

### Abstract

Currently there is a scarcity of scholarly engagement of the contemporary South Asian fiction with the environmental ramifications of the military adventurism and the exploitative tendencies of the dominant ideologies in the Indo-Pak and Af-Pak regions. This dissertation, by attending to the ecocritical implications of a selection of novels by Nadeem Aslam, Feryal Gauhar, Mirza Waheed, Shafī Ahmad, Uzma Aslam Khan, Mohsin Hamid and Arundhati Roy, seeks to fill this gap. It codifies environmental issues within the militaristic, capitalistic and dichotomous gender-based and class-based social order. The research postulates that the powerful-weak, us-them, culture-nature, man-woman, human-nonhuman, and modernity-tradition dichotomies constitute the locus of the on-going environmental degradation in South Asia. The authors draw attention to imminent ecological perils engulfing the whole region if the same reductive, dichotomous, capitalistic and militaristic paradigms persist. Employing four spatial models of environment provided by Tuan (1990)—rural, urban, suburban and wilderness—I mainly examine the following phenomena: brutalization of the ecosystem in war-afflicted Afghanistan and Kashmir, the reductive treatment of the natural and the bodily, deforestation, imminent extinction of avian and animal life, ecological marginalization, and eco-destructive neoliberal projects as an extension of neo-colonialism. The dissertation essentially applies ecocritical and ecofeminist approaches, but it also makes use of the tenets of animal studies, environmental justice and Marxist ecocriticism as they all contest the role of the powerful nations, institutions and ideologies in damaging the environment. I build on the pertinent conceptualizations provided by such environmental scholars as Lawrence Buell, Vandana Shiva, Carolyn Merchant, and Val Plumwood, among others, to establish the theoretical, hermeneutical, socio-political, and aesthetic lenses through which the texts can be examined. This theoretical synthesis cements my premise that the nexus of militarism and capitalism with the prevalent reductive discourses like

patriarchy, class conflict and anthropocentrism is detrimental to environmental stability and, ultimately, to human existence.