role in ecological destruction, legitimising the power structures of a system of human and environmental exploitation (259). Artistic and visual appreciation of nature, as Reed has effectively and forcefully contended, mask the very tarnished effects of environmental degradation. With reference to the novel *White Noise,* this ecological dynamic can be visualised discretely when Gladney remarks the following during the evacuation scene of the "airborne toxic event":

> These things happen to poor people who live in exposed areas. Society is set up in such a way that it's the poor and the uneducated who suffer the main impact of natural and manmade disasters. People in low-lying areas get the floods; people in shanties get the hurricanes and tornadoes. I'm college professor rowing a boat down his own street in one of those TV floods. We live in a neat and pleasant town near a college with a quaint name. These things don't happen in places like Blacksmith. (14)

Gladney's remark indicates that the privileged white society is insulated in such a manner that the present toxic danger becomes invisible to them. After all, toxic danger is only something that happens to people who live in the slums, are of low-class or perhaps who live in underdeveloped countries and are more prone to ecological disasters. This distorted idea of nature that is described in the above discussed is further linked to the idea of its absence.

Likewise, the absence of nature is also described poetically in DeLillo's fiction. The connotations in the choice of his words describe Jack's world as one that is monochromatic until he experiences the toxic event. In *White Noise,* nature is only referenced a few times, ironically once when the toxic event occurs in the novel. It is then that the sunset becomes spectacular for the characters:

> Ever since the airborne toxic event, the sunsets had become almost unbearably beautiful. Not that there was a measurable connection. If the special character of Nyodene Derivative (added to the everyday drift of effluents, pollutants, contaminants and deliriants) had caused this aesthetic leap from already brilliant sunsets to broad towering ruddled visionary skyscapes, tinged with dread, no one had been able to prove it (170).

The irony is further heightened as DeLillo writes:

> The sky takes on content, feeling, an exalted narrative life. The bands of colour reach so high, seem at times to separate into their constituent parts. There are turreted skies, light storms, softly falling steamers. It is hard to know how to feel about this. Some people are scared by the sunsets, some determined to be elated, but most of us don't know how to feel, are ready to go either way. (324)

DeLillo's use of tropes and metaphors in the novel point to the serious challenges that American society is facing today with the rise of new technological dependencies. The sharp and antithetical juxtaposition of "chemical dump site", "industrial waste" with "scalp degeneration" and "glorious sunsets" (22) highlights the discrepancies and interconnections between pollutions, humans and the world around them. The lack of spiritual calmness is evident in the characters' constant sense of threat and fear of death, a tone evident in the description of sky and earth. Heinrich avoids simple pleasures like watching sunsets with his families because he believes that

"the modern sunset" (61) is perhaps ominous as well. According to Randy Laist, images like "sunsets are the novels definitive image of the mutual penetration between people and the landscape character of the Anthropocene era" (91). The constant fear of human death due to the infiltration of machines-like computers, the pharmaceutical industry, drugs and chemical waste is exaggerated to demonstrate how technological consumption in American culture has disrupted normal life and the natural selves of modern American men and women. Toxic elements have been infused into everyone's genetics; no one is safe, whether rich or poor, from industrial contamination. While, the observations on the toxic implications embedded in the text reveal hidden power dynamics related to politics of domination, it simultaneously leads us to another important theme in the novel which is powerfully intertwined with the representation of a dystopic environment- consumerism.

4.3.2 Consumerism

Fiction is one feature of a culture, and the culture depicted in American novels reflects the prevailing assumptions, fears and expectations of American society (Mizruchi 109). *White Noise* also portrays an American consumer society of the late 20th century that is quite displaced and oblivious of the 'natural' amidst the dominant artificial lifestyle. DeLillo skilfully reflects how the constructed environment has an impact upon the minds and attitudes of characters. The reader is trapped in the representation of the brand names and commercial products as the story progresses and develops. The synthetic, artificial and human-made commodities capture our attention as DeLillo describes the characters' fascination with the artificial. Upon arriving home after a visit to a friend, Gladney and Babette pass by streets, and the writer explains the environment in words that speak to the artificiality of the contemporary predicament, "along Elm all the stores were dark, the two banks were dimly lit, and the neon spectacles in the window of the optical shop cast a gimmicky light on the sidewalk" (14).

Ironically, the natural chemistry associated with vision is juxtaposed with words such as "lit", "dark", "light" and "dim" (87). The "spectacles" or the eyeglasses made of neon are not transparent but reflect a "gimmicky" light, blurring the actual purpose of vision and sight. The words and their positioning within the context of natural versus "un-natural" become relevant when we realise how much the contemporary individual has become complicit in the post-industrial washing-out of the naturalness around us. The quotation above is followed by a list of

brand names of various products that are synthetic, such as "Dacron, Orlon [and] Lycra Spandex" (52). This apparently has nothing to do with optics but is rather an advertisement for commercial products as reflected and narrated many times in the novel. Perhaps this is one of the writer's stylistic techniques used to highlight contemporary American culture and emphasise its conformity with artificiality. What is relevant about this description about optics is the disparity the writer has demonstrated by juxtaposing optics with synthetic. The author has created a meta-comment on perception, employing the quality of vision to portray the environment. Such paragraphs in the novel are significant as they reflect a general theme in the narrative. The characters and their environment display strong ties with their associations to brand names and commercial products. On many occasions, the reader is compelled to reflect upon his or her surroundings, including popular consumer culture. Furthermore, the built environment in *White Noise* is entirely removed from the natural environment, as the connection between the characters and their natural environment is minimised. The natural environment and characters' surroundings are portrayed through mediated images, like the TV broadcasting natural disasters. The TV is an un-natural medium that reflects Jean Baudrillard's concept of simulacra and also points to the same self-referential quality of imitation of reality in his conceptualisation of the 'simulacra'. Baudrillard claims that the contemporary society has become a replica of all reality, replacing reality with signs and symbols, and human experience has been reduced to that of a simulation of reality.[15] The novel effectively delineates this observation as a sign of historical changes, juxtaposing postmodern culture and nature and superimposing postmodern aesthetics. In "What is Nature" Kate Soper notes:

> discourses which direct us to the 'nature' that we are destroying, wasting and polluting, and discourses that are focused on the ideological functions of the appeal to 'nature' and on the ways in which relations to the non-human world are always historically mediated, and indeed 'constructed', through specific conceptions of human identity and difference. (3-4)

That is why DeLillo in *White Noise* often directs us to 'nature' through symptoms of destruction, pollution and waste. However, one cannot ignore the ever-present constructed and artificial environment evident in the text. This artificiality is so central that "nature" recedes behind the screens and curtains of TV and other forms of media representation. Like most of us today, Jack

is trying to find the underlying meaning of this chaos. He turns towards the sky and calls out, "What is out there? Who are you?" (101). However, ironically, the joke is on the readers. There is no answer. There is nothing that can be referenced. The globe and the sky have undergone a transformation, and Jack, like many of his contemporary Americans, is incapable of decoding substantial "referents for signifiers" (Hummer). The blue sky thus becomes simply a flat blue space. Our so-called technologically advanced world becomes one of radiations, waves and simulacra (Aleksandra 1-8). The contemporary postmodern ideology ontologically has no more than this to show to us, and *White Noise* exhibits this. Perhaps it would help us to arrive at a more coherent understanding of what the postmodern society and culture entails if we consider this ideology through the narrative of industrialisation, especially in the U.S., Fredric Jameson explains this phenomenon in his well-known book *Postmodernism*, in which he explicates that the notion of postmodernism does not fit into "any conveniently coherent thumbnail meaning" (xxii). Similarly, Buell argues that the dividing line between "natural" and "built" in the contemporary postmodern environment has been nearly eradicated:

> Natural and built environments, revisionists point out, are long since all mixed up; the landscape of the American 'West' is increasingly the landscape of metropolitan sprawl rather than the outback of Rocky Mountain 'Wilderness'. (Buell, *Future* 22)

It is not difficult to comprehend the 'natural' environment in contemporary built environment, which potentially bears within itself the seeds of potential danger, risk and damage. *White Noise* adequately explains this scenario. Waste and pollution are referred at the very beginning of the novel. However, the inherent danger within the story is not perceived until the grand toxic airborne accident in the middle of the novel. This human-made catastrophe gains attention through TV and media, and less clear dangers to the environment like the bioaccumulation of toxins in comparison lurk only in the background. Hence, in *White Noise,* the human-made eco-catastrophe, the airborne toxic event, is made more prominent through media responses and voyeuristic enthrallment. Otherwise stated, the characters in *White Noise* take great interest in interpreting the intense interest towards the natural disasters broadcasted. What DeLillo is suggesting is perhaps that our indirect and limited connection with the "natural" world has become so human-made and artificial with the impact of industrial and technological capital that we need to reconsider what "nature" is. This observation is quite similar to what Sanders anticipates about nature when he poses the

question, "what has become of nature in recent American writing?" and suggests that all modern American novels are "antinatural" (191). What is suggested here is that our perceptions of nature need to be reshaped, and the poetics of ecological consciousness need to be renewed.

Furthermore, in *White Noise,* this limited perception of detachment from the environment is evident. The novel presents an environmental crisis as quantifiable statistical data based on the pollution level, projections of global warming, health data, a list of endangered species and other details. These details are technologically controlled. As Richard Kerridge has also pointed out, "the meanings of these items are much less stable" when viewed only with regard to representation as opposed to the actual event ("Introduction" 2). Broadcasted news of disasters and environmental changes cannot be contained as *representation,* as some critics argue, but the news does in fact rupture representation of reality. This condition of "disconnection" from the real describes postmodernity, which is troubled by an enlargement of the role played by the virtual world. Perhaps it is not incorrect to suggest that this "disconnection" is multiplied further by DeLillo's narrative of simulacra. Through this depiction of "disconnection", DeLillo is successful in referencing different types of "disturbances" in the novel. The surprise invoking of "Dacron, Orlon, Lyca Spandex" (52) in parallel to news about environmental crises on TV allude to disturbances in the surroundings that may not be toxic but symbolise a secondary level of pollution in the environment. The repeated drumming of technological apparatuses – this is quite clearly manifested in *White Noise* in the form of images and sounds streaming their way out of the TV and radio in Jack Gladney's household and in the supermarket – accentuates the aura of a constructed human habitat that strives to alienate itself from nature. Anderson Ashford (2009) also points out in *Ecocritical Theology* that the title *White Noise* also directs our attention to the chorus of sounds in the background that create "disturbances" and distractions throughout the novel (88). The anthropogenic pollutants, such as traffic rattle, Babette's humming, the endless sounds sweeping through the market, the TV shows, commercials and fragments, are interwoven into the narrative. The cacophony and stream of sound, related to both the human condition and the artificial, are central to an ecocritical reading of the novel. *White Noise* thus refers to ambient noise emanating from everyday scientific technologies. Furthermore, the title and the term 'white noise' also refers to non-optical radiations, such as x-rays and sounds waves, and the ever-present technology in our built environment. One can argue that when all the individual sounds converge to form disturbances that saturate the environment, they are difficult to distinguish and thus

become “white noise”. This metaphor is crucial to our understanding of unseen pollution in the atmosphere and leads the discussion to another form of pollution- chemicals.

4.3.3 Chemicals and Toxins

In today’s technologically advanced world, consumption affects people’s desire for both an attachment to and detachment from a sense of order and permanence. It could be the same reason that a postmodern man like Jack and his wife Babette feel compelled to consume. Ironically, consumption does not come with any sense of fulfilment. However, one may wonder why well-settled and educated people of North America would want to consume something that involves risk to their health and the natural environment. This is a “biological” perspective that might reveal a character’s desire for detachment from the external environment in order to “conquer” death. DeLillo underscores risks perceived as external and internal hazards. One of the prominent features of the narrative is exposure of chemicals and substances to the human body, both by choice and by accident. The exposure to chemicals raises questions about bioaccumulation and toxicity, which have long-term consequences for both the environment and the human body. Some of the chemical risks are mentioned frequently in the novel, especially those rooted in pharmaceutical products. Nyodene D and Dylar are two chemical substances that occupy a prominent position in the plot of the novel *White Noise*. These chemicals have a role to play in both the external sphere and private domestic space (Heise, “Toxins” 474). While Nyodene D, a poisonous gas, expels people from their homes and damages the external environment, Dylar infiltrates chemicals into the domestic sphere. Dylar is also a symbol of false hope in the novel, a symbol of a false pursuit to conquer death. After the gas accident in the middle of the novel, the idea of death and “toxic fear” haunts Jack and his family. Jack is tormented by this fear of death because of his direct exposure to the toxic gases, while Babette is tormented by the fear of death and consumes a drug called Dylar to conquer this fear. Out of this desperation, she experiments with an unregistered drug, Dylar, in exchange for sexual favours (191-203). Babette’s secret consumption of this drug serves both as an escape from the dread of death. It also serves as a motif that can be read in contrast to the trope of the artificial and toxic manifested in the novel through biochemical, pharmaceutical products and a symbol of the pervasiveness of toxicity in the human body and the natural environment. Babette’s motivation for self-medication adds to the motif of toxicity; she consciously drugs herself to attain freedom

from the fears she harbours, knowing that there could be unforeseen consequences. Likewise, her husband Jack is "drugged" as he is unconsciously exposed to toxins in the external environment without his consent. However, it is gradually revealed how members of the Gladney family are individually exposed to an array of chemical hazards in their daily routine. On a regular basis everyone is a consumer, Jack consumes "blood pressure pills, stress pills, allergy pills, eye drops, aspirin. Run of the mill…Everybody takes something" (DeLillo 62).

Ironically, at the beginning of the novel, Jack unknowingly recounts the various therapeutic chemicals that make up their daily routines. The side effects of the combination of these drugs are revealed later in the novel when Jack unwittingly discovers the nature of the new drug his wife is consuming. However, regardless of everyone's consciousness of the effects of the drugs, the Gladney family is never free from chemical exposure even in their homes. DeLillo's message becomes unequivocal in the text when the reader realises that while Nyodene D. is a threat to the public sphere, Dylar signals the invasion of chemical hazards and risks in the domestic domain (Heise, "Toxins" 750). Both substances are largely detrimental to human health. Heinrich's comment is useful in understanding the gravity of the situation. During the evacuation, he comments:

> In powder form [Nyodene D.]'s colorless, odorless and very dangerous, except no one seems to know exactly what it causes in humans or in the offspring of the human. They tested for years and either they do not know for sure, or they know and aren't saying. (131)

Similarly, Babette also reveals that the official testing of Dylar as a drug was suspended because the pharmaceutical company thought the drug might be fraught with risks. Babette's cry, "I could die, I could live, but my brain could die, but the right side could live …Mr. Gary wanted me to know the risks", validates the vulnerability caused by technology, which can be all consuming (DeLillo 193). It is important to note, however, that Dylar does not work. Jack says:

> Would it ever work? it was the benign counterpart of the Nyodene menace …releasing benevolent chemicals into bloodstream, flooding the fear of death part of my brain…. Technology with a human face. (211)

Technology fails, on one hand is the dreadful and yet life-sustaining face of technology and on the other hand is confrontation of Jack's fear of toxic risks and his final acceptance to see the similar risk in another. *White Noise* in many ways underscores the voluntary and involuntary risks that abound both humans and the environment. Replete with satire and hyperbolic episodes, the novel aims at portraying a capitalist consumer society in which everyone is exposed to various levels of toxic risk, both visible and unseen. Gladney's existential stance is justified by his lack of knowledge of the emerging risks, suggesting that *White Noise* effectively portrays a society at toxic risk and can be read as what Buell terms as a toxic discourse.

4.4 Debate in Context: Similarities and Differences

In this section, I briefly highlight the significant similarities and differences in the critical debate around environmentalism in *Moth Smoke* and *White Noise* to highlight what distinguishes these texts from each other.

4.4.1 Postmodern novels

Moth Smoke and White *Noise* are marked by literary conventions, which makes them postmodern in content and style. Both novels utilise strategies such as paradox, humour, paranoia and a world of divergent and incompatible identities that inculcate a sense of anxiety and paranoia in individuals.[16] Both novels exhibit a hyper-real situation. The artificiality of the built and the natural environment that is manifested in the narratives generates a feeling of uneasiness and insecurity in *Moth Smoke* as well as in *White Noise*. The novels both embody the definition of postmodernism provided by Ihab Hassan:

> Postmodernism may be a response, direct or oblique, to the Unimaginable that Modernism glimpsed only in its most prophetic moments. Certainly, it is not the Dehumanization of the Arts that concerns us now; it is rather the Denaturalization of the Planet and the End of Man. We are, I believe, inhabitants of another Time and another Space, and we no longer know what response is adequate to our reality. In a sense we have all learned to become minimalists – of that time and space we can call our own – though the globe may have become our village. (395)

It is also imperative to discuss "dehumanisation", as both DeLillo and Hamid in exhibit their concerns regarding the dehumanisation of the planet. This is an important distinction that demonstrates the way writers have delineated the denaturalisation of the environment and the mode of life of a postmodern individual. Helen M. Dennis notes the following about *White Noise*:

> This is a postmodern novel precisely because it reflects contemporary reality when we define that reality as a process of dehumanization and denaturalization, which is the inescapable condition of our lives. (par. 7)[17]

Comparatively, both the novels deal with the issues of this reality in specific contexts. The desire for death is prominent in both the novels. Daru is constantly living in a life of "shadows", and this lifeless existence reflects the postmodern individual's predicament. There is no desire in Daru to thrive, but the fear of death is relatively more pronounced in *White Noise*. While technology is seen in terms of class stratification in the Pakistani context in *Moth Smoke*, in *White Noise,* technology becomes ominous as the novel progresses from the simple computer-related technology to the 'airborne toxic event'. When it assumes the garb of a toxic event, technology affects Jack's health, building up his fear of death because of his exposure to chemicals like Nyodene D. Both novels depict their characters struggling with the Baudrillardian world of simulation. All characters are in search of their identities in a hyper-real and artificial society. In an ecocritical context, for both novels, the signifiers of nature hold no meaning. Similar to their lives, the environment that they inhabit is meaningless, fake and hollow.

4.4.2 Environmental apocalypse

The distinctive features of *Moth Smoke* and *White Noise* are linked to tropes of pollution and environmental risk, suggesting that images symbolic of an apocalypse are unique and conceptualised from their respective positions as being distinctively Pakistani and American in their approach and representation. Each author addresses the challenges of toxic consciousness; the slow, permeating risks that afflict contemporary Pakistani and American society; and the dilemma Rachel Carson foresaw when she wrote *Silent Spring*, seeking to dramatize biomagnification and the impact of technology on people and the environment. Furthermore, in a broader cultural context, *White Noise* and *Moth Smoke* are rich and apt examples of meaningful fictions that seek to depict a technological end. Both novels reflect an environmental apocalypse

in an age of nuclear risk. However, DeLillo's sharpest and most incisive irony is reserved especially in describing the ecological disasters and environmental hazards of contemporary life (170; 324). Moreover, Don DeLillo's portrayal of his characters' fear of nuclear horror is embedded deeply in the minds of American residents, which is likely related to the two World Wars. The aura of perpetual fear of a globally threatening nuclear explosion that has not yet taken place stirs feelings of uncertainty and suspense. Moreover, in traditional apocalyptic literature, there is sense of the complete annihilation of the world. In *White Noise* and in postmodern American society in the 80s in general, this sense of destruction is replaced by a feeling of uncertainty and nameless fear.

4.4.3 Dynamics of Capitalism

One of the significant socio-political, cultural and literary debates of the contemporary age is the triumph of capitalism. Ellen Meiksins Wood argues in "Capitalism and Human Emancipation" that "capitalism cannot avoid ecological devastation" because of the antisocial nature of its impulse to accumulate (265). This system does not have respect for the material world:

> Capitalism may be able to accommodate some degree of ecological care, especially when the technology of environmental protection is itself profitably marketable. But the essential irrationality of the drive for capital accumulation, which subordinates everything to the requirements of the self-expansion of capital and so-called growth, is unavoidable hostile to ecological balance. (265)[18]

Similarly, Hamid also criticises a capitalistic culture that prevails in Pakistan and disrupts the socio-economic as well as environmental atmosphere. A common feature in both *Moth Smoke* and *White Noise* is *a* capitalistic yearning for consumption, advancement and economic instability. This study underscores that the interrelation between capital and economic deregulation is responsible for creating conditions of violence and poverty in *Moth Smoke*. The world portrayed in *Moth Smoke* is not only complex, but it also highlights Pakistan's substantive socio-economic as well as eco-social transformation. It offers insights into how Pakistani society and culture are affected by the widening gulf between the rich and the poor, a gulf primarily impacted by capitalism. Hamid is sensitive to the characters of the novel and their degeneration into mechanical individuals devoid of genuine freedom and submerged in the demands of global

capitalism. One of the reasons for Daru's hubris is the role of capitalism and private enterprise. In the absence of equal opportunity and economic stability, normal civil rights cannot be achieved, nor can individuals prosper in a real sense.[19] According to the Marxist notion of ecology, ecological balance is achieved when there is a relationship between a social and "natural praxis". An intimate relationship between nature and human society is essential for harmony, but it is thwarted as humanity becomes alienated from nature. This alienation becomes evident as humanity drifts away from its primordial source, "nature". The race for material accumulation is underestimated, as one observes in *Moth Smoke* as well.

The people of Lahore who seem to be "at the mercy of the powerful" (225) reflect Hamid's articulation of a significant link between the environmental crisis of the country. The author's reference to the intense heat wave causing death and sickness and the despicable social and economic conditions of common people in Lahore are juxtaposed with the references to the celebrations of the testing of the atomic bomb. This focus prefigures Rob Nixon's "environmentalism of the poor" (4) as it talks about those who lack resources, like the impoverished people of the global South, where Pakistan stands out as one of the poorest capitalist states. The images of a test bomb explosion, the penurious and the wealthy, the polluted landscape and the changing ecological paradigms transition into the problems that this comparative study addresses, and that resonate throughout the novel. Hamid's narrative challenges the question of how Pakistani storytellers conceptualise ecology in the grip of neoliberal capitalism.

Like *Moth Smoke*, *White Noise* is also a sharp critique of the late capitalism in America. Through the character of Jack, DeLillo acknowledges various sorts of consumerism, ranging from media to drugs. Chemical consumption is presented as a corrupt practice used to lure the attention of consumers at all costs. DeLillo, like Hamid, presents a revolt against the forces of capitalism through fiction, demystifying unrestrained consumption.

4.4.4 Disruption of Pastoral Ideal

DeLillo and Hamid both use metaphors, images and more significant tropes to describe the rupture of the concept of an ideal relationship with pristine nature. The environmentalist perspective in *White Noise* comes from anxiety that is deeply rooted in American culture, the anxiety about the worldwide ecological destruction that threatens humans' present and future lives in the form of synthetic substances. The concept around DDT in the text is a reminder of such an apocalyptic worldview that Carson foresaw in *The Silent Spring*. DDT was considered to kill insects only. However, Carson gathered data and scientific evidence that the chemical can penetrate the human body through inhalation. It is stored and kept in fatty rich organs. Large amounts of this compound get stored in the liver and kidneys (21). The chemical that DeLillo refers to in the novel Nyodene D is a derivative of DDT, which is toxic to all forms of human life. The American industry readily produced such groups of toxins that were used not as a pesticide but were also used in warfare during second world war (28). Extending and connecting Carson's views on such toxic chemicals and its impact on birds and animals', one observes how it echoes Virgil's Meliboeus in ancient books of pastoral, whose apprehension towards his flocks and their suffering on his journey is unknown (Ashford 99). Carson's delving into the question of such type of an apocalypse is something that plagues the 21st century and is taken up by DeLillo to draw attention towards the ongoing debate between the environmentalists and industrialists.

Similarly, DeLillo's portrayal of the toxic event in the novel occurs due to a train accident, which ties it to the dominant American cultural symbol and metaphor of "train" as also recognised by Leo Marx in his most famous book on American environmentalism *Machine in the Garden : Technology and the pastoral ideal in America*. These parallels are significant as they mirror the nostalgia for the pastoral ideal, yet the whistle of the train in Marx's narrative and the "airborne toxic event" in DeLillo's fiction ruptures through the moments of quiet and tranquil relaxation. Just as the "noise" of the trains whistle in Marx's *Machine in the Garden* is invasive of comfort so is the "toxicity" in *White Noise* which reflects a negative cultural metaphor for the contemporary American industrial development. The concept of machine/ train in American pastoral myth links two worlds, the country and the urban. Therefore, by the time DeLillo wrote *White Noise*, America had already defined itself to what Deitering calls "toxic waste" (202). The toxic accident is referred to as derailing of a train car in the novel. The representation of a train car serves a metaphor,

leaking a toxic poisonous gas, and transports the cultural symbol of the train to another level. As Ashford observes:

> The machine that fascinated Thoreau through sensory perception are now pollution the rural environment of Blacksmith, USA. Blacksmith becomes the new Concord and as the black mass enters the consciousness of the residents of the city, it also infiltrates their bodies. This invasion is not a little interruption of sound or thought. This is a life-changing situation for the Gladney family as they are forced to evacuate their homes. (99)

Therefore, this toxic situation in the novel foreshadows the concept of total annihilation of the biosphere what generally ecologists and theologist term as an *apocalypse* and is linked with the debates over nuclear waste disposal which were the dominant themes in the 1980's. Moreover, in American fiction, there is also an implicit desire for that pastoral ideal upon which American environmental imagination is built, which is, however, irretrievable.

Moth Smoke, on the other hand, is opposed to this pastoral notion of retreat, but it reflects an image of an urban wilderness that relies on one's social conditions. As opposed to the nationalist interpretative frameworks of the Anglo-American nature paradigm *Moth Smoke* is marked by what Mukherjee terms as "materialist and capitalist bases underlying them" (40). In contrast, to American notions on modern technology, the technology and its impact on humans and their habitat differs according to economic hierarchy and stratification in Pakistan. The rich and wealthy can retreat into a bliss of comfort amidst chaos and destruction. The forces of capitalism have resulted in a build-up of wealth at one pole in Pakistan and relative human desolation and environmental degradation at the other pole, which is characterised by contamination, pollution, urban sprawl and congestion, and a corrosive social and ecological life.[20]

Moth Smoke represents the political and socio-economic consciousness of modern Pakistan, depicting the social struggles and economic crisis paving the way towards environmental desolation. The environment in Pakistan is thus a "historical consequence of both the colonialism of the past and the present struggle against its new form" (Mukherjee 41). The environmental anxiety manifested in *Moth Smoke* describes an idyllic ideal that is only a privilege for a few. The connection between capital accumulation and neoliberal economic deregulation not only compartmentalise Pakistani society, but its impact is observable in the environment as well. *Moth*

Smoke demonstrates that access to financial capital, which largely remains in the hands of the elite who can create their own pastoral ideal, also provides holders with immunity to crime and a refuge from decaying, polluted habitats.[21] To beat the stagnating unfair disparity in the country, most people like Murad, the rickshaw driver, and Daru resort to selling and using toxins, like drugs and cigarettes. The malign and decaying environmental space in *Moth Smoke* in the confines of which Murad and Daru interact is mostly a product of an economic system that significantly shapes people and leaves little space for the improvement of their ecological habitats. On the contrary, the elite who are a by-product of neoliberal policies can create a clean environment for themselves like that of "Sweden" without leaving the "dusty plains of the subcontinent". The criminal activities, heightened insecurities and dirty trash-filled poor neighbourhoods in the city of Lahore cannot be understood without the context of the role of history, material realities and what Ashcroft (2001) terms as "pattern of discursive struggles" (12) against the colonisation and in this case, neoliberal progress and the corruption of the wealthy elite. These differing trends in environmental debates in Pakistani and American literary context that playout in cultural and literary studies is based on political and historical ideas. And the debates also expose explicitly the surmounting importance of "environment" as a category that is distinct in terms of South Asian when compared to the Euro-American environmentalism. From the analysis it is evident that Pakistani fiction in comparison is:

> a specific environment of historical condition, as it manifests in former colonies and the new postcolonial nations, enabling a complex and rich representative act that we call the postcolonial novel form". (Mukherjee 187)

4.5 Conclusion

Since the connection between the places we refer to as home and the environment continues to suffer from rampant pollution, the examination of both novels raises similar questions within their cultural confines and according to the nature of ecological risk. Moreover, a literary analysis of toxic risk perceptions and polluted environments in fiction suggests that anxieties and fear regarding a degenerating environment are not always as conspicuous as they could be. Heise, for instance, explains that contemporary postmodern writers make use of chemical substances and drugs (pills as well as narcotics) as metaphors, blurring the boundaries between the environment and the body, domestic and public space and harmful and beneficial

technologies (748). For this reason, the comparative study of both fictions focuses on the "blurring" of private and public spaces, both psychologically and physically. Carson also notes this at the beginning of *Silent Spring*, quoting Albert Schweitzer's view when he says "man has lost the capacity to foresee and to forestall. He will end by destroying the earth". However, no one could have envisioned that the contamination of our space and home communities is on its way toward such destruction, leading humanity toward an "antidote to oblivion". Both *White Noise* and *Moth Smoke* in a broader context can be critiqued for presenting an entanglement of nature/culture dualism imbricated in waste, consumerism and absence of nature. Reading *Moth Smoke* and *White Noise* provides an exclusive opportunity to explore how the environment and human nature relate and interact. While similarities between different forms of environmental representation reveal fundamentals about human nature, human society and the way mankind generally regard nature in different cultural contexts. The differences in a transgeographical debate draw our attention to what Mukherjee terms as "the potted history from below" (174) of postcolonial conditions when compared to the American discourse and reveal key aspects of the material and historical realities of Pakistan, south Asia and the third world in general.

NOTES

[1] The subtitle has been borrowed from *Moth Smoke* (112).

[2] Paul Jay. "The post-post-colonial condition: Globalization and historical allegory in Mohsin Hamid's Moth Smoke." *: A Review of International English Literature* (*ARIEL*: 2005).36.1

[3] The Reluctant Fundamentalist Mohsin Hamid's Narrative Technique. https://www.gradesaver.com/the-reluctant-fundamentalist/study-guide/mohsin-hamids-narrative-technique.

[4] Don DeLillo in his 1985 novel features a character of a nun who disbelieves in God, lives in a society of consumers who are alive but do not live, in an environment which is vulnerable to a cataclysmic man-made toxin event. Moreover, the latest zombie media fad, environmental catastrophes meshed with toxins can be read like a contemporary version of the testament "the book of Deuteronomy" which is quite reminiscent of Don DeLillo's *White Noise* (1985).

[5] Scott Russell Sanders. "Speaking a word for nature." *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*, edited by Harold Fromm and Cheryl Glotfelty, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1996), 182-95. https://coderoncode.com/transhumanism/futurism.

[6] McGeorge, Bundy. New York Times magazine. Also see the *Transhumanist Revolution*: *Hubris* Jan 1, 2014.

[7] Cynthia Deitering, "The Post-natural Novel," in The Ecocriticism Reader, ed. Harold Fromm et al. (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1996), 196.

[8] Alok Jha in the article, "Climate threat from nuclear bombs" reviews on the hazards of nuclear weapons and its impact upon earth, agriculture, atmosphere and human population. Frederick Turner, "*Escape from Modernism:* Technology and the Future of the Imagination," *Harper's Magazine* 269 (November 1984): 55.

[9] Shah Muneer Baloch, 'The Fallout from Pakistan's Nuclear Test". (*The Diplomat.* May 29: 2017). https://thediplomat.com/ Accessed on May 5th, 2017.

[10] See for example, Scott Hess, "Postmodern Pastoral, Advertising, and the Masque of Technology," Interdisciplinary Studies of Literature and the Environment 11.1 (2004): 71-100,

[11] Gifford in context of post-pastoral narrative, defines six basic characteristic features that would define the text as a post-pastoral one. See, Gifford, Terry. "Pastoral, anti-pastoral and post-pastoral as reading strategies." *Critical Insights: Nature and Environment* (2012): 42-61.

[12] "Narrative Technique in DeLillo's White Noise Essay" https://www.bartleby.com/essay. Accessed on July 1st, 2019.

[13] "Don DeLillo's White Noise: a novel way of dismantling consumerist excess". https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016.

[14] In *The Risk Society: towards a new modernity* published in 1986 gave the notion of man-made risks in contemporary society and was of pivotal significance in the public debate of the mid-1980s, because

of many environmental disasters such as the Chernobyl catastrophe. Beck approached these problems as examples of what he termed a worldwide transformation towards communities and societies dominated by the idea of risk.

[15] Jean Baudrillard, "Simulacra and simulations." In: Rivkin, Julie and Michael Ryan (eds.) *Literary theory: an anthology* Maiden: (Blackwell Publishing: 2004): 365-377.

[16] For details on *Moth Smoke* as postmodern novel, see, Moin, Afshan, and Khamsa Qasim. "Discerning Hyper Reality in Mohsin Hamid's Moth Smoke: A Postmodernist Reading." *The Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 23.2 (2015): 109. https://scholar.google.ca/. 24 Nov 2017.

[17] Helen M Dennis, 'English and Comparative Literary Studies' *Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies*, Coventry (University of Warwick, 2011) https://warwick.ac.uk.

[18] Ellen Meiksins Wood, "Capitalism and Human Emancipation: Race, Gender and Democracy." *Democracy against Capitalism: Renewing Historical Materialism*. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995). 264-83. Web.

[19] See, Stiglitz in *Globalization and its Discontents*, on capitalism and its impact. (2002).

[20] For a detailed study on how capitalism impacts environment and social life see, John Bellamy Foster. 'The absolute general law of environmental degradation under capitalism.' *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, 3:3, 77-81 (September: 1992): 77-81. https://doi.org/10.1080/10455759209358504.

[21] The devastating impacts of SAPs in 1988-1999 due to neoliberal policies imposed on Pakistan rendered most of the people in the country with an unfortunate and tragic scenario intensifying class division inequality and high rate of unemployment ("Neoliberal Economy" 1342).

CHAPTER V
SENSE OF PLACE IN *TRESPASSING* AND *A THOUSAND ACRES*

5.1: Introduction

Previous chapter examined the nature of toxic discourse in Pakistani and American fiction in English, locating neoliberal forces, neocolonial power dynamics and industrial capital consumption as possible means of perpetuating pollution and chemical contamination. This chapter analyses environmentalism and a sense of place by exploring the plurality of eco cosmopolitan trajectories in *Trespassing* and *A Thousand Acres*. The writers in these texts demonstrate environmental and political awareness advocating for a connectedness entrenched in larger transgeographical and global contexts because the stress—at least in Euro-American environmentalist spheres—has in the past been on privileging rural and urban attachment to limited home-grown and immediate localities alone (Heise, *Sense* 29; Mukherjee). On the contrary, Heise argues that "rather than focusing on the recuperation of a sense of place," environmentalism requires that it should adopt an "understanding of how a wide variety of both natural and cultural places and processes are connected and shape each other around the world, and how human impact affects and changes this connectedness" (21).

Heise maintains, that in our globalized society, the politics of environmentalism exceeds the physical spatial borders, and eco-cosmopolitanism on the contrary suggests that we inhabit a planet that is "deterritorialized", where people inhabit a wide variety of spaces and places that are both geographically and culturally distant from each other (58, ch.4). While the eco-cosmopolitan vision grants us a framework to locate new meanings in envisioning non-human/human relationship in broader local and global perceptive, the socio-economic and political contexts, and discursive practices are never overlooked. Both the novels, *Trespassing* and *A Thousand Acres*, deal with different social and historical contexts and share a predominant interest in the human nature entanglement. While doing so, both the novels explicate the percussions and rationale of socio-political implications of the processes such as the sociopolitical marginalization of

indigenous members of fishermen community in Sindh (Salaamat) and the marginalization of female victims and the local agrarian land in *A Thousand Acres.* These connections are significant in underpinning the political co-optation of the environment and its consequences on the ecologies of respective regions thereby exposing latent militant (ethnic nationalist Sindhi separatist movement) and (androcentric dominance of women and land) in the novels as they present a dual vision of environmentalism in the two texts under consideration.

The dual perspective on the environment in the two novels provide an alternate vision of relating to ecologies perceived in transgeographical contexts. Given these two aspects, the following discussion tracks how *Trespassing* and *A Thousand Acres* engage in what Heise calls eco-cosmopolitanism with a simultaneous focus on environment and dominant ideologies specific to their histories and cultures.

5.2 *Trespassing*

Internationally read and acclaimed, shortlisted in 2003 for the Commonwealth Writers Prize the novel *Trespassing* commences dominant themes of violence, religious extremism, multiple nationalism (Sindhi separatist movement) and the global economy are just a few to mention. The hierarchies of power and politics in complex ways shape the plot and themes of the novel. It is also important to mention the milieu within which texts are constructed and what different alternative meanings one can derive out of them. The history of Pakistan and the discourse that it generates provides one a rich postcolonial context to draw on dominant themes on imperialism especially now as Pakistan after the advent of 9/11 of September 2001 is perceived with a gaze of suspicion and threat (Singh 23). The encroachment of Taliban and foreign imperial nations has resulted in multiple layers of resistance and rebuilding narratives by what Ashcroft et al, term as "formerly silent native[s]," addressing numerous offenders against the state, individual freedom and self-determination. To serve as agents of resistance, the texts written after the partition served to reformat the positions of dominance and power, situating local practices, experiences and concerns at the centre striving to push the exploiter "to the margins of experience" (Ashcroft et al. 12). This tendency tends to reject some emblematic features of imperialist conscience and literature, to disrupt or to deconstruct what Ashcroft et al observe as a kind of logic and "ideologies of the West" (27).

In a postcolonial context, whenever the origin of Pakistan's present turmoil and the crisis is traced, it is also common among different writers to rely excessively on "Islam" to define national belonging (Rahman; Kabir). Similarly, Farzana Sheik writes in *Making Sense of Pakistan* that Pakistan as a nation was created in the name of Islam by Jinnah and many followers:

> For whom the force of Islam was judged to extend beyond the sphere of religion to touch vital matters of temporal existence, including the conditions of modern nationhood. It is this vexed relationship between Islam and nationalism that has proved to be deeply problematic and is arguably the single greatest source of ideological uncertainty in Pakistan. (1)

Within the vortex of this "ideological uncertainty" which has profound historical roots, the building blocks of Pakistan, such as nation, community and power, that primarily shaped Pakistan – yet largely is informed by Islam, were all fiercely contested (Sheik 1-2).

The novel *Trespassing,* on the contrary, despite the observations made on prominent ideological and religious factors affecting Pakistani identity takes an altogether different trajectory by presenting an different perception of Pakistan that is seen rooted in a more planetary and terrestrial setting that is not grounded in prominent ideologies that have represented Pakistan to the world. Quite the reverse, the ecological vision that this analysis will focus on aligns with the what Kabir claims as "pre-Islamic past" (173), a "materiality of place" (Rahman 261) and what Heise terms as "eco-cosmopolitanism" (*Sense* 50), and a type of universal and cosmopolitan thinking that is not essentially imperialist or despotic cosmopolitanism but instead what Spivak (2003) sees as a kind of "Planetary" in nature. The interpretation of cosmopolitanism in this analysis is not a totalizing system of capital exchange instead as Heise defines the concept, it upholds and acknowledges differences and seeks to underscore the way humanity and all living forms are implicated in the global ecological network that manifests our everyday activities (*Sense* 56). From an eco-cosmopolitan perspective, Heise explains the global networks of exchange in our daily routine as:

> From the food, clothes, and fuel we buy to the music and films we enjoy, the employer we work for, and the health risks we are exposed to, everyday routines for most people today are inconceivable without global networks of information. (54)

This type of extended ecological comprehensions of cosmopolitanism is relevant to consider as a foregrounding of ecology and its relationship within a sense of place as well as a sense of planet. Therefore, in this context, *Trespassing* presents a sense of eco-cosmopolitanism as Rahman (2011) notes becomes a way to imagine beyond the defined realms of religious nationalism by situating oneself in the planet that is owned by all, in its all forms of existence, its flora and fauna, and its geography (261-282). *Trespassing* like *Thinner Than Skin* and *Geometry of God*, demonstrates the multiplicity of South Asian Muslim affinities and affiliations and also the richness of pre-Islamic cultures intellectual and aesthetic inheritances (Clements 12). Such narratives by South Asian writers as Clements observes, "may not only satisfy neo-orientalist demands for Muslim "exotica" to some extent, but also function strategically to subvert the stereotypes that would feed occidental assumptions and appetites" (12). Khan in a similar vein is conscious of various connections and therefore shapes her fiction in content and form that features her characters who avoid "being forcibly attached by patriotism and nationalism to cultural and political formations" (13) and instead are represented committed to its geography and nature.

Trespassing is Khan's multilayered narrative encompassing an environmental impulse intertwined with complex delineation of geography, emotional and symbolic underpinnings with the land. Kabir observes in *Deep Topographies* that the way Khan aligns to local attachments such as desire and longing in the novel, offers the narrative a "real alternative" to Islamicist self-fashioning strategies, and redirects the novel as a response of a post-partition generation exploring their lives within "chaotic layers" of history and politics (174). For Khan, the geography and landscape of Pakistan are what gives the country its identity. Thus, one observes, *Trespassing* opens with the image of sea vast and expansive with turtles laying eggs, signifying life and fertility and the novel begins by setting one of the primary themes in the novel "water" respectively. However, along such diverse themes, Khan also offers a finely constructed geographical vision and presents a way to sustaining eco-critical consciousness, and a narrative that responds to "nature's own rhythms, an echoing of the song of the earth itself" (Bate 76). But, at the same time, the author does not ignore the ecological and the socio-political context of the terrestrial landscape

and develops a strong acquaintance with her local place and responds to the environmental systems in the larger global context. Drawing upon Heise's conceptualisation of global environmental imagination, *Trespassing* connects the local natural features of Pakistani landscape, its ecological interactions with the sea, animals, insects and the farms around which the primary character's lives revolve. The novels ecological awareness is proportional to what Heise has theorised on the ideals of cosmopolitanism, an impulse which she defines as "environmental world citizenship" that "attempts to envision individual and groups as part of planetary imagined communities of both human and non-humankind" (57). Correspondingly, Shazia Rahman notes in *Karachi, Turtles and Materiality of Place* that *Trespassing* embodies an eco-cosmopolitanism that is ingrained in the local in a manner that it implicates the planet globally (261).

Khan simultaneously demonstrates an ecological awareness that needs to understand a symbiosis between **history, culture** and **environment.** The eco-cosmopolitanism in *Trespassing* is at the same time an artistic response to the political and historical conditions of what Mukherjee terms as "uneven development" in Pakistani context, a condition that cannot be divorced as a distinct category to those of culture and history (83). That is why on the one hand in *Trespassing* the characters are identified as cosmopolitans, and yet Khan does not dismiss larger ecological issues like environmental injustice and violence and thereby demonstrate historical and political perspective which views culture, history and environment in their real, mutually intertwined conditions. Before I move on to the eco-cosmopolitan vision in the novel; I would like to gather some dominant strands of the novels postcolonial style of writing that sets it apart from the American novel in its material conditions, style and form and cosmopolitan perspective.

5.2.1 Stylistic Novelty

Nilanjana S. Roy notes that "While Khan's prose may be subtle, her style is as forceful as any of the great storytellers... Khan is creating a tradition and style of her own as a writer".[1] Keeping in view Roy's observation, there are many features that provide the novel with a distinctive stylistic flavor. The fiction comprises of multiple voices and stories, and each story is entrenched in the social issue of identity, ethnicity, subjectivity, gender and human nature interaction. However, the exceptional quality of Khan's style is her use of images, symbols and metaphors that are as complex as the complex pre-historic past that she interlaces with the larger themes in the novel. Metaphors assume larger dimensions in the novel thematically as well as

stylistically. With the use of metaphors Khan utilizes another feature of stylistic innovation; "code-mixing", a development of a third linguistic expression as a result of two or more languages (Hamers and Blanc 35). Use of untranslated words in the novel are also used when the author attempts to illustrate the traditional and cultural customs (Suleman 60). The impact of Urdu language through the linguistic process of code-switching has resulted in generating an innovative style at the lexical level in Pakistani postcolonial fiction in English (Ahmed 63). That is why the use of Urdu words and expressions in *Trespassing* gives :

> It a linguistic and cultural identity and it is more evident in the large number of loan words from Urdu and the other regional languages which have made their way more common in Pakistani English. The influence of Urduization seems all- pervasive in Pakistani English. (Baumgardner 42, qtd. in Ahmed)

Khans' use of words like "ajanbe" for "foreigner" for example, not only describes a unique vernacular expression specific to Pakistani narrative, but it has a linguistic function. Identity issue, which remains significant to the novel is raised through the persona of Salamat, which in itself in Urdu, means "peace". Ironically, he is represented as someone "who wanders through life, trying to find an attachment to something definitive and fulfilling" (Khan 49). However, his identity "remains" exclusive as an "ajnabe" in the novel, revealing socio-cultural knowledge tangled in the inter-discursive structures of the text. Similarly, viewing text from such inert-discursive formulations Khan presents a multifaceted world representing different meanings in context.

5.2.2 Environmental-Historical Aesthetic

On a more formal and thematic level, there are other significant features of her novel that fortify new ways of delineating Khan's vision. Thus, to acquire an ecocritical postcolonial perspective, one must also consider looking into Khan's style what Mukherjee calls eco-materialism while engaging South Asian texts. Mukherjee defines them as the aesthetics of uneven development, the materiality of performance culture, stylistic variations between various cultural forms that can offer us different dimensions to accept the profound meanings that texts may propose (81). Extending this conceptual framework, I would begin with the specificities of style in *Trespassing*. The most striking feature of Khan's narrative is its inextricable intertwining of Pakistan's history with the environment that exposes itself as a representative model of "uneven historical development" quite specific to Pakistan. Therefore, one notices, that *Trespassing* fulfils

the criterion provided by Mukherjee in terms of locating realities embedded in both the form and content of the novel. Those are for example as follows:

1: *Trespassing* draws on Pakistan's rich past ancient civilization which is entangled with the environmental eco-cosmopolitan impulse in the novel. Shamsi observes that Pakistan's pre-Islamic civilizations (manifest in the archaeological locations of Taxila, Harappa, and Moenjodaro), and its joint borders and intersecting cultural traditions with India, Iran, Afghanistan, China, and Central Asia, "has given Pakistani writers a particularly rich cultural heritage to draw on" (*Dragonfly* xxii). Likewise, in *Trespassing* Khan links the cosmopolitan vision and cultural historical legacy with the centuries-old silk route and provides the novel with distinctive historical material reality. References to the silk route in the novel connects Pakistan's past and present with the centuries old borders that define South Asia's permeability of borders this giving it a cosmopolitan bent.

2: The novel reveals the hegemonic accounts of history that resists this authority in the lives of the people who are marginalized, disenfranchised like Salamat and inhabit the margins of class and society and are denied economic agency. This socio-political marginalization is a result of class politics and ethnic violence in Sindh that is linked with the contestation of ecological resources (Dogar). Furthermore, the mass migration of people from India to Pakistan as an aftermath of colonization led to an immense deterritorialization and displacement of the people after independence ("Migrant Literature")[2]. This process is perpetuated due to dislocation as well as external invasions for example the cooks family "moved to Thatta from their village, driven out by the trawlers that invaded the local fishermen's zone" (Khan 100) and impetuses the influx of disenfranchised people into the metropolis for livelihood introducing new vulnerabilities, especially those who are at the margins like Dia's cook and Salaamat.

3: Khans complex vision on politics- her simultaneous focus on exposing the transnational geopolitical structures of neocolonialism and the local political conflicts within the country – is supported by a specific strategy of shaping her narrative around the intrinsic connectedness of spatial and temporal relationships that are aesthetically expressed. For example; the workers financially deplorable and abusive conditions at the "shrimp factory" is an example of neoliberal development and free market oriented towards exploitation of labor; the referencing to "foreign trawlers" are examples of resource theft by transnational invaders; local religious and ethnic

violence are examples of a complex political vision that is directly linked with the narrative aesthetics of the text. Water and energy scarcity due to unequal distribution (152 Ch.3) Therefore, in spaces like labor exploitation in the factory, contention over resources/water, makes concrete the legacies of the past colonialism now shaped by neoliberalism, sectarian politics and globalization.

4: The fourth feature is Khan's use of what Mukherjee calls "cultural performance" or cultural elements such as art of making "natural dyes" traditional textile skill and expertise recalling ancient native knowledge of dying yarn in the prehistoric Indus civilization of the Sindh region and Salaamat's "truck art" in the novel as a site of what Kabir notes as "ideal(ized) creativity" (181). According to Hashmi:

> Pakistani contemporary art is penetrated by the fractures, turbulence, and discontinuities of its political history. As the nation-state has continuously grappled with the complexities of its 'many pasts', Pakistani artists have articulated the complexities of its evolving 'present'. (9, qtd. in Kabir 179)

Salamat's creativity is seen in the form of "bus decoration" that also emerges as a specific cultural performance which, according to Mukherjee, is a distinctive feature of a postcolonial text. Such examples of variations remain a principal component of critical response to the contemporary Pakistani novel. This specificity of Pakistani novel then tends to deviate from the imitation of the established Euro-American aesthetic patterns and norms (Mukherjee 155). Keeping in view these features on style and radically uneven material environmental and historical conditions manifest in *Trespassing*, the following analysis attempts to explore how individuals and the non-human environment form a part of the planet as well.

5.3 Historical, Cultural and Ecocosmopolitan Vision in *Trespassing*

Drawing on Heise's formulation of eco-cosmopolitanism, which is useful in examining the spatial and temporal entanglements in *Trespassing*, the discussion intends to highlight how Khan recognises the deep entrenchment of human and nonhuman in the planet and proposes ways of inhabiting the earth by reconfiguring our conception of the scale. Further to that, to envision individuals and groups as part of planetary "imagined communities", in *Trespassing* the analysis consequently informs an ecocritical dimension by first bringing in a discussion on the character of

Salaamat and his relationship with the space he inhabits and the environmental vision he encompasses. Salaamat is the very first character introduced to the reader. The setting of the novel is mainly in the metropolitan city of Karachi in Pakistan in the 1980s and 1990s and brings forth multiple characters belonging to different ethnicities and genders. Amongst so many characters, however, the focus of the story is on Salaamat, Danish and Dia and their inextricable connection to the nonhuman and the environmental space. The title *Trespassing* unfolds one of the primary meanings of the story; *trespassing*- trespassing of national borders, the socioeconomic borders and within ethnic division her character's trespass now and then, even love a most compelling emotion can be trespassing- finally the trespassing of the familial dictates that eventually lead to transgression of tragic results. Coupled with this theme is yet another powerful dimension that establishes context of the story; the tempestuous rise of intra-religious orthodox conflicts and ethnic violence in the province of Sindh. Khan dissects the country showing how it limps under the yoke of oppression, orthodoxy and corruption exposing how religious and social barriers in modern Pakistan makes it nearly impossible to live a normal life without encroaching another's property (Rahman 262) . Further, through the persona of Salamat in the novel, Khan demonstrates the relation between land and history. Salaamat in the novel symbolizes uprootedness due to the process of partition, current displacements of native rural communities by internal conflict and external globalization, and the conflicting pulls of nationalism that is rooted in religion entrenched in U.S imperialist cosmopolitanism (Junquera 63).

Within the current situation of this political and national atmosphere emerges physical land space and the local practices, though not devoid of the larger planetary perspective. While the magnitude of the environmental crisis is distinctly global, ecological sensitivity and ecocriticism grow from the local topographies (Heise 56). As the reader encounters the persona of Salaamat, the interconnectivity between him and the natural environment is reconciled instantly. Being a dislocated fisherman in Sindh, Salaamat is also out of his job as a fisherman and Khan exposes the reality in the very first two pages of the novel:

> His locks billow, and his mood is suddenly ruffled by thoughts of his fathers and uncles, who did not go out. They say the foreign trawlers have stolen their sea. They trespass. Fish once abundant close to shore are now disappearing even in the deep. (2)

Salaamat is dispossessed and out of livelihood because of the “foreign trawlers” (2) who have overfished along the coast of the sea depriving hundreds of fishermen in Sindh out of their daily bread and butter. To notice the presence and violation of what Nixon would term as “foreign burdens” the foreign fishing trawlers in Pakistani seas at the outset of the novel is an illustration of such a burden. Fatima Dogar observes and foreshadows significant consequences of the violence and exploitative "trespassing" on the lives of displaced indigenous fishermen communities (Water “Matters”)[3]. Drawing on Nixon’s conceptualizations of *slow violence*, one can trace multiple types of violent acts that fuel the environmental and human vulnerability in the city. The eruption of violence due to Sindhi separatist movement and the unjust act by the authorities to deprive Sindh from resources such as fresh water from the River Indus (Khan 343) is also an act of slow violence. The water predicament in the novel raises disturbing questions about the political systems and the corruption of the local governance that prevail in the country. Such descriptions in the text provide evidence that the water crisis in Sindh is not because of water scarcity in the region, but echoes Mukherjee claim, it is due to “the politically and economically structured uneven distribution of it” (65). This reality is further reinforced when the writer describes the main Indus River as being “dwindled to a trickle” because of unjust “choking” of waters in Sindh by “dams in the Punjab” (Khan 345) and the province of Sindh itself being crushed and rendered impotent because of the exploitation of water as exposed in the text (345). These are acts of violence, as Barefoot Hopi notes, they are “acts of terrorism! Acts of terrorism committed by Governments against their [own] citizens” (734).

This instance of “ecological violence" is further reinforced because of the unfairness of the régime for unlawfully allowing and supporting the foreign trawlers to invade and usurp the resources under the cover of a neoliberal free market. However, this is also suggestive of the role and intervention of global forces that deprive Salaamat of his daily bread, a reminder of North American writer and poet Sherman Alexi who provocatively juxtaposes in a similar mode the Euro-American colonist self-nurturing ambitions with the death and eventual extinction of salmon fish which for those rooted Indians on their land was not merely their bread and livelihood, but all that is metaphorically life-giving and vital in their life and culture. The Native indigenous cry for the vanishing salmon in the rivers by the Euro-American invaders is echoed here reminiscing depletion, contamination of the resources and deprivation of their livelihood.[4] The consciousness prevails, as Khan brings to the readers notice the predicament of disappearing fish from the

Pakistani waters because of overfishing by illegal foreign invaders as khan alludes to this economic setback subtly. The **water trope** runs throughout the novel establishing and linking many themes in the political milieu of Pakistan in the 1990s. Therefore, water plays a dual role in the novel:

> From water's divisive role in inciting separatist ethnic orientations to its fostering of deeper human and animal connections, and the role of the sea space as an impetus to aesthetic and poetic transformation of city space, the novel opens itself up to provocative readings in the domain of hydro politics, ecocriticism and human geography. (Doggar 2)

While the water trope plays a vital role in establishing an environmental theme, it is simultaneously connected with the socio-political issues in Pakistan. Fiction, as Said asserted in *Culture and Imperialism*, is inseparable from the social context, noting that it is influential in creating discourse (212). Therefore, in this social context, the geography of the land and its waters represent powerfully the potential for resistance to protect its sovereignty against violence.

On the other hand, the fact that the beginning of the novel opens with water imagery also reveals the environmental concerns immediately —life with a powerful image of a boy by the sea; nature versus nurture. The serenity of the sea and a boy engaged playfully with a turtle soon converts into a scene of brutal exchange as heavies from the city try to rupture the natural harmony. At the beginning of the first chapter, the way Khan introduces an interaction between Salaamat, the wanton boys and the turtles suggests a dual attitude towards nature. While the boys try to destroy nature, Salaamat on the other hand is the nurturer, he is the protector. Salaamat, belongs to the native communities living on the coast of Indus River, and is also one of the central characters who has been dislocated and deprived but seeks solace in the vastness and splendour of the sea and the land that stretched across. Salaamat's zeal to protect turtles and their eggs from human wantonness reveals his strong association with the land, water and the marine animals.

However, this attachment also unfolds another facet; Salaamat is ensnared into a Sindhi intra-political nationalist movement which as Rahman notes results due to his dislocation from the sea. By being in close harmony with the sea and the turtles, he displays bondage with the land and water which supersedes the political ideologies and religious nationalism rampant in the country. This phenomenon reflects Salaamat's sense of cosmopolitanism, which is rooted in the planet rather than the political and the religious forces (Rahman 190). Another character in the novel that

shares a similar planetary consciousness regarding his connection with the sea is "Daanish", who is the only son of an upper-middle-class family sent to the United States to study journalism. He is obsessed with collecting seashells from across the oceans of the world, which is greatly nurtured in him by his father (Khan 23). Seashells and the sea in a way are symbolic; his "passion" for them "kept him in tune with his surroundings" (24), and symbolise "joy" and a "bond" with nature like Salaamat as he collected them across his travels aropund the world. They also reflect his cosmopolitan side of his nature. However, more than that Khan represents him as someone who is firmly attached to the local sea and the little creatures of the sea, yet his thinking transcends the borders of Pakistan. Danish's internal dialogues and reflections on environmental issues in a planetary context such as; pollution on land and in sea waters because of Uranium deposits mainly due to the first Gulf War, gives him an authorial voice in addressing one of the urgent problems of environmental pollution unique to the local region as well as relevant to the transnational realms. Heise points out that "radioactive contamination is the most obvious indicator that the natural and the domestic can no longer be decoupled from the technological and the transnational" (*Sense of Place* 186). Subtly, Khan juxtaposes and makes repeated references to transnational environmental hazards within the narrative to raise the issue and concern of how individuals live in a globalised milieu where risks such as nuclear contamination transcend and transgress national borders. Khan, consequently, addresses this question by interweaving the narrative style, the strategy and the ecological content.

Although, Danish is based in Karachi, yet his connection and bondage with the sea and seashells are both planetary and global simultaneously. The seashells that he has possessed over the years have been collected from various corners of the world during his study tours, featuring them as both typically local and global as well. However, unique to the two male characters; Salaamat and Danish in the novel is their irresistible attachment to the sea. Likewise, "Dia", the central character in the novel is the daughter of a wealthy Sindhi businesswoman who likes to water her interest and imagination around the world of silk warms on her family farm in the province of Sindh in the Thatta region. Her full-blown obsession is not restricted to the local silkworms but runs deep and far into the global historical discovery of silk farming (Rahman). Día's attachment to the farm is spiritual and according to Rahman "her spirituality provides an eco-cosmopolitanism that does not fit into Pakistani religious nationalism" either.[5] The main characters lead us to a sense of rootedness as manifested in the novel and articulates how the

concept of place gears toward environmental materiality which is an essential concept in environmental imagination and is further articulated in the following discussion.

5.3.1 Sense of Rootedness in *Trespassing*

Referring to Lawrence Buell's *Future of Environmental Criticism*, and his theorisation of "place" in terms of connection, one comprehends that all three characters Dia, Salaamat and Daanish fit neatly into their local, regional places and yet transcend into the global, fulfilling the requirements of place-attachment. Buell writes:

> The concept of place also gestures in at least three directions-toward environmental materiality, toward social perception or construction, and toward individual affect or bond-makes it additionally rich and tangled arena for environmental criticism. (63)

Likewise, due to each character's attachment to the nonhuman elements in the environment which are by and large planetary can also be synchronised by the principles of eco-cosmopolitanism outlined by Heise. The concept of human rootedness in their environments can be exemplified the way Khan has critiqued the socio-political forces spawning in the country and its impact upon deterritorialization. Still, the eco-cosmopolitan underpinning becomes obvious respectively as she juxtaposes the traversing nationalist and ideological boundaries with those of the expanding boundaries of human with the nonhuman. Heise argues that eco-cosmopolitanism is an ability to envision beyond the national boundaries by rooting ourselves in our planet which is accomplished by our sense of awareness of the environment and the land we inhabit particularly regarding the geographical landscape such as the urban, rural and the interrelationship with other life forms. Extending the argument, one also observes how Khan draws attention toward Pakistan as a separate Muslim nation-state by invoking history. This is her technique to showcase an ecocosmoplitanism by exploring temporal and spatial interconnections recognizing how deeply entrenched such networks are. That is why she recalls the historical moment by invoking the founders vision for a unified state which is in jeopardy, by doing so Khan exposes how contemporary Pakistan is divided into this ethnic crisis in the country due to cultural differences among minorities such as Punjabi's, Sindhi's and Baluchi's. One of the characters in the text reveals this reality stating that, "we will always be divided. We'll always be Punjabi, Pathan, Pukhtun, Muhajir, Sindhi, or what-have-you. But, we will never be united ….[ ].They will be rootless" (68-69). The statement is significant because it suggests political destabilization causing

phenomenon's like violence, ethnic conflict and "rootlessness". Khan deliberately traces and juxtaposes the past historical conditions with the present to reveal how ecology, culture and politics are intertwined and how such networks "shape daily routines" (Heise 55, 61).

Similarly, one of the characteristic features of cosmopolitanism is that they are often abstracted as "rootless", "homeless" and in *Trespassing* the situation depicted entails a cosmopolitan ability where many Pakistanis are rootless primarily due to their dislocation resulting initially from their migration from another land that was initiated during 1947 partition, and later it perpetuated after the independence through forces such as local religious/ethnic violence, fragile state policies and globalization. On the contrary, this rootlessness can be juxtaposed with the characters such as Salamat, Dia and Danish who are, on the contrary, deeply connected and rooted in their geographies and the local animals (Rahman). Perhaps, one can say that the binaries of these two opposing strands in *Trespassing* show spectrum of realities in Pakistan; on the one hand, we have a country divided due to nationalist, religious and ethnic violence and on the other, it is seen rooted in geography and its environment. Therefore, as Rahman notes that amidst the ethnic hostility in Karachi, one can trace multiple characters like Salaamat, Danish and Dia that harbour a strong sense of attachment and rootedness with the terrestrial and aquatic environments and animals which transcends the violent nationalism (265).

Likewise, in *Trespassing,* Khan highlights Dia as another eco-cosmopolitan thinker, who never leaves her place nor is she displaced yet harbours a planetary consciousness. Like Salaamat and Daanish, her relationship with the environment is closely knit to the point of being divine and spiritual, as the novel skillfully oscillates between nationalistic, cosmopolitan and local attachments with the environment and the nonhuman. While the two male characters Salaamat and Daanish deal with issues such as the Pakistani local Sindhi movement and the U.S transnationalism while being attached with their environments simultaneously. Dia's character, on the contrary, is more transcendental and spiritual when it comes to her relationship with nature and the eco-cosmopolitan attitude that she manifests. Her modern liberal background is coupled with her bend towards the call for prayers, and Khan describes her feelings, "The muezzin had a thin plaintive voice, and when he sang Dia felt the day close around her. It was as if the caller asked what the day had brought. The same errors? yes, the same. Even so, God had not lost hope entirely. There would be tomorrow, though one day tomorrow would run out. He would not keep spinning

forever" (195). There are two emerging analogies, first that she responds to the call for the prayer, there is a religious bend, and secondly, the analogy of "spinning", an attribute she sees in both her silk warms as well as God. The analogy is significant in understanding how the concept of the divine for Dia manifests the minute details of everyday life. Moreover, the connection of spirituality and environmentalism that Dia represents is contrary to what we significantly see in nationalism exhibited by Salaamat and Daanish. Her kinship with nature is what can be termed as eco-spirituality as she is seen connected with her silkworms spinning on their cocoons on her mother's farm. Her relationship with nature around her provides her with a sustained level of consciousness and provides an orientation towards ecological sensibility. It is interesting, therefore, to see how her amusement in watching silkworms leads her into discovering the divine as she wonders that, "an insects' life was so measurable, and yet so mysterious" (105). Her private study of silkworm breeding, at the farm, provides her with spiritual insight into how nature operates and functions on its own, robust design of God is manifested into their spinning, eating, breeding and procreating. This is a purely spiritual phenomenon which Dia finds attractive, thus captivating her realization:

> That it happened here, in her mother's farm, in the middle of the scorched Indus plain, amid the chaos of Sindh, made all her ethical quandaries regarding the breeding of another life form to suit human interests vanish Standing in a room with eight thousand tiny creatures, witnessing then perform a dance that few humans even knew occurred; this was life. (108)

Dia's sense of spirituality and her environmentalism is akin to what Alfred Tennyson and William Wordsworth hoped to find in nature to understand God. It is reminiscent of how both the poets saw benevolent powers and sublime majesty and transcendence into the realm of the Supreme Being. Likewise, Dia's introspection taught her about herself and the world around her, just like it did to Wordsworth and Tennyson. Her happiness is enhanced when she is with the silkworms and imbues a desire to join the non-human like Salaamat in the novel. Dia is not just another character in the novel which has an affinity and likeness for the nature around her but also manifests a cosmopolitan mind which links her introspections and reflections to the history and discovery of silk. While Día reflects on the mystery of silkworms Khans eco-cosmopolitanism transports her character beyond the confines of Pakistani geography crossing borders giving the readers a glimpse

into Pakistan that is historically and geographically unique. Silkworms transport her to the Silk Route, a road of immense economic and cultural exchange connecting East with the West, that runs through the Indus valley, accelerating the frequency and magnitude of the influx of ideas, commerce, conquest and the people. Hence, Dia, never leaves Pakistan, yet her detailed analysis of the global history of silk makes her cosmopolitan as Khan describes her terrain of thought when she tries to speculate upon human greed and violence generated for the achievement of the capital good, Dia contemplates:

> The Empress His-Ling-Shih had suspected how her discovery would shape the destiny of others, would she instead have tossed away the threads, never to speak of them again, If she's known that a thousand years later, several dozen Persians would pay with their lives for trying to smuggle silkworms out of China, would she have made that robe? If she hadn't perhaps one of the many innocent daughters of those murdered me might have one day stood the chance of discovering something else. (11)

Then she moves on, "would the empress had squashed the caterpillars if she'd known that what would happen twenty-five hundred years later after her find" if so, the Sicilians who'd been trying to make silk spider webs wouldn't have kidnapped and tortured their neighbours, The Greek Weavers, to elicit their knowledge…. Seven hundred years after the agony of Greek weavers …it was the Bengali and Banarsi weavers who suffered because of British torture and greed (12). These references signify globalisation marked by trans-national relations based on vocation, ambition and exploitation (Yaqoob 254). The ancient history of silk farming and trade shed light on international traders and Persian smugglers jeopardising their lives to control the silk industry and its production as consumer capital (Khan 11). The long monologues by Dia on the history of silk making and trade by invoking the role and impact of Sicilians, Greeks, Bengalis and the British reflect a transnational politics. Khan implicitly draws the reader's attention toward the history of human violence for the struggle and control over natural resources. Juxtaposed with this global cosmopolitan approach is Dia's appeal for the local history. Dia is fascinated by the "mighty Indus" and assumes that the grandeur of the majestic river's history can best be comprehended by old men and books which would narrate stories of princesses like Sassi "dwelling in lakhybagh on the banks of river" (97). According to Rahman:

> Her fascination with local and the global history, the nonhuman such as the Indus River and silkworms, and her ability to connect the dots between all of these can be considered eco-cosmopolitan. (97-98)

Like Salaamat and Daanish she too is a very much part of the environment in which she lives, where the only dividing line is her spiritual connection with the non-human amidst political instability and turmoil in Pakistan. Dia's ecological sensibility is intertwined with the divine as is her rootedness in the local land, a kind of eco-spirituality in which she sees her creator, God in the very details of ordinary daily life. The divine is not merely the spinning of the silkworms or their dance, but she sees that plants, in the changing seasons around the year and the animals around her all have a purpose. Khan describes her attachment and fascination with nature:

> The monsoons were Dia's favorite time of year…Best was when the rainfall softened to a cool drizzle, driving the tiny furtive creatures she loved out into the open……She'd step cautiously along her brilliant green lawn, absorbing it all: a residual raindrop on a single leaf, causing it to shudder like hiccup; hoverflies swilling mist; bulbuls diving for dancing gnats. She's felt things so poignantly it was as if the flaccid sky had sunk into her bones, teaching her to see life up close, closer than anyone else. When a thin flaxen light cut through the clouds- the clouds that were in her- she could hear earthworms die and aphids sweat honey dew…. At night fall, she'd slip between deliciously chilled damp sheets that smelled of rain and think, as she so often did at the farm: God is here; God is detail. (289-90)

Author's description about Dia is interesting in revealing her eco-sensitivity, because as Dia is drawn towards tiny details around her habitat, it allows her to become one with the nature as she experiences the sky "sinking into her bones" the clouds as if were "in her". Her love for nature, the divine in nature and local geography expresses her desire and attachment that she bears for the sense of local land. In a planetary sense, all the creatures and non-human elements that she lives with share the planet with her and in a sense, makes it an emblem of eco-cosmopolitanism (Rahman). Likewise, she shares this aspect with Daanish as well, on hearing upon his intrinsic interest in the tiny creatures of the planet amuses her. Daanish reacts positively towards the prospects of breeding silkworms, and Khan expresses his feelings, "he was delighted as if he had gained simply by noticing. As if by sharing a fleeting moment with two tiny unsung beasts, his

world had opened" (217). The "opening of his world" by his encounter with the tiny beasts can be regarded as like those of Dia in certain ways, especially how both are driven to another realm of existence of extreme happiness and fulfilment when they are among nature that is around them in their local geographies. At the same time, one also observes, Dia's traditional silk farming, which is a manifestation of nature and resource is tragically dependent upon human-made tools to survive in the challenging environment of commercialised projects. This provides insight into an account of nature that is not in conformity nor compatible and requires human support for its survival. While history, culture and nationalism are fragile and prone to continuous human intervention and violence, thereby, causing deterritorialization and post-colonial rootlessness, the cosmopolitan attribute in *Trespassing* enables them to step out of the narrow confines of geographical politics and embrace a planetary vision which is rooted in the characters' sense of environmental consciousness and sensitivity. While the interaction with the non-human aspect of existence in *Trespassing* provides an ontology of rootedness in the nonhuman world, other significant theme in the fiction provides a chaotic layer of global and local scenarios of environmental politics which requires equal attention and is discussed below.

5.3.2 Ecological Contaminants

Besides an awareness around a distinct sense of place and environmental cosmopolitanism in *Trespassing,* Khan is also aware of real problems in Pakistan like pollution and transnational risk scenarios. Heise writes that:

> An awareness of risks at different scales of the local, regional, and global transforms ordinary modes of language, narrative and thought through their novelistic scenarios. (*Sense* 154)

The different systemic and accumulative risks raise the question of how such distinctions relate to social networks. Accumulative risks may result from either global distribution like loss of water, deforestation or from the magnitude of environmental hazard that may impact globally (Heise 156). On the other hand, systemic risks may result from human activity that is not global. The systemic risk in *Trespassing* like fish trawling and the fear of fish stock depletion has an impact that is both local as well as global in implication. Similarly, waste disposal practices in terms of risks emerging from resource exhaustion or contamination are associated with deep-rooted practices and cultural transformations (Heise 153). Hence, the novel also underscores the outcomes

of ecological disasters like air pollution, toxic dust, the spread of toxicity and pervasive lack of hygiene in urban spaces rendering landscape not risk-free. Heise writes in "Narrative in the World Risk Society" that to a greater extent multiple types of risk awareness have aided in reshaping the imagination of the planet in other spheres and also in its environmentalist dimensions.[6] Relating it to the text, the disconcerting idea of environmental pollution and global risks is echoed by another eco-cosmopolitan character Daanish in *Trespassing.* Rahman (2011) notes that Daanish, a student of journalism, in the United States has a tremendous potential to reflect upon his situation in the U.S as well as its role in the cosmopolitan world. He comes face to face with the U.S. nationalism amidst the first Gulf war and gets a chance to understand the imperative of the U.S. capitalism and hypocrisy to dominate the world. His scepticism leads him to the criticism of the U.S culture and its palate for hegemony. However, while he is there, Daanish is also motivated by the natural beauty that this country is endowed with as his attention is captured by the environmental plentitude around the university campus. Being a cosmopolitan and environmentally sensitive character at heart, Daanish's reflection is noteworthy:

> Such beauty in a country that consumed 30 per cent of the world's energy, emitted a quarter of its carbon dioxide, had the highest military expenditure in the world, and committed fifty years of nuclear accidents, due to which ocean teemed with plutonium, uranium, and God alone knew what other poisons. It had even toyed with conducting nuclear tests on the moon. (48)

Daanish's internal monologue is a sum of many environmental hazards that have become global owing much to what America has contributed due to its imperialistic ambitions across the world. Khan's juxtaposition of "beauty" with the repercussions of toxins such as "carbon dioxide", "nuclear accidents", oceans swarming with toxic waste such as "plutonium and uranium" reflect the global effects of activities supposedly to be locally providing a global risk perception, as Heise argues:

> Awareness of ecological and cultural connectedness implies a knowledge of the kinds that are generated by such connectivity: the impact of global markets on local natural resources or farming practices, pollution of oceans, acid rains, radioactive fallout, or global warming. (*Sense* 121)

Hence, the trans-local consideration of risk generating from local reaching global forms are imbricated in very intricate ways as mentioned in the above statement. According to Beck's "Cosmopolitan Manifesto", it is predicted that we will witness the rise of new kind of transnational communities and politics emanation from "world risk society".[7] Perhaps this trans-local effect can be extended further when Daanish who is already revolted by American nationalism and its unbound military expenditure, on his visits to Pakistan educates himself further by learning from Dia who adds to his realization that:

> 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. Ama said the rain destroyed our mulberry trees, but she'd had no way of confirming that. We ran short of food for the silkworms. (330)

This episodic turnover in the narrative foregrounds the possibility of what can be taken as an example of a trans-local community that may have arisen from the shared risk experience of the Gulf war. The very assumption lies in the fact that "black soot" because of the war experiments in Iraq war was global and not just local.

Similarly, another dimension in the novel is Khan's multi-layered critique on the issue of urban ecological contamination and decay. The author often draws attention to dirt and filth in the city of Karachi on local grounds through references such as "the grubby halls of hospital", windows which are but "dust-opaque", the stench of "burned-litter" emanating "noxious fumes" (69) which paints a picture of degraded and neglected environment. Karachi, a metropolis that privileges itself as the most advanced and modernised city in Pakistan, cuts a picture of an environmentally degenerated, politically violent and culturally disintegrated urban space. The deterritorialized migrant from the Indus valley and other parts of Pakistan makes it thickly overpopulated shaping the urban ecology into an abyss depriving the inhabitants of resources like water and pleasures of nature (327). She also cautions about the atmospheric waste and the environmental degradation on the streets of Karachi, and cuts an appalling picture:

> He covered his nose when passing the large patch of land where the neighborhood dumped its trash. Polythene bags hung on the tree limbs and telephone wires, plugged open gutters, tumbled along drive ways. …. his powerlessness overwhelmed him. How could he even think clearly when his body struggled at the most basic level: for water, electricity, clean streets? What could he begin to do here? And yet, somehow millions survived. Was its survival or immunity? Was there a difference? (327)

To the fundamental question raised by the author regarding the general attitude of the public, her apostrophe "was it survival or immunity?" implies a broader meaning as a community deprived of fundamental rights like water and electricity does not seem to understand the logic of hygiene and a clean environment. Khan, although touches upon multiple aspects of environmental issues confronted by Pakistani soil and like Smiley portrays an eco-cosmopolitan aspect of the narrative. Yet, she is not oblivious of taking a tour of a Pakistani landscape contaminated with "waste" and garbage that blurs the otherwise "fossil-rich" (Kabir) Pakistani landscape. When scrutinised through risk theories, Khan and Smiley's works emerge out as unique and they provide a reading of South Asian and North American landscapes of pollution and toxic waste simultaneously. The "waste perspective" finally attempts to highlight the alienation of human towards their environment in which they survive. Khan's narrative never stops reminding its readers how humankind abuses its very own space, whether Khan talks about nuclear waste or whether she talks about the excremental waste polluting the airspace (20) or "human waste" destroying "most reefs on Karachi shore" (45), she is unveiling Pakistani environmental problems at large which are rooted in unbound capital consumption:

> Karachiites walked out of necessity, not for pleasure. Till now, he'd simply accepted this. Beauty and hygiene were to be locked indoors, adding to their value. No one bothered with public space. As if to illustrate, the little boy tired of the chewing gum wrapper, bounced over the bags on Daanish, unrolled the window and tossed the paper out. He then proceeded to empty his pockets on to the street-more wrappers, a chili chips packets, and fistful of pencil shaving…no one noticed. (*Trespassing* 43)

The description is an apt insignia of our general attitudes as they feed into our systems and become a norm. Just as Hamid reminds his readers constantly about the trash-filled streets of Lahore, so does Khan in *Trespassing* reinforced by noise:

> Noise. Always noise. Construction, neighbors, children on the street, generators, loudspeakers. Never a moment of natural silence, the kind in the sunken garden. Or the cove. (312)

If *White Noise* is an emblem of the noise created by many frequencies with equal intensities and what DeLillo has suggested in his novel, then in Pakistan the noise pollution in an urban setting is a never-ending phenomenon giving rise to perpetual anxiety. Although for most of us the concept of pollution is restricted to resources and nature, however as Khan and DeLillo have rightly pointed out the noise is another pollutant disturbing the serenity of the environment and the natural rhythm of life thereby generating one more pollutant in the atmosphere? As studies have also shown how noise pollution can influence our psychological health, giving rise to more severe and chronic issues related to health later in life perhaps. Therefore, in brief it is summarized that both garbage and human waste (body secretions and trash, means as both something that is ours and not ours), then, carry signs of self-alienation from ourselves and the environments that we inhabit, thereby directly calling into question every persons role in an increasingly so-called advanced technological age in the contemporaray world.

It is argued that, in *Trespassing,* Khan has represented an interplay of Pakistani eco-cosmopolitanism and environmentalism in a complex dual way. The complexity of her characters entails different classes, genders and ethnic backgrounds. The readers come across a lower middle-class Sindhi in the figure of Salaamat; a middle class educated Muhajir Daanish and the protagonist Dia who represents an affluent class in Sindh. Although the characters are different yet their similarity with each other is manifested in their interest towards animals, insects, and nonhuman aspects like the land and the sea, and a sense of their place in a global planetary sense. By exploring these characters, Khan has interwoven multiple issues that beset Pakistani society on a social and political level. Pakistani eco-cosmopolitanism is primarily different from North American eco-cosmopolitanism by virtue of its cultural, regional and global perspectives which cannot overlook Pakistan's history, its religion and cultural practices, and in a way provides an environmental reflection and portrayal of an aesthetic model for considering eco-cosmopolitanism which cannot

be severed from Pakistan's local geographies, its flora and fauna and by this means bypasses the boundaries created by humans.The three principal characters in the novel trespass these boundaries and associate more with the local geographical lands than the destructive political forces in Pakistan and embrace a planetary global consciousness (Rahman).

Khan uses fiction as a vehicle to describe the lives of displaced migrant people like Salaamat, who represents like Murad in *Moth Smoke,* the underclass in a third world country like Pakistan. It is also an insight into the lives of a subaltern community that cannot be ignored because they serve the affluent class domestically. This is a distinctive feature of Khan as well Hamid, as both, the writers cast light on the ecological and psychological traumas confronted by the underprivileged of Pakistani society. They suffer displacement and more ecological setbacks because of this depravity, and ecocritical investigation to probe into these epistemologies serves as an essential tool to raise consciousness against the changing dynamics of the environment.

In a broader context, *Trespassing* unfolds an exciting blend of eco-cosmopolitanism coupled with a sense of place with toxic implications grounded in pollution and contamination. Although, the three characters in the novel exhibit a profound sense of land and home place, but they also reflect a strikingly clear global thinking as they seek to establish links and strong connections to their respective realities and how it is subject to change because of other internal and external pressures like political, national and economic globalization.

While Khan's detailed exploration of Pakistani eco-cosmopolitanism and environmental consciousness deals with the role of the human and non-human in Pakistani environmental and cultural context, American writers Jane Smiley, exemplifies an ecological eco-cosmopolitan narrative emanating from the U.S. American Midwest farm country in Iowa and its provocative transformation in *A Thousand Acres* which is the subject of next discussion with a simultaneous focus on similarities as well the profound differences in the narrative.

5.4 *A Thousand Acres*

Mary Vermillion writes in her essay "The Uses of Tragedy: *A Thousand Acres* and American Exceptionalism," that the novel *A Thousand Acres* represents "American culture and identity which draws on the "American pastoral dream" and "Jeffersonian agrarianism" (151). Thomas Jefferson nearly two centuries ago proposed for America as a state of small farmer-landowners, each economically and administratively independent, and he held that agronomy would be the "heart and soul of American democracy" (qtd. in Malone 3). The novel, thwarts Jefferson's ideal and represents the contemporary realities of United States "single-crop, government subsidized, heavily regulated agricultural system" (3). In *A Thousand Acres* Jefferson's agrarian myth based on "conservation ethic for protection of natural resources in America" (48) are represented as being eroded by the growing capitalism and its influence on the American economy and the transnational environment (Ruta par. 2). Along with these predominant agrarian themes the novel also manifests an eco-cosmopolitan perspective coupled with abuse, violence and environmental degradation. Therefore, the following discussion will focus on all these different trajectories of the novel so that a comparison can be forged out.

Unlike Khan's *Trespassing,* which is centred on three primary eco-cosmopolitan characters, Smiley however centres her narrative on the eco-cosmopolitan consciousness around the dominant character who is the first-person narrator "Ginny Cook Smith". Both the novels, in an inextricable way, touch upon themes which are similar and yet different in their subsequent approach. One witnesses many similarities regarding the thematic structure of the two novels; in their treatment of issues like violence and trauma, the role of gender, local/global adaptation coupled with the human - environment interpretations. Both the narratives have a strong link with the farms that they hold so important in shaping their daily lives. Dia's mother's silkworm farm connects her with the divine. However, Ginny's father's farm, which spreads over a thousand acres representative of patriarch's state, is tragically responsible for Iowa family's disintegration in the late 1970s over its division. Similarly, both the novels cannot escape the violent onslaughts brought about by the sense of their division. Khan's attempt to imagine Pakistani perspective on eco-cosmopolitanism is grounded in the intersections of geography, ecology and culture. On the other hand, Smiley's sense of trauma and violence is deeply embedded in the division of its patriarch state and the treatment and abuse of its female gender. There is also an absolute sense of

rootlessness and displacement in both novels under discussion. *Trespassing* introspects the rootlessness and displacement concerning the nation-state in the late 80s of political Pakistan similarly; *A Thousand Acres* suggests a vivid description of the sense of the land that leads to disintegration and displacement of its inhabitants. The concept of "rootlessness" is also important when seen in connection with eco-cosmopolitanism, both the novels suggest a strong bend towards this tendency because cosmopolitans are often critiqued as rootless as one notices in *Trespassing* and Smiley also suggests this notion in the persona of Ginny who becomes rootless when she is bereaved of a thousand-acre land.

Moreover, the most important connection that can be established between these two novels from two different and opposing cultures is the ecological consciousness inter-twined with the eco-cosmopolitan and environmental impulse. In the following paragraphs, I shall attempt to adhere to some of the notable features of the novel *A Thousand Acres* in connection with eco-cosmopolitanism and its interrelation with the environment and the non-human space with the exclusive focus on issues like the sense of place/land and trauma, planetary health, and local toxic risk scenarios.

Jane Smiley mentions in "Shakespeare and the Twentieth Century"[8] that *A Thousand Acres* grew out of a "response to the play" King Lear by Shakespeare and it stands as a modernized revision of the play (qtd.in Hicks 1-20). However, the novel is not just a rewriting of Shakespeare's tragedy, but in many inextricable ways, it comments on the prevailing social as well as agricultural circumstances/agribusiness, the use/abuse of agricultural land in the United States during the 70s and 80's precisely the period when the novel is set. Consequently, one finds many references in the novel where Smiley critiques industrialized farming and the land resources being exploited by the farmers as well as by mega-corporations and agribusiness trade parties. Moreover, from a broader ecocritical perspective, the narrative also has a potential to underscore Heise's theoretical underpinning of eco-cosmopolitan trajectory especially with references to American agrarian narrative that seeks to explore local lands risks and transnational consciousness. The setting of the novel is a thousand-acre farm owned by Harold Clark in Iowa who lives with his three daughters. Scott Hicks notes in "Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres* and Archival Reimagination of Eco-Cosmopolitanism" (2013) hat for Smiley the novel's idea of re-writing King Lear was prompted when she was visiting McDonald's in Delhi and later in New York and was "precipitated by a few

accidents" (2). Smiley was struck with an idea when she beheld the decorated pictures of Midwest in McDonald that she decided to re-imagine Shakespeare's *King Lear* by transporting the setting of the whole story in Iowa. However, the novel is not just a re-writing of *King Lear,* but it also entails an environmental and eco-cosmopolitan inclination. The fact that the author of the novel, as Hicks notes, sits in McDonald's of Delhi and New York while contemplating the structure of the novel reflects a cosmopolitan attitude. The food in this context that is being served in the form of Mac burgers and the reaps of the harvest, the role of the farmers their subjective problems regarding global trade and environmental hazards that they bear their merchandise reflects cosmopolitan impulse intertwined with its ecology (2-3). Ecocriticism, as a recent theoretical enquiry has now begun to explore the various cultural means by which the connection with the natural environmental worlds is produced and perpetuated. The field also investigates how such connections foster or obstructs national, regional and transcultural forms of identification. Therefore, such ties to the outside modern world also emerge in the novel as the individuals in a culturally specific context identify and see themselves as part of the planet.

One of the most prominent features of environmentalism evident in the novel is a sense of place and the land as it is inherently conceptualized. Like Khan's representation and affiliation of her characters with the environment, Smiley also begins her novel by complementing on the notion of place as envisioned by her main character, Ginny. According to Heise:

> while cosmopolitanism has generally been understood as an alternative to nationally based forms of identity, it confronts more local attachments in the case of environmentalism in the United States, which have been articulated by means of such concepts as "dwellings", "bioregionalism", as an "erotic of place", or a "land ethic". One cannot deny that under certain circumstances such affirmations of local ties can play an important role in environmentalist struggles. (*Sense*10)

Based on this observation, one notices that Smiley begins with vivid natural descriptions as Ginny narrates her story, she is enthralled by the beauty of the natural world that surrounds her. Ginny's connection with the physical world is suggestive of Heise's conceptualisation of eco-cosmopolitanism which she describes as, "more-than-human world", the realm of non-human species but is also suggestive of its connection with objects which are animated as well as inanimate networks of influence and exchange. Such a connection with the land and non-human

world is dexterously painted in words by Smiley as she describes the way Ginny imagines and feels about the land she inhabits, her attachment towards it, and an awe she feels toward an intricate sketch of local, regional interaction of human and the eco-system across a limitless planet earth is profound:

> I used to imagine how it all drifted down, lazily, in the warm, soupy water-leaves, seeds, feathers, scales, flesh, bones, petals, pollen-then mixed with the saturated soil below and became, itself, soil. I used to like to imagine the millions of birds darkening the sunset, settling the sloughs for the night, or a breeding session, the riot of their cries and chirps, the rushing hough-shhh of twice millions of wings, the swish of their twig like legs or peddling feet in the water, sounds barely audible until amplified by millions. (*A Thousand Acres* 31-32)

Such an imaginative reflection on the gifts of nature's biological diversity that is visible in the very minutest creatures around her and across the planet, the insects the plants, the leaves, the seeds, the procreation, the richness and "abundance of life than any soil anywhere", exemplifies an eco-cosmopolitan vision and an environmentalist perception (Hicks 3). Further to this, when viewed from this perspective, such a worldview, therefore would reach beyond the "ethic of proximity so as to investigate by what means an individual and groups in specific cultural contexts have succeeded in environing themselves in similar concrete fashion as part of the global biosphere, or by what means they might be enabled to do so" (Heise 62).

Hence, Ginny embraces an eco-cosmopolitan awareness by creating a variety of ecological imaginations of the global by being situated in the local geography of her land. Such an interpretation deploys conventional articulations of the relationship between local and global environment, the human and the non-human community. Likewise, Khan also transcends the "ethics of proximity" for example, in *Trespassing,* when she alludes to nature, the sea, the water, the insects, the turtles and celebrates both local as well as planetary within her cultural purlieus. Such interpretations as Heise predicts also provide detailed knowledge of the social, cultural as well as the environmental contexts that would enable the future environmentalists for a preemptive measure to ensure the well-being and health of the planet earth (Hicks). Furthermore, when approaching Smiley's novel from the perspective of "land" and the dimensions of sense of place, one is compelled not to overlook the contrast one observes in the exquisite beauty of the land

paradoxically juxtaposed with its exploitation and abuse. Additionally, strong parallels are drawn between the victimisation of both the gender and land, but Smiley in *A Thousand Acres* allows the silent voices to expose their tales. Therefore, the exploration of trauma experienced by the silenced women and the natural world, and their dislocation, becomes an integral part of the investigation within the novel. There is a strong relationship between landscape, memory and a traumatic past spatially caught within a web of the toxic landscape. The conflation of nature and female bodies has been used to justify environmental and ecological decay and, according to Geoffrey Hartman, the early US history has also problematized the symbolic function of land concerning the memory and sexual traumas of women.

Consequently, in retrospect, the novel, on many occasions articulates the psychological distress of the women about the descriptions of the poisoned and toxic farming practices in the novel. In a more in-depth analysis, a connection can be traced between the destruction of the family farm stretched across a thousand acres and the sexual abuse of the two daughters; the trauma of the land and that of the female simultaneously. In *A Thousand Acres,* one can see a powerful symbolic interconnectedness between the loss, pain and the destruction of the land concurrently.

Considering the connection between suffering and the land, as depicted in the novel, one notices in *A Thousand Acres* that trauma is represented through many references regarding textual space, body and geographical land.[9] The novel examines Ginny not only exposing and unveiling events through a buried and repressed history of sexual violence, but the novel also attempts to portray her gaining insight into a link between the exploitation and misuse of female bodies and the local geographical land in her community. Furthermore, the aspect of distress in contemporary fiction overlaps in specific ways with ecocritical concerns as well. This combination of trauma and ecological sensitivity in the novel seeks to highlight the relationship between humans and the nonhumans in literature and culture. Hartman has pointed out memory can also play a significant role in pastoral spaces which, in many ways, tie in with ecocritical discourse and its preoccupation with the physical natural world and the concept of place. For Hartman, William Wordsworth, nearly two centuries ago, previewed contemporary environmentalist discourse which rested on increasing isolation from the natural world. Industrial revolution undermined the poet's belief in the powerful healing connection between humans and nature around. Therefore, Hartman draws

attention in his work how today's technology impacted environmental decay that was prefigured in the past:

> The slower trauma of industrialization coincided with Wordsworth's inner sense of irreparable change: they foreboded a cosmic wounding of nature-of natural rhythms, of organic growth-which reinforced his fear of apocalyptic rate of change and nature loss. (xvi)

Similarly, according to John Muir, such grave concerns about nature and environment by Wordsworth extended also to North America and "the despoiling effects of industrial revolution on the American landscape" (24) thereby, linking Wordsworth's works to American pastoral and the land destruction in the United States, which therefore becomes a matter of immense importance for the present analysis. However, unlike *Trespassing,* Smiley's novel *A Thousand Acres* portrays the alienation and isolation of humans from their natural physical environment, that the English poet feared and prophesized. This important phenomenon becomes clear when one reads how the novel elucidates the ecocide due to modern technological industrialised agricultural practices which transform the landscape into a mere wasteland, which is yet another trauma.

Additionally, the novel interconnects ecocriticism with trauma as Smiley connects, sexuality, land and corporeality. According to Rodi-Risberg (2009), although trauma theory and ecocriticism may seem different, some similarities exist between the two disciplines, and the principal point of convergence is the very notion of crisis with a potential threat of annihilation (56). Just as trauma does not belong to any discipline as such or genre, so does the ecocritical discourse; which has been established as a cross-disciplinary area of investigation and generates multidisciplinary dialogues. To be precise, one can say that one of the defining characteristics of environmental humanities is its tenet of interrelatedness or interconnectedness of all things; as Slovic observes while referring to Walt Whitman's " Song of Myself ", ecocritical discourse "is large and contains multitudes" (qtd. in Risberg 7). Furthermore, eco-critics engage with various disciplines including geography, ecology and therefore, some of the examples such as the "threatened loss of landscapes", the "industrialization of countries", "the cruelty of farming methods" (158) and health hazards like cancer and "fertility and reproductive health", fall in the category of ecocritical field of inquiry (Kerridge 5). Thus, Smiley presents conflicting perspectives

in the novel by intermingling, ecology, sexuality, trauma and agricultural practices providing it with an ecocritical and cosmopolitan trajectory.

While Smiley focuses on the traumatic sexual experience of the females in the novel and the poisoning of the land, the eco-cosmopolitan dimension is highlighted simultaneously as a socio-political mediator between the global and the local (Vertovec and Cohen). As Smiley connects the dots between the local agricultural practices and norms, the novel comments on the social and agricultural circumstances of the United States in the 1970s. The eco-cosmopolitanism in the novel is tied to industrial farming, the exploitation and abuse of the natural resources in a local scenario that ultimately questions the global corporality. The author of the text writes:

> Most people in the business of critiquing agriculture right now are pretty convinced Iowa is the next Alabama – that Third World way of life of tenant farms and big absentee landlords, factories with low-paying jobs in little towns, migrant workers […] that's what's coming, and it's directly attributable to government policies, to industrial propaganda about how to farm and to university research that has promoted industrialized farming over anything. (Smiley, qtd. in Annegrat)

Smileys comment on the state of agriculture requires a glance at the social and economic circumstance in the novel and the American agriculture policy of that time. Hicks in his well-informed essay "Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres* (1991) and Archival Reimagination of Eco-Cosmopolitanism" writes that the agricultural productivity of the US in the novel:

> exposes the insufficiency of environmental world citizenship, constrained as it is by the extranational power of global trade organizations, the futility of political and environmentalist expression through individual purchase-power, and the absence of functioning global environmental regulation. (3)

By grounding his argument in agriculture history and economics, Hicks argues that the novel exposes limitations and possibilities of environmental citizenship and ultimately articulates the importance of an environmentalist discourse (4). As Smiley, weaves her narrative around the father, daughters and the land, the industrial agriculture is exposed to horrors of its pollution and destruction that is responsible for the environmental devastation. The novel was set at a time when

the political scenario of the 1970s in the United States had altered tremendously under president Nixon's reforms that loosened the US currency which led to US product availability in the global market on cheaper rates. The agribusiness and farming were at its peak with immense technological farming techniques and new methods to introduce high crop yields became a priority. The American flow of the crop yield multiplied; the farmers were viewed as the "feeders of the world" (ibid 6) that eventually increased the value of the farmland. To promote more business, the farmers brought new machinery, modernized methods and efficient ways of mechanized ploughing were introduced. While the farming required new methods of improving yield and crop, the agribusiness also introduced the use of chemicals as pesticides. In their pace to increase their capital, the farmers seldom realized the harm pesticide caused to the human and to the environment. With this basic idea, Smiley presents an eco-cosmopolitanism that is not aligned with the rootedness of the characters with their environment, on the contrary, this prevailing theme on agribusiness alienate the desire to form an attachment or rootedness. With these ideas, Smiley debunks the pastoral myth of preservation or conservation of the 1000 acres land, in the novel. It does not symbolize purity and harmony that is unique to the America pastoral myth; rather, it exposes globalization in the Midwest. The corn produced at the farm had to be exported out, Ty's hogs were taken to a far-off market. The family's reliance is on mortgages to buy more hog as a valuable product reframes Iowa as, "not as an 'American' heartland, but a global heartland, whose regional and national safeguards fall in fealty to trade liberalization and decoupling" (Hick 11).

In *A Thousand Acres*, the writers focus on hog production to feed the "starving world" rationalizes the politics of capital, power, and global agriculture industry thus presenting intricate questions on the productivity of an eco-cosmopolitan impulse with a local and transnational consciousnesses enmeshed in a political and economic system administered by global commercial capitalism (Hicks 11). Similarly, with the theme on agriculture and commodities related to its productivity, and global trade, Smiley focuses on another extremely significant theme in the novel-male-dominated violence, which is both domestic and ecological and is discussed in the following section.

5.4.1 The Scars of Domestic Violence and Ecological Poisons

One of the critical ecological issues foregrounded by both Khan and Smiley simultaneously in their novels is today's most immediate environmental concern: the toxins and ecological degradation. Both the authors have also foregrounded how a regional risk scenario such as toxicity transforms the individuals and their relationship with both the human and the non-human. Smiley presents in *A Thousand Acres* the desolate vision of a ruined and poisoned landscape and the possibilities of new relationships- among humans, and between humans and landscapes. Although Smiley's novel *A Thousand Acres* is a tale of American people and their tensions behind large-scale agribusiness of Zebulon County, but at the heart of this narrative is a critique of the contemporary industrial agricultural model, a capitalist outlook for profit and production at the absolute front sacrificing long-term sustainability of water and soil quality. Gilbert argues in "Resistance is Fertile" that the novel reflects upon Cook farmers, "who pioneered a draining of the swampy wetlands, and ending with Green Revolution technological advancements including chemical fertilizers and pesticides," the novel replicates "the shared nature of an oppressive human supremacy" over its environment (2). As one reads the novel one cannot resist noticing; a refusal to incorporate the health, safety and well-being of the agricultural landscapes and the practices that go into sustaining them, a total lack of consideration of the non-human. The technological innovation strips apart the natural primacy of landscape, just as the women in the novel are deprived of their freedom. From this perspective, the issue is not merely that all places are connected, but it is to understand which connections are most important. Heise also points out that eco-cosmopolitan approach should also value the local ecological experiences along with the highly mediated and abstract kind of knowledge. Hence Heise notes that:

> The task of eco-criticism with eco-cosmopolitan perspective is to develop an understanding and critique of these mechanisms as they play themselves out in different cultural contexts so as to create a variety of ecological imaginations of the global. (62-63)

As part of an eco-cosmopolitan investigation tracking local narratives which in the rhetoric as well as visual realms have shaped the perceptions of the globe, also includes the complexity of environmental threats such as nuclear risks, toxins, large-scale radioactive pollution, chemical poisoning, thereby, establishing an urgency of a global and transnational connectedness. As

Lawrence Buell has also pointed out that, “the fear of a poisoned world is being increasingly pressed, debated, debunked, and reiterated from many disciplinary vantage points” (*Toxic Discourse* 639). Therefore, in A *Thousand Acres,* Smiley subjects Ginny to gradual awakening to the land poisoning due to toxins underground. As the novel crystallises around this awakening of Ginny’s memory and the memory of the land, Jess Clark is the first to draw her attention toward the chemical destruction of topsoil in the sphere that surrounds the agricultural land. Moreover, the exploitation on both the realms, domestic as well as the land are equated as a property that Larry owns in his patriarchal dominion, for example, “we are just his, to do with as he pleased, like the pond or the houses or the hog or the crops, Rose remarks” (191).

Similarly, Ginny’s awareness is grounded in socio-economic politics of how their gender determines women's social positions in the country. Many critics like Barbara and Sheldon in *Fathers and Daughters in Feminist Novels* (1997) have also commented on how Smiley forges a connection between the two. Smiley profoundly critiques how the connection between the abuse of the women and the poison of the thousand-acre agricultural land is based on a masculine politics culminating on aggression and violence (Barbara and Sheldon 23).

In a few other texts, Smiley herself consciously reflected and commented about her environmental concerns in *A Thousand Acres*, especially concerning ecology and farming. Similarly, Heise writes in “Toxic Bodies, Corporate Poisons” that with the publication of Racial Carson's *Silent Springs*, the environmental movement in the US received one of its crucial impulses on the subject (160). It is a complete document which for the first time in the United States had drawn public attention on the adverse effects of excessive use of herbicides and pesticides in American household and agriculture. Carson compared the dangers of environmental chemicals to those of nuclear radiations; it was a significant hazard in the 1960s which was associated with many stories and images the same time when Smiley wrote her novel *A Thousand Acres.* Carson is credited with alerting the population and politicians who were at that time quite ignorant about chemical exposure. From that period, onwards, by and large, chemical pollution, the dual nature of chemicals its symbolic role of drugs as an instrument of addiction and subjugation and the poisoning of the human body and the natural environment has been indeed a central issue for American environmentalism (Garrad 5). Correspondingly, *A Thousand Acre* explores the danger of chemical contamination which seeks to investigate the risks to which the citizens of modern

societies can be exposed. Perhaps this investigation also paves the way toward risk scenarios which contribute to forming contemporary socio-technological structures. Rodi-Risberg writes about the effects of toxins in *A Thousand Acres* that:

> The women (and children) in the novel are targets for toxin exposure just as they are targets for abuse as the pesticides poison women's reproductive organs, thus foreclosing their future. Because of its theme of environmental poisons, the novel not only links concerns of environmental justice with eco-feminists issues but may also be classified as something Terrell Dixon calls "the literature of toxicity". (19)

In a similar context, Beck postulates that modern societies are entering a phase of "reflexive modernization", in which he argues that the modern processes such as (biochemical) technology transform the traditional structures and the hazards that characterize this and will lead to a new Phase in the evolution of modernity, which he characterizes not as "postmodern" rather as "risk society". Implying that modern society, because of its technological development today, has reached a stage where it can no longer protect itself from the onslaught of unintended "side effects of its multiple technologies". Such side effects many decades earlier were invisible and latent, but now they are merging into public view across the globe. Where one of the situations is the excessive use of pesticides as one discovers in *A Thousand Acres*. In Beck's perspective:

> As it is exported to countries with lax environmental regulations that in turn export their pesticide-contaminated harvests back to the countries which meant to avoid just these chemicals, in a global cycle he calls the "boomerang effect". Of course, buying organic produce may offer a temporary release from this cycle for the affluent; but when soil, air, and drinking water are polluted, even the socially privileged are increasingly impacted by risks that effect the foundations of life. Moreover, if some risks are deliberately moved across national borders, others travel around the globe without anyone's conscious attention. (qtd. in Heise, *Sense* 147)

Correspondingly, in the novel, one reads about the members of Clark family drinking poisoned water which was a result of ammonia deposits underground, Larry's literal and symbolic poisoning of his well is the negligence which is deliberate and has a crucial impact upon society at large, Ginny's bitterness for her father's indifference towards the land and the people is justified because:

> The lust to run things exactly the way he wanted to no matter what, poisoning the water and destroying the topsoil and buying bigger and bigger machinery, and then feeling certain that all of it was right. (343)

The episode suggests in a way how exposure to chemicals often went unnoticed and was taken for granted in American farming practices. Smiley has critiqued this indifference towards environmental health and risk factors as part of the overall narrative so that some critical ecological issues can be brought to light. As Heise argues in *Sense of Place* that "strictly local hazards can at times resonate culturally and politically far beyond their limited geographical domain, according to the logic of "second-hand experience", as in the case of Love Canal which led to community activism against toxic waste disposals in many other regions of the United States and beyond (126).

A Thousand Acres adds further layers to the subject and rhetoric of pollution and toxicity making it a leitmotif that reaches beyond the typical association between the sexual abuse and the victim's sense of being polluted. Her narrative also literalizes the motif of pollution by emphasising the damaging effect of poisonous agro-chemicals used in farms. Through the character of Jess who has a passion for organic farming, Ginny learns that her five miscarriages were perhaps caused by the chemicals used by farm chemical fertilisers that got in the water supply. The revelation of this reality is even greater, as Jess exposes, "People have known for ten years or more that nitrates in well water cause miscarriages and death of infants" (165, qtd. in "Body").

Although Ginny's sister Rose has two children, like her mother, she also has cancer which was an effect of ecologically irresponsible, unsustainable and exploitative farming practice. Hence, Rose and Ginny are victims of pollution in a double way: their bodies are contaminated figuratively by the sexual suffering and literally by the poisoned water and contaminated soil. Therefore, *A Thousand Acres* critically exposes the dark and bitter secrets behind the reassuring narratives of progress and economic success that the patriarchy in the farming community propagates. However, gradually, Ginny acquires an awareness of pollution and scares of violence as it affected the women at large. Like Maria in *The Wrongs of Women*[10] Ginny develops a feminist consciousness through her analysis of deeply felt trauma. Her awareness is manifested as she engages in a heated

argument with Ty about the farming practices, and keeping their "private" experiences of miscarriages a secret:

> Jess said to me that the reason for the miscarriages is probably in the well water. Runoff in the well water. He says people have known about it for yours! We never even asked about anything like that, or looked into a book, or even told people we'd had miscarriages. We kept it all a secret! What if there are women all over the country who've had lots of miscarriages, and if they just compared notes-but God forbid we should talk about it! (259)

Ginny is first to break the family taboos by talking against the violence against women and the land practices within the male-controlled ideological system of the farming community. Schonfelder writes in *Wounds and Words* (2013) that the narrator in a de-toxifying gesture exposes the "grand-history" propagated by men as self-serving construction intended to veil the exploitative violence that sustains it (225). These are some of the instances in the novel that implicate a toxic risk possibility at the regional level. However, according to Heise and Buell, regional and global risk scenarios fall into at least two distinct categories systematically that involve local perception and experience in quite diverse ways. Meaning in a broader eco-cosmopolitan sense that collective risks which result either from global distribution, for example, cases such as underground water depletion or loss of biodiversity with an impact on global resources, but as Heise points out that "systematic risks can result from human activities that are not themselves global" as well (153). In a more planetary sense, the narrative aims at a broader portrayal of a community and society in which individuals are exposed to multiple risks, these may be ecological and technological hazards on local level, but this phenomenon is not unique to one place or one community, it is, in fact, a practice which many farmers indulge in perhaps without even being aware of the various repercussions it entails.

Moreover, the real problem of toxicity may be due to pesticides or uranium poisoning as suggested by Smiley and khan, derives from the complex techno-economic system that has developed for more than a century now to deliver chemical products to individuals, and that's where the real threat and risk lies across the world especially in terms of the global corporate world. This concern in the novel about the effects of environmental toxicity on humans and non-humans on a local scale becomes an increasingly urgent call for large-scale global solutions to

planetary devastation. Thus, as Heise would formulate, it revitalises an understanding of cultural as well as ecological frameworks extremely essential for future environmental policymaking regarding planetary health.

5.5 Comparison in Context

A comparative reading of both the novels demonstrates striking vantage points where one can attempt to understand how Pakistani and America novelists envision on mutual concerns about the environment, the ecology and the relationship between the human and nonhuman form of existence from their distinct cultural parameters in theme and content. Smiley and Khan both voice their concerns in conjunction with their geographical, political and cultural spheres. At the same time, the "violent geographies of late capitalism" as Michael Watts insists, cannot be ignored when analysing the texts from disparate geographies. The struggles in Pakistan concerning its geography entails a different type of expectation when compared with the geography of the USA. As Khan has profoundly integrated into the plot of *Trespassing* how the geographical conflicts in the name of so-called religious nationalism are not only oppressive in Pakistan but also impacts its ecosystem. Therefore, to understand some of the areas that may help in identifying specificities and differences, important tropes, themes and stylistic devices (metaphors and images) are briefly highlighted below.

5.5.1 The "Nature" of *Trespassing* and *A Thousand Acres*: Metaphoric Implications

According to Greg Garrard, cultures can be read as rhetoric, not in the strict sense a rhetorician would understand, but it can be read as "the production, reproduction and transformation of large-scale metaphors" (7). Metaphors are significant in the sense that they sometimes produce effects which may either be political or may serve some social interest (7-8). "The drive toward the formation of metaphor," according to Nietzsche, "is the fundamental human drive" (31). Ricœur's claim that "metaphor is the rhetorical process by which discourse unleashes the power that certain fictions have to describe reality" can restore the full depth of the meaning which is crucial to understand the environmental gist in the two texts under consideration. The metaphor has not been used by the two authors to ornament the language as a stylistic decoration only; rather it is a "semantic innovation, an emergence of meaning" (Valdes 65-85) and function as a signifying system. The metaphors and symbols create images in mind that generate more

significant meanings. Hence, looking at *Trespassing* and *A Thousand Acres,* meaningful ecological interpretations can be carved out.

Correspondingly, "**Nature" "body**" and "**landscape**" serve as common metaphors that underscore the themes of environmentalism as it unfolds. The metaphor of the female's body in *A Thousand Acres,* as Meridel Le Sueur argues is like a "reservoir" and like the "landscape" that repeats itself (205). In the epigraph of the novel which is taken from: *The Ancient People and the Newly Come* the central idea of the metaphors unfolds:

> The body repeats the landscape. They are the source of each other and create each other. We were marked by the seasonal body of earth, by the terrible migrations of people, by the swift turn of a century, verging on change never experienced on this greening planet. (qtd. in Anderson and Edwards 205)

Female bodies and the "body of the earth" are subject to social change and seasonal change (205-206). Land is poisoned and so is the human body hence the metaphor in *A Thousand Acres* acts as signifying system, thereby foregrounding that metaphors like these serve as vehicles for conceptualizing the world and the self, the body and the nature thus giving it a reality as Ricoeur writes that "work and world mirror each other" (273). The "nature" in Smiley's novel is represented which is already adulterated by human interference and domination through agriculture. Steven Hartman writes that in *A Thousand Acres* the metaphoric representation of nature, the landscape and the land with the interaction between humans and their environment is also set against the history of the white colonies of the American West (49). While the novel is grounded in the metaphor of the female body as the landscape that is dominated, controlled and thwarted it also draws on "history of the settling and agricultural development" so that it can address the issue which is local and global (50). Smiley herself acknowledged that the environmental ethos greatly inspired her writing of the novel *A Thousand Acres* stating that:

> Our relationship to the Great North American Prairie, especially the tallgrass prairie, is a paradigm, perhaps the paradigm of our relationship to Earth. … On the prairie we had our way in almost everything, and every potential our ancestors saw for fertility, productivity, and European-style settlement has been fulfilled. (qtd. in Hestetun 48)

The way Smiley reflects on the logic of control and domination behind prosperous farming in the heart of Iowa state, "the novel exposes the intertwined discourses of nation-building and gender construction that locate paternal ownership at the origin and center of the nation while covering over alternative histories" (Carden, qtd. in Hartman 181). The novel then reveals two basic and dominant views through this powerful metaphor of **"nature**" representation: it presents a realist position compelled by a deep desire about humanity's duty and responsibility to value, conserve, and recognize our dependence upon it. The rich prosperous land of Larry is internally poisonous. The damp metaphor buried undeath the land is a metaphor for human interaction in the novel and thus requires attention.

Secondly, it also reminds the readers how nature in the American West is typically a "cultural construct" (Soper 4). Hestetun writes that the gendering of women in the novel which is taken as a metaphor for landscape throughout is based on a cultural heritage, suggesting how the dichotomy between male and female demotes women to the position of "other", woman and nature becomes the object of male-signifying authority and power, violations and desire. Thus, woman and nature in the form of the vast land are the territories that are tamed and tilled in agriculture and the concept of "nature" is "allegorized as either a powerful maternal force, the womb of all human production, or as the site of sexual enticement and ultimate seduction" (103, qtd. in Hestetun 53). In the ultimate analysis, the connection of nature in the novel and its connection to the land and women symbolizes the contemporary environmental concerns and issues culminating on the idea that "the rape of America is still being perpetuated by men who have an engineering mentality" (ibid 57). Therefore, the nature metaphors serve to highlight in a symbolic mode a "cultural script" (59) of the American Nation and represents an instance of something that disrupts the agrarian myth of idyll pastoralism revealing:

> The dark critiques of industrialization in rural America, [which] epitomize the extent to which the destruction of rural communities and ecosystems is propelled by the *male* farmer and fueled by the inherent patriarchy of the traditional agrarian pastoral. (qtd. in Hestetun 56)

On the other hand, the metaphor of "water" "sea" and "land" are signifiers of larger socio-economic scenarios in *Trespassing.* Khan's emphasis on the water is a symbolic representation of resistance and exploitation. Water metaphor is also crucial in *Trespassing* to highlight :

> How unequal demarcation, distribution, and consumption of natural resources points out to neo-colonial policies being employed subjugate and marginalize minority communities in India and Pakistan. (Perzadeh 71)

Water in the novel plays a pivotal role like water does in *A thousand Acres* as well. In both the cases the water is being either depleted or pensioned. Similarly, while Smiley exposes American social values hidden in the metaphor, Khan exposes larger ethnic and nationalistic exploitation in the metaphor of water. The metaphor of land calls attention to belonging and rootedness. Water symbolises the connection and disconnection of both non-human/human entanglements. While displacement and deterritorialization of Salamat in *Trespassing* are due to the intervention of ethnic violence in Karachi and his being away from the sea "waters", the deterritorialization of Jenney in *A Thousand Acres* is due to the intervention of transnational agribusiness trade groups. Hence the metaphor of water and land implicates more massive political and social conflicts in *Trespassing* and *A Thousand Acres* respectively.

5.5.2 Waste, garbage and toxins: Environmental hazards

The familiar underlying trope that waste, garbage and chemical toxins commonly "provide a privileged perspective from which one can make sense of a world that would otherwise appear fragmentary, contingent, without design" (Martin), becomes significant in both the novels as one tries to seek meaning in context. From European modernism as Martin observes, starting from Walter Benjamin's "rubble history" to the famous quartets of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land,* extending to Marcel Duchamp's "ready-mades" garbage and waste stands out as one of the principal conceptual tools used by the Western writers and poets of modernity to "make sense of their social and historical reality".[11] Indeed, as one would observe, a similar pattern in Smiley's cultural reach in *A Thousand Acres,* as she employs the toxic waste trope in her novel to demonstrate the widespread fear of chemical toxin in America. The representation of this toxic reality focuses on a crucial topic that was contemporary and socially inclusive. Smiley's environmental critique of chemical industry underscores the author's consciousness toward toxic practices calling onto the "toxic discourse" of its time.

On the other and hand, the **trope of waste** and garbage in *Trespassing* underpin the old prevailing dilemma in Pakistan: poor waste management policies and neglect. Khan highlights these issues throughout the text. This also reveals that Pakistani writers like Khan and Hamid cannot overlook the future of Pakistan's landscape that is at the brinks of ecological collapse since the public and the state together cannot forge an alliance with the ecology that defines their existence. Khan although travelled extensively to various places, but unlike most of the writers writing in English she lives in Pakistan. Being situated in Pakistan, she voices the difficulties and challenges Pakistan faces without undermining the role and position of the local in the globalized world.

5.3.3 Gender and Social Implications

Both the novels share similarities regarding presenting a rural and pastoral setting with female characters playing a pivotal role in the stories. The female's in both the novels are independent voices from different communities voicing challenges of their respective societies, presenting a mosaic glimpse into Pakistani and American society and how societies positions gender. Through these myriad characters, Khan like Smiley takes into consideration the issues of environmental and social struggles within the context of pastoral ecology. Thus, in both Khan and Smiley's discourse, ecological implications are also revealed via the political and social overlapping posing essential questions for ecocriticism. There is also a distinct ecological epistemology connected with the experiences of citizens of the developing world like Pakistan when compared with the first world fiction in English. There is an active social consciousness of ecocriticism in the narratives, and so is the consciousness of the eco-social injustice as one can witness in *Trespassing* in the persona of Salamat and his subaltern human condition on the plains of the Indus. Similarly, what sets *A Thousand Acres* apart from *Trespassing* is how it frees itself from the limitations of its plot. From the beginning, as Brauner observes in "Speak Again", that the story is about absence, disappearance, silence: the imperceptible and the unmentionable, the female members of the Clark family (657). In *A Thousand Acres* Sanders also notes that:

> People both act upon and are acted upon by the land they inhabit in *A Thousand Acres*, [t]he soils, rivers, pesticide-polluted watercourses-even the farm machinery used to work the land-all prove crucial players in the particular drama of *A Thousand Acres*. (203)

These silent members gradually raise a voice as they seek to understand and narrate their relationships with the human and non-human world around them. Ginny in *A Thousand Acres* gains an environmental understanding and awareness as she makes visible the despicable herbicides and pesticides that have ravaged her landscape and her body and voices for the environment in which she spent so many dreary years of her unhappy life highlighting a social issue in America. *Trespassing,* on the other hand, explores the politics of gender in Pakistani society, highlighting the constraints imposed on most females and the consequences of transgressing those restrictions. However, Khan's female characters are represented as resistant, complex and multidimensional to cast them as strong individuals dispelling stereotypes of victimised females.

Smiley, through the close intertwining of complex male-female and human-nature relationship in the context of environmental hazards exposes and emphasises the crisis of western industrial civilisation thus unfolding the curses of modern technology against nature and humanity in general. However, most importantly, both Khan and Smiley within the confines of their Pakistani and American cultural and geopolitical sphere, speak a common language for the landscape-a language that inscribes connection with the environment to sympathise with the land and nature that surrounds their existence.

5.5.4 Dimensions of Environmental world Citizenship

Trespassing presents a new form of eco-cosmopolitanism, although the characters have a deep sense of place, they do reflect a more planetary imagination as they create significant connections to their immediate local reality and how it seems to alter due to pressures of economic and political globalization (Junquera 56). There is a critical environmentally oriented cosmopolitan trajectory that entails global ethical considerations and responsibilities in the novels. Both the novels demonstrate how the local inhabitants of Iowa and Karachi are struggling to embrace a planetary consciousness- a "global awareness" that is seen as continuous ecological damage of the landscapes. The various local voices in *Trespassing* as well as in *A Thousand Acres* highlight the trials and challenges humanity confront in representing the ecological entanglements, although they might be closely intertwined and connected within that environmental space.

Eco-cosmopolitanism in *A Thousand Acres* negotiates the problems of threat from larger agribusiness corporations. Scott Hick writes "Not only do the association's members articulate farmland as a 'natural resource'; they frame it as a pastoral obligation they owe human beings across a crowded planet" (5). Consequently, such an eco-cosmopolitan perspective, when viewed in the light of archives from the Iowa state university as Hick has described so effectively and in detail, for the preservation of land and its impact on the broader level is justified, then a thousand-acre farmland that the novel represents is not just a land in possession of a family–but it also entails the amount of food, crop and meat it would otherwise produce for a starving world. Such an eco-cosmopolitan outlook advocates saving precious soil, avoiding inappropriate farming practices and conserving land to ensure food for the planet in times of shortage (Hicks 1-20).

While Smiley frames the predicament of the agricultural farming practices, Khan negotiates with the unjust un-lawful ways of the domestic government and the international lobbying and calls for an environmental justice in *Trespassing.* Khan's voicing of the marginalised dispossessed fishermen and their predicament is also complicated implicating negligent environmental regulations in Pakistan. Khan's eco-cosmopolitanism differs from that of Smiley's cosmopolitan in outlook regarding what Rahman interprets as a vision that is not based on nationalism nor is it an antagonism to a kind of national patriotism "that can be co-opted by U.S imperialism" ("Karachi." 262). It is instead a form of an eco-cosmopolitanism that reaches beyond the nation-state by embedding oneself in the planet and its geography, human and non-human space which are both simultaneously local as well as global (263).

Additionally, both the novels also expose people from across cultures struggling to embrace a wider consciousness – in many ways a global awareness about matters such as the ecological crisis of land, environmental devastations regarding toxicity and pollution which have become widespread across the globe paradoxically with the advancement of technology. Undoubtedly, Ginny's challenging and onerous success and ability to voice the complexity of a sense of environmentalism mirrors that of many individuals of rural American farm life. Likewise, Khan's introspection of a global interference into Pakistani urban and rural ecology is recognised by many Pakistani individuals who can see the current environmental problems at hand. With Pakistan in an outright state of unease within the country as ethnic violence disrupts human life, there are various other social processes taking place that give rise to ecological damage and human

suffering. These challenges call upon a close attention of ecocritics on issues mentioned above, in terms of engaging deeply in environmentally oriented texts to expand the ecocritical dimension of study with a hope to tackle problems of health across the world, global agriculture and rights of humans and non-humans at the same time which makes it an integral part of a biotic ecosphere. Therefore, in many profound ways, both the texts analyzed coincide with Heise's argument that narratives are useful templates by means of which we can convey such a dual vision of the earth as a whole and of the different parts of earth that are shaped by varying cultural contexts" (*Sense* 210), thereby expanding the scope and horizon of multiple critical insights with a hope to bring more awareness about the planet earth. While the similarities in themes are so profound, the corresponding differences are inherently visible in the basic social situations in which people in both societies live and operate daily business.

5.5.5 The Relevance of Khan's Fiction – Different Cultural Vision

The point of departure from the American fiction in comparison is the way Khan offers an environmental vision in *Trespassing* which is a unique way of presenting to the readers a diverse vision of Pakistani cultural background which is rooted local geography, its topography and non-human life and associates with the pre-Islamic vision of life (Kabir 173-185, Rehman 201). Contrary to the American imagination of environment that one discovers in *A Thousand Acres*, Khan's *Trespassing* reflects an image of Pakistan that is grounded in a heritage that dates to centuries-old ancient historical connections linking modern-day Pakistan with the ancient precolonial world of trade and exchange:

> These connections were consolidated by the Silk Route, 'that legendary key to beauty, lucre, [which] functioned as an international, commercial and diplomatic highway in ancient times' and whose mountain passes channelled an exchange of goods, political massive and religious cultural ideas. (qtd. in Kabir 174)

Similarly the **metaphors** and **symbols** employed by Khan which are primarily "sea" (water) and (land), its animals, "silkworms", "turtles" and non-human form of life gives a distinctiveness to Pakistan in a sense that it can "bypass the prescriptive rigours of religious nationalism, a political ideology that both created Pakistan and has contributed in ever greater ways to its current problems" (ibid 174). It is crucial to understand this nature-human connection because it enables one to comprehend how "nature" provides various possibilities of belonging that is grounded in

Pakistan's prehistory and the environment. The complex intertwining of the symbol of sea and land in *Trespassing* is significant. While the sea is a symbol of resistance against neoliberal forces, its vastness also provides characters like Salaamat a refuge from the Sindhi nationalism and violence that disrupts human life in Karachi. He identifies with the sea and water and not with the violence or orthodoxy (Rahman). The sea, therefore, provides a moment of freedom and escape from the narrow and shackled social existence in Karachi.

Parallel to the imagery of the sea is another powerful imagery of Dia's silkworm cocoons. The silk factory run by Dias mother Riffat brings into focus the old traditional use of organic dyes for the silk thread reviving century sold native culture. Through the mysterious working of the silkworms in their cocoons, Khan introduces Pakistani pre-colonial and ancient history reviving the memory of silk route and its role in connecting present-day Pakistan with the far East through Karakoram highway (Kabir). These symbols, images and tropes are essential because they not only connect and excavate the hidden old Indus civilizations and old traditional practices like making of dye in the novel, but they reconstruct history for what Kabir calls "real Pakistan" thus embedding that history with "an organic revival of the regions indigenous art and craft" (ibid). According to the report *by National Crafts Council of Pakistan*:

> Our crafts emerge from the area's long history of ancient civilizations, as a dimension of regional cultures and as an intrinsic part of a complex ritual of life. The fusion and subsequent absorption into the Indo-Aryan cultures, flowering against a backdrop of very high mountains, arid plateaux, verdant plains, riverine tracts and scorching deserts, moulded the aesthetic expression of the people. (par.3)

This is Khan's technique of presenting a different vision through symbols and analogies revitalizing old traditions, old histories of ancient civilizations once operated in Pakistan juxtaposing with contemporary Pakistan. Similarly cocoons also metaphorically stand for connection, they connect Dia and Danish, but they also connect the reader with mythic exotic memory of ancient Pakistan with the exotic ancient world of transcultural flow and economic bonds across distance, as Dia contemplates the history of the silk trade and silk secrets. Hence, the silk threads in *Trespassing* link the Sea with the prehistoric "Paths" tracing a geography that circumvents territories now in modern day Pakistan, thus by uniting sea and land author attempts to delineate an allegory for Pakistan's roots and traditions that are unique to the image and position

of Pakistani geography. By doing so, she presents what Rahman and Kabir view as tangible and factual Pakistani identity entrenched in its landscape, nature and geography which creates the difference.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter explored *Trespassing* and *A Thousand Acres* using theories of eco-cosmopolitanism. It has also analyzed the impact of toxic contaminants in *Trespassing* and *A Thousand Acres*. To conclude, one can say, understanding the similarities and differences between the two novels helps one to identify the environmental consciousness and its manifestation. While the eco-cosmopolitanism in khan's novel is grounded in past histories, native traditions and Pakistani geography, the eco-cosmopolitanism in *A Thousand Acres* based on a neo-pastoral mode the theme is grounded in the struggles of people in rural America attempting to embrace a planetary consciousness, a global consciousness that paradoxically foreground as well as contribute in the constant environmental destruction and damage of the landscapes that people cherish. The nature of eco cosmopolitanism in *A Thousand Acres* is overtly political, whereas the eco cosmopolitanism in *Trespassing* is planetary. While *A Thousand Acr*e is a "cultural construct" as Soper argues, revealing the American national allegories of conquest and domination also sharply critiquing the industrial capitalism. On the other hand the regional and territorial approach in Khans' *Trespassing* reveals a distinct geography that is embedded in the histories and secrets of ancient civilization and provides its characters with a freedom that is not visible in Smileys fiction thereby making space for a much needed ecocritical investigation in a transgeographical context.

NOTES

[1]'*Jagged Little Pill* - Nilanjana Roy - Jun 30, 2003". https//en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uzma-Aslam-Khan.note 8. Accessed on June 21, 2019.

[2] "Migrant Literature - Wikipedia." *Migrant Literature*. n.d. Web. 03 Jul. 2019 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Migrant_literature

[3] Saria Fatima Dogar – "Water 'Matters': Exploitation and Resistance in Uzma Aslam Khan's Trespassing". https://resourcesofresistance.wordpress.com. 11.10.2017

[4] Sherman Alexei. *The Summer of Black Widows*. Brooklyn, New York: Hanging Loose Press, 2003.

[5] Shazia Rehman in her article "Karachi, Turtles and the Materiality of place" in Pakistani context with reference to *Trespassing* has suggested that Dia's persona is different from the other two characters in the sense of her spirituality and her religion. Her eco-cosmopolitan outlook and her environmental sensibility are proportional to her sense of spirituality.

[6] Toxic cleanup and toxic discourse is gaining a lot of popularity in today's world, not just from environmentalist's perspective but toxic cleanup crews are not alien to children's play words as fire trucks, which also has become an important feature, that the contaminated environment that Carson decried at the inception of the environmental movement in the 1960's is now an integral part of the very ordinariness of everyday life. For more see, Buell's "Toxic discourse" and Heise's "Narrative in the World Risk Society" (120).

[7] It is worth mentioning that "risk" has nowadays become a significant theoretical lens with which one can envision the emergence of new social movements and structures, foregrounding cosmopolitan forms of awareness and inhabitation based on shared risk. This also frames and summarizes the environmental justice movement and its work.

[8] There are many similarities/parallels between the novel and the play King Lear. King Lear has five acts as nearly all Shakespeare's tragedies usually bear, similarly, Smiley's novel is divided into five books. King Lear's three daughters Gonerill, Regan, Cordellia can be paralleled with Caroline, Rose and Virginia (Ginny) in *A Thousand Acres* the three daughters of Lawrence Cook. Lear desires to split his kingdom amongst his three daughter and the decision is primarily based on the level of love his daughters display towards him. Cook on the contrary desires to divide his land based on an idea regarding hog operation. Lear banishes and disinherits his youngest daughter Cordelia, because her love for him is insufficient, similarly Cook dismisses Caroline in signing over the property because she disapproves his idea. As a result, both favorite daughters from the novel and the play are removed. However, the major difference lies in the innocence of relationship between the father and the daughters in Lear, as opposed to Clark whose relationship with his daughters is based on incest, abuse and violence.

[9] See, Anne Whitehead's article "Geoffrey Hartman and the Ethics of Place: Landscape, memory, Trauma*"* (2003).

[10] See, novel by Charlotte Elizabeth. *The Wrongs of Woman*. (Taylor, 1844).

[11] See, Martin and M. Meissner. "On Beckton Alp: Iain Sinclair, Garbage and 'Obscenery'." *Research in Sustainable Urbanism* (Routledge, 2015).

CONCLUSION

This comparative study began from the premise that **transgeographical eco-sensitivity** represents an environmental debate that is specific to geographical, historical, and cultural coordinates, especially when engaging South Asian postcolonial environmental discourse with Euro-American environmentalism. Drawing attention to ecocritics' concern about the increasing dilemmas and consequences of environmental pollutants, urbanization, and contamination, the study explored how literary criticism and fiction can be a medium to contest for or against environmental change, expanding "the notion of the world" to include the entire eco and biosphere (Glotfelty xix). So far, most ecocritics have generally focused on nearly with exclusive focuses on nonfiction accounts and essays of American writers, such as Henry David Thoreau, Edward Abbey and Aldo Leopold, who though, acknowledge the interconnectedness of all living things, have blatantly ignored and marginalized that part of natural landscape—urban or rural—that includes the social and human sphere (Adamson 14; Mukherjee 6). To address this gap, it was also reiterated that the cross-pollination of ecocriticism by diasporic and post/colonial criticism furthers the earlier revisionary script. Through these lenses, a comparative analysis was carried out.

Thus, in the light of the objectives and the research questions utilizing ecocriticism and postcolonial theoretical underpinnings, the study was an attempt to read Pakistani and American fiction ecocritically in a comparative mode to realize the shifting grounds of environmental politics. While the study aimed to analyze the environmental dimensions and dilemmas in the selected texts, the study also contextualized these dilemmas in the possible larger historical and socio-political circumstances within which the local and globalizing power relations take place. The interpretation, analysis and comparison of the texts under study were guided by the following research questions:

4. How does the transgeographical environmental context play out in the selected works of Pakistani and American writers?
5. How do Pakistani Anglophone and American fiction writers represent problems of environment and human engagement with it in their works?
6. In what ways can we compare texts across regions and cultures and how do such comparisons address our present-day environmental sensibility?

Comparative ecocritical analysis of the texts, in the light of research questions and the interpretative framework, furnishes useful insights about the novels in terms of how they represent and portray ecological themes in the broader relations of socio-political contexts. I laid out my findings in Chapters 4 and 5, each of which were explored from an ecocritical and postcolonial paradigm. However, some of the most enduring observations about the representation of texts resulting from interpretation and analysis are discussed below and concludes the study with the potential findings, followed by suggestions and future possibilities.

It was argued that the idea of geography and land has played an essential role for colonial expansion and transgeographical differentiation in the past and impacts the present in the form of the continuing reality of neocolonialism in postcolonial environments (Mukherjee). Accordingly, with a focus on Pakistani and American fiction in English, the comparative framework of the study has carved out the similarities in terms of environmental problems that we all confront, but the shared environmental commonalities, such as toxicity, consumption, contamination and ecocosmopolitan vision that I have addressed in the study are differentiated from the Euro-American environmental model in terms of fundamental "underdevelopment" in postcolonial geographical zones that differ from North America in material realities and American pastoral tradition. While doing so, I have also paid attention to the narrative style as well as the theme and contents of the Pakistani novel as part of the South Asia novel. Building on Mukherjee's stance of cultural and literary specificity, Pakistani fiction, similar to other postcolonial South Asian fiction in English, offers a grounded critique of the unjust practices of a ruling elite and the globalization processes that continue to perpetuate a culture of "uneven development" that in many ways are seen responsible for creating obstacles for a sustainable clean environment in Pakistan. In the process of the interpretation of these texts, I argued that these conceptual threads are what differentiates the Pakistani fiction from that of American fiction in English. It was also stressed

that the cartel of industrail capitalism is a defining component in American fiction in disrupting the pastoral harmony of the American nature discourse. However, the process of neoliberal capitalism, which now passes on as "imperialism" and "uneven capitalist development" (Mukherjee 14), is manifested in a more intensified form in postcolonial zones than in the North American region (14).

The study aslo suggests that the contemporary Pakistani fiction in English has expanded its thematic and conceptual scope by locating the stories within the changing dynamics of globalization, geopolitics, nuclear technologies, communal conflicts and violence, and deterritorialization as it is often reflected in the works of Aslam Khan (*Trespassing, Thinner Than Skin*), Mohsen Hamid (*Rising, Moth Smoke)*. The interpretation and analyses of Pakistani fiction in English reflects an apprehension and concern with the environment, not just as a setting or a site, but as an ecological and socio-political entanglement of human and non-human environment and emerges profoundly in the texts.

By testing the larger environmental issues, such as toxicity, waste garbage and resource depletion, environmental violence and human–nature relationship in the texts is analyzed, as well as the literature review intercede political questions. This premise also supports Mukherjee"s (2010) conceptual stance that environment, as a network of relations between both human communities and non-human environments, is not only a dominant thematic occurrence in the works of South Asian writers but "a formal and stylistic presence", reflecting irregular development, environmental degradation and ecological imperialism (Mukherjee 11). Based on this framework, the analysis shows the singularity of Pakistani fiction and raises related social and political questions about environmental disruption and lack of harmony.

Hamid in *Moth Smoke* represents the political and socio-economic awareness of contemporary Pakistan, depicting the social struggles and economic predicament that are paving the way towards environmental desolation. Through his style, diction and the thematic representation of Pakistani society and the multiple problems it confronts, Hamid also underscores a narrative that reflects neoliberal development and its ramifications on ecological and social disintegration. Truly depicting a culture of asymmetrical development that is explained in the literature review and the analysis, Hamid refines our understanding of what the term means in the context of Pakistan. The historical reality of Pakistan as a former colony of the British, with all its

baggage of imperial consequences still intact, and now under the crunch of the corrupt ruling elite, *Moth Smoke* establishes a form of contemporary imperialism and violence that incapacitates the society as well as the environment. The term "violence" is significant given what Nixon conceptualises as a kind of ferocity that is "silent" and "slow" (2) when applied on Hamid novels in terms of the environmental situation in an overly urbanised country. Unlike the militarization and physical violence, environmental violence is slow and invisible, which speaks powerfully to what Guha and Nixon term as "the environmentalism of the poor". It is so because Hamid interweaves a debilitating environmental vision by exposing the horrific logic of globalization and corporatism that only acknowledges those who are privileged. The filth ridden wasteland, the dusty, polluted urban biosphere, depicted in the *Moth Smoke* provide an insight into an environment which is an outcome of the contemporary neoliberal capital consumption. The polluted urban spaces are a consequence of the rising demand for resource consumption (Perzadeh). This demand for unobstructed consumption in a resource stressed country, such as Pakistan is compounded by what Hamid acknowledges as "privatization and the boom of guaranteed-profit, project-financed, imported oil-fired electricity projects" (Hamid*, Moth Smoke* 72). The excessive vehicle exhaust and fumes expulsion, the use of unbound energy consumption in the form of ACs and the exhaust it generates poisons the landscape whose price is born by the excluded marginalized poor, while the elite and the powerful "spout neo-Malthusian theories about the inevitability (and desirability) of their demise from a safe distance" (Mukherjee 162).

Uzma Aslam Khan portrays a picture of an ecocosmopolitan vision in *Trespassing* in which her characters embrace a planetary consciousness by rooting themselves in the animals and the nonhuman part of the nevironrmnrt, invoking a paradigm of "earth democracy" (Shiva), or "eco-cosmopolitanism" (Hesie). However, like Hamid, she also begs our attention as she turns to the problems of the neoliberal state, ethnic violence, militarism—all contributing to the invisible ecological vulnerability as well as the instability in the region. Khan calls attention to political and social issues, such as environmental justice, racism[1] and resource depletion. In *Thinner Than Skin*, Khan shows how Pakistan's Northern forests are in jeopardy due to unjust pillaging of timber, species extinction, and marginalization of indigenous communities, revealing divisive and discriminatory policies economically and a politically structured uneven distribution of resources. Furthermore, in *Trespassing,* the politics of violence, deprivation and resource exhaustion is highlighted as well. Like Hamid, Khan believes that neoliberalism and capital consumption

renders the environmental vulnerable in Pakistan to a larger extent. In *Trespassing* "shrimp factory" and "water" are therefore powerful metaphors not only symbolizing nature but of livelihood, to derive living from nature, a perspective that has been silenced from the mainstream environmentalism. Such images become a metonym for environmental injustice as a result of the unequal distribution of resources and power in the community that favors certain social structures of nature at the expense of others (Adamson 181).

Thus, it is important to mention, the underlying powers structures and dominant forces in the texts that I have just mentioned above. It is because, writing, whether theoretical or creative, that erases the needs, conditions, and exploitation of the impoverished underclass and simply sanctions social differences, which cannot provide people who are unlikely to have a sufficient common ground on which to come together and locate answers to crucial questions about the exploitation of the marginalized poor in economically suppressed and environmentally degraded regions of the world, cannot offer justice. On the contrary, postcolonial Pakistani fiction offers us tools refined in the landscapes of uneven development to expose ecological disparities as well as itself as cultural critique.

American fiction in contrast offers a version of contemporary American neopastoral trope, in the sense of how humanity has aligned with an increasingly conflicting relationship with the environment and the bioregion. Both DeLillo and Smiley in their respective novels have demonstrated the way the traditional ideal of literary pastoral has changed in the American context, reminiscing what Leo Marx anticipated in *The Machine in the Garden*.[2] For Marx, and many American thinkers, such as Buell (1995), Gifford (1999), American literature is "pastoral literature, and the American experience has been and still is a pastoral experience" (Bryant 63). Marx's argument that the American experience that was based on the "pastoral ideal"—a dominant romantic ideal that humanity can survive in between the primitivism and civilization—is thwarted by the power of technology and modern industrialization (63). The recurring imagery of machine in the American garden is a trope that signifies the disruption of harmony, and it is as " a symptom of the social conflict between myth and history, between the pastoral ideal and the growth of technology" (64). Leo Marx's melancholy over the disrupted pastoral harmony due to the intervention of machine and technology is a lamentation that parallels the American literary tradition and is reflected in *White Noise* and *A Thousand Acres* respectively. *White Noise* reflects

recalling such a technologically saturated social milieu. While the roaring sound of the locomotive is a dominant trope (for industrial power and urbanisation) in Marx's Virgilian mode, DeLillo and Smiley's narrative interrupts the American pastoral by invoking the trope of "chemical adulteration" and toxicity. For both the novels, the chemical poisoning is a trope which serves as an aesthetic representation of conflict and imbalance. It is an indicator of social struggle and conflict between history and myth, between the progress of technology and the idyllic.

Similarly, with the environmental knowledge that is now available, humans have recognized the impact of its dispossession from the land. With the creation of previously inconceivable weaponry and toxins, and the enormous damaging proficiencies of nuclear threat and chemicals in the form of pesticides and drugs in industry and agriculture have shown a development of modifications and a change in American novel characterized by a different type of pastoral writing. *White Noise* and *A Thousand Acre* reflect the ecological crisis that started in the United States in the early 1980s and swings from pastoral to what Ashford Anderson terms as a *neo-pastoral* form of writing.[3]

The study also reveals that while Pakistani fiction demonstrates a third world environmentalism primarily originating out of socio-economic setbacks and historical reality entrenched in present postcolonialism, American environmentalism witnessed a period of historical consciousness formation usually known as a "post-natural" age (McKibben), a period when American people profoundly experienced threatening catastrophes, such as the Love Canal accident, and Three Mile Island hazards in America. DeLillo's *White Noise* that was released a month before the Bhopal accident in India sheds light on how American people were already perceiving and narrating stories in the backdrop of such hazardous calamities arising out of chemical poisons generating a broader sense of the "post-industrial imagination" (Wallace 66). That is why DeLillo's *White Noise* and Smiley's *A Thousand Acre* represent environmental contamination and ecological destruction of that period; such a drastic change that it did not align itself with the glorification of nature, and instead represented that the places people inhabited and built and the natural environment, as well as human bodies were changing due to ecological contamination. This shifting phenomenon shaped a new attitude in American culture towards environment, and nature which is reflected in the novels as well. The American public began to

see themselves in a different light concerning their relationship to the natural world and recognized their complicity in post-industrial ecosystems grounded in waste and pollution (Deitering 13).[4]

Consequently, the previously held notion on nature worship, and inhabitation reversed and became problematic in American culture especially in the late 20th century. The imaginations on rural-urban spheres, as well as human bodies, were reshaped (Buell, "Toxic" 639–665; Deitering 2–3). Thus, within this framework DeLillo and Smiley's fiction is a depiction of contemporaray American culture which is informed by a sense of technological superiority in the form of complex networks of machinery and systems, which has in many ways replaced nature as a primary source of sublime experience (Henneberg 52). On the other hand, contrary to this American vision, Pakistani environmental degradation focuses on how the slow entanglement of neoliberalism and environmental injustice serves as the catalyst for human and ecological dehumanization, which is deeply tangled with the relationship between economic status and cultural consequences of uneven development where the pendulum between underdevelopment and technological development is at an extreme rate.

Therefore, it is argued that the concept of ecocentrism is diverse in understanding the dynamics of environmental apprehensions, problems and dimensions in a transgeographical context in view of global polarities, such as North and South. It is also argued that cultural representations of environment also manifest itself quite differently in terms of aesthetic values and material realities. In the Pakistani context, the emphasis in the texts is more on a social and political condition of deep and continuous exploitation of humans and impoverished communities as well as non-human environment. While in the American context, in the selected novels, the emphasis is more geared towards the disruption of a pastoral myth embedded in the toxic consciousness of post-industrial society. Based on these observations, I conclude that postcolonial environmental conditions are firmly rooted in a cultural history which is distinct as compared to the historical tradition of euro-American environmentalism and thus requires a different lens for interpretation. And thereby offers us rich ground in which to root a better, more transgeographically inlcusive politically effective enviornmentalism and a more satisfying, theoretically coherent ecocritical sensitive comparatuve framework

Recommendations for Further Research

There is no doubt that in today's fast-paced technologically advanced post-industrial era, environmental studies and concerns make an integral part of environmental education. This fact is attested to the number of books, journals and literature published every year on the subject matter around the world. The study undertaken suggests that discourses about environmental issues and concerns have a potential to become a part of education. The way writers engage in highlighting environmental and human relationship explicitly and implicitly might help to play an essential role in Pakistan's environmental education. Perhaps this is how we can contribute to environmental restoration. The most significant benefit that one can draw from such an implication is that for fostering environmental consciousness, an exciting and entertaining narrative can be successfully employed within classroom discussion as a gateway for learners of all ages to explore education on human–nature relationship for sustainability. Thus, on epistemological grounds, the overall meaning of this study has implications for how literature across the world and especially from Pakistan may be utilized as a resource not only in environmental education but also in literary studies by opening multiple avenues and ways for considering environmentally oriented texts.

In addition to all the recent scholarship that has emerged and is still evolving in the ecocritical domain, one must not overlook the works from Pakistani writers that can still be investigated for comparative ecocritical analysis and praxis. We can be appreciative of the genius of Urdu writers and their translated works like Saadat Hasan Manto or Qurratul Ain Hyder who are great names and can be read alongside international writers in an environmental context. The most notable examples of Pakistani nature writing can be witnessed in the poems of classical Urdu poets, such as Nazir Akbar Abadi as well as in the poems of poets, such as Mohammed Hussain Azd which was influenced by the Romantic movement of the 18th century. Nature representation in Iqbal's poems can be compared with Western poets of his age. The poetic expression of Majeed Amjed reflects nature in its various manifestations. For example, his poems "Sons of Stony Mountains", "A Cry" and "Spring" can help infer how modernist poets viewed environmental sustainability. Also, poets, such as Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi ("Jungle", "Dairy"), Meeraji ("Call of the Sea"), Sharif Kunjahi' ("Tree of the Barren Waste") are some avenues for exploring Pakistani poets and nature in their work. The poems by Pakistani poets range from romantic lamentations to

resistance, tyranny, and nature writing. A glimpse into the vibrant discourse of Pakistani poetry reflects a kaleidoscopic prism of the Pakistani landscape, its flora and fauna as well the social and political meilei of its time.

In the domian of non-fiction, books (*Piya Rang kala, Kajal Kotha*) written by Yahaya Khan are replete with images and symbools from the underground as well physical natural world. The way he persent an understanding of nature is a unique blend of spiritualism and sufism, combing elementss of mysticism with the forces of nature. This area is untrameled so far and can be compared with the Native American understanding of the ecology. It is not merely a matter of proximity with nature, the earth in the true sense is one of us, this is the primary concept of the Native American and is also refelcted in the true accounts provided by Yahya Khan. Different transaltions of Urdu writers and poets works from different regions in Pakistan can be a fruitful area to investigate various ecological themes. For example, Kahsmiri poetry [5] Punjabi, Sindhi and other regional langauges have rich tradition of folklore that can be a fertile ground to explore ecological themses in a comparative mode. Moreover, postcolonial studies and ecocritical theories have changed the broader perspectives of the intellectual landscape of cultural and literary studies; therefore, merging postcolonial ecologies with different works from dictinct cultures and geographies may provide a new theoretical framework for most predicaments and dilemmas of contemporary societies. Therefore, it is hoped that this study serves as a stepping-stone for further research in the area of comparative literature.

NOTES

[1] The term Environmental racism became political discussion in the year 1987, when the united Church of Christ's commission for racial justice published a report that found race to be the leading factor in the location of hazardous waste facilities. See "Introduction" in *Environmental Justice Reader*, (University of Arizona Press, 2001).

[2] Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden* (New York, 1964).

[3] Joan Ashford Anderson. *Ecocritical Theology: Neo-Pastoral Themes in American Fiction from 1960 to the Present* (McFarland, 2014).

[4] For an in-depth analysis, see, for example, Cynthia Debittering's "Post Natural Novel" 13.

[5] See, for example, Naseer Khan "Ecological Conscience in Kashmiri Poetry: An Ecocritical Survey" 2018. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/32.

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