



RESEARCH PAPER

The Natural and the Social Pakistan: An Eco-Marxist Perspective of Tariq Rahman's *Animals*

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ABSTRACT

Pakistani literature has contributed to the ongoing debate on the environmental crisis. However, the scholarly works around the writings rarely address the importance of the environment and its influence on human and non-human relationships. This study addresses this issue through textual analysis of Tariq Rahman's "Animals" using Eco-Marxism. The story critiques capitalist-driven environmental exploitation, where land and animals are commodified under the guise of progress. The bourgeoisie benefit from development projects, and the proletariat suffer exploitation from both the elites and environmental degradation. The study finds that "Animals" exposes capitalist exploitation of both nature and labor, reinforcing systemic inequality. Rahman illustrates that environmental degradation is not incidental but a consequence of commodification that can be solved by giving importance to indigenous culture. Future studies calls for research addressing marginalization, resistance, and equitable development in Pakistani literature

Keywords: Environmental Degradation, Biopolitics, Capitalism, Eco-Marxism, Natural Environment, Social Environment

Introduction

The current debate on environmental degradation and climate change has gripped the attention of researchers in various academic fields (Adger et al. 2009). These aspects are reflected in literature as an issue to be addressed (also known as climate fiction or Cli-fi). Climate change eventually affects both the relationship between humans themselves and their relationship with their environment. Pakistani Writings in English are no exception. However, the environment is rarely treated as the primary subject matter of Pakistani Writings in English because precedence is usually given to the population, i.e., humans' relationship with other humans. It mainly deals with hierarchical structures based on various social factors such as gender, caste, and education. It eventually leads to a debate about the identity crisis of a character, as most mainstream Pakistani writings are written by diasporic writers (Shamsie 2017). Hence environmental issues are scarcely explored in Pakistani writings.

Environmental degradation in this region can trace its origins to the onset of colonization, where Britain's looting of resources left the subcontinent in an economically insecure state. While some credit the developments to the advent of the British, the so-called "supposed gifts" (Roy 2018, 135) in the form of railways and partition did not only benefit the English in the long run but also damaged the biosphere and "future economic prospects" (Jannuzi 1986, 153) of the Pakistani society. The scarcity of resources reinforced the persistent hierarchical structure in post-independent Pakistan as it mainly banked on the agricultural mode of production. This, in return, fuelled the central mechanism for feudalism (Abbasi 2021). These zeitgeist of the post-independent setting of Pakistan has established its place in the local literature because the mode of production is explicitly and implicitly involved with the human dynamics of a particular society. According to Marx and colleagues,

“the mode of production is a form of expressing life for individuals. Individuals’ relationship to the mode of production coincides with who they are” (Marx et al., 1974, p. 42)

Mode of production is a combination of productive forces and relations of production. The productive forces refer to instruments, raw materials, and labor force utilized in production. At the same time, the relations of production refer to the structures that regulate the relationship among the labor force in producing goods and distribution.

The natural resources and structures that regulate the mode of production form the basis of Eco-Marxism, which sees the security of the environment and population as the core pillars of the modern nation-state system. The environment is not compromised of living and non-living (Zainor 2016) but also includes other societal factors that can be calculated and operated as productive forces (Medovoi 2013). The word “population” is used instead of “humans” to show their biological status as any other species that can be utilized as an input resource in production. According to Oxford Learner’s Dictionary (n.d), the word “population” is defined as “[countable + singular or plural verb, uncountable] all the people who live in a particular area, city or country; the total number of people who live there.” Similarly, in Marxism and Ecocriticism, the population is again defined by the area or state it inhabits (Khazoeva et al. 2019; Hartnett 2021). These definitions inevitably bring the environment to the center as a being that influences its inhabitants and their relationships.

Environment and population dynamics are abundant in the writings of Tariq Rahman, a Pakistani writer, critic, and scholar. He has received many international (Humboldt Prize) and national awards (Sitara-e-Imtiaz). The subject matter of his fiction writings varies in their themes: religion, poverty, exploitation, women’s oppression, and working-class knitted in Pakistani culture. His writing style is simple and casual, reflecting the lives of ordinary men in Pakistani society.

Pakistani writings deal with urban and rural settings that have been analyzed in by critics from the perspective of Marxism and Ecocriticism, and both dimensions are the elixirs of growth for local literature. Ever since the recent consequences of climate change in the form of the nationwide flood of 2022, critics have again turned to an eco-critical lens to highlight nature’s exploitation and accuse humans of destroying it. However, there seems to be negligence in existing literature analyzing climate change concerning the mode of production. It is not always necessarily humans who deteriorate the condition of environment around them. According to the Eco-Marxist perspective, it is the one percent of the human, the bourgeoisie, who control the mode of production and regulate the conditions of a natural environment with the help of infrastructures introduced. For instance, in *Animal*, the mode of production shifts from agricultural to capitalist mode. In this newly established production process, infrastructures such as roads and guest houses introduce the concept of wage labor. The purpose of the study is to generate debate about how the human vs. nature relationship works because the issue cannot be seen in terms of black and white. The problem is nuanced and requires to be explored and investigated critically.

This study considers the short story *Animals* from eco-marxist perspective in order to explore how the environment is impacted by controlling mode of production at mass and detail level. It studies the characters’ social class, their relationship with each other, and their impact on the perception of the environment that would lead the researcher to the biopolitical unconscious of the text. Hence the study questions the influence of the environment on the relationship between characters and their settings. Once having investigated the influence of environment, the study would inquire the impact of class division on the character’s perception of their environment. The study also intends to signify the need for Eco-Marxism in Pakistani literature in light of the ongoing climate and environmental crisis. Many literary works are evidence of human’s exploitation of nature, disregarding the materialistic link between the two. The nature which is usually seen as a

static element in Pakistani writings, gains consciousness in Eco-Marxism; it becomes alive due to its intricate association with culture and society. The environment is born and is explored considerably less than other elements in Pakistani Writings. The purpose of the study is not only to initiate a debate about the issue at hand but to identify the biopolitical consciousness of Pakistani writings, which highlights the core issue of exploitation of not only nature but humans too.

Literature Review

Pakistan's population growth and economic as well as industrial development have resulted in a number of natural environmental problems, such as the degradation of agricultural land and forests along with, water scarcity and poor air quality (Parveen et al., 2019). In urban spaces or the built environment, the major problem is waste management and recycling (Manzoor et al., 2020). Many well-known and densely populated cities such as Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Lahore often suffer from issues of garbage and plastic litter scattered around (Rahman, 2013). The depletion of natural resources like sand, rocks, minerals, forests, and water is on the rise and has compelled numerous individuals to migrate from rural regions to urban areas (Nawaz et al., 2019). This migration has intensified the strain on urban environmental management systems, which are already insufficient and lacking. Smith (2010) even argues that infrastructure projects can significantly impact people and influence their dealings with social and economic inequality.

Such incorporation can be seen and represented in Anglophone Pakistani writings by celebrated authors such as Taufiq Rafat, Mohsin Hamid, Bapsi Sidhwa, and more. One such acclaimed author is Tariq Rahman, whose collection of short stories is seldom explored. His collection of short stories between the years 1960 and 1994 includes four collections: *Legacy and Other Stories* (Rahman 1989), *Work* (Rahman 1991), *The Third Leg* (Rahman 1999), and *Selected Short Stories* (Rahman 2002). His earlier collection was inspired mainly by Guy de Maupassant and Oscar Wilde and had "no sense of Pakistan as a location" (Shamsie 2017, 478). Later his writings explored and incorporated elements from Urdu fiction. This incorporation reflected ordinary men, proletarians, of Pakistani society, their struggle, and subjugation in the postcolonial and globalized world.

The characters and settings of Rahman's short stories are highly influenced by one another. The relationship among characters is based on the class structure. The question of settings and their relationship with the characters becomes the subject matter of research and exploration. For example, Hussan (2021) investigated the class structure in Rahman's short story "Mustache", and explored different financial and social mechanisms that the elite class uses to control the labour class. The lack of opportunities and the dispossession of the labour class of the same products they create lead to further exploitation. Dadu and Shafaqat reflect this class division and lack of opportunities for equal resources, and their labour power being bought for an insignificant amount by the feudal of their town. Hence, their whole life and their services further dip then down into the cycle of exploitation and social degradation based on the class they belong to at the hands of the Chaudhary. Dadu and his family do not realise the strength and power that lies in the hands of the feudal. They think that power is associated with a moustache and muscular physique, which is certainly not the case until they face the wrath of Chaudhary, who sends over his men to beat up Dadu for not listening to him. It is then that Dadu's belief in the myth of power being associated with a moustache remains no longer intact (Hussan, 2021). The idea of doing away with age-long established myths is further explored by Rasool et al. (2022), who highlighted the myth and misconception of many Pakistanis believing that only Bengalis were at mistake, which caused the separation of East Pakistan. In Rahman's story "Bingo", Safeer's character is questioned by a Major of the Bangladeshi army to explain which codes of ethics compelled him to kill innocent people just to abide by the orders of an unscrupulous government. It was then that Safeer realised that the separation of East Pakistan did not result from the mistakes of Bengali people but the unscrupulous political orders being blindly followed

(Rasool et al., 2022). Another myth deconstructed by the researchers in the context of this study is a flawed understanding of the faith as reflected in the short story "Eid-Milad-un-Nabi". In this story, Rahman criticises the people for thinking they are religiously accurate for celebrating Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) birth, which is certainly not the case. He presents the characters in a way that shows how they celebrate this day just to please their superiors and to establish a socially pleasing image of themselves, while none of these people actually practised his (SAW) way of life, which is true Islamic life. Mullah Allah Din is one such of this hypocrisy and mythical belief in religion as he is assigned the duty of preparing his students for the recitation of Naat, but he regularly beats them up so much that sometimes his students would actually bleed. After beating them up, he would find solace and serenity in their voice and lyrics of Naat and then claim that this makes him a good Muslim and worthy enough to be followed and admired (Rasool et al., 2022).

According to Javaid and Munir (2022), Rahman's fiction has undertones of postcolonial discourse where he establishes a direct relation between power and the White Colonialists through the speculative hegemonic ideology of Marxism. Rahman presents the White Colonialist as '*mai baap*' in his story "Mai Baap", which means they are the masters of the local people. They loot and plunder the local resources and then deprive the local masses of that, and an added insult to that comes from their hegemony where the colonised are told how to act 'civilised'. The title of the story reflects not only colonisers as masters but as holders of livelihood, sustainers, and being at the top of the great food chain; Rahman's "Poststructuralist stance towards the metonym of Mai Baap as it is an instable signifier with multiple meanings and hence, Mai Baap itself is not an absolute entity" (Javaid and Munir 2022, p. 457). Ahmad and Khan's (2019) take on Rahman's story "Charity" in postcolonial light is another related idea where the Eastern local way of life is juxtaposed with the Western imported way of life. Bobby and Rabab discuss the *tanga* and the Japanese motor car that pass by them, and Bobby remarks that it feels like the modern age bumped into the medieval age. They lack a sense of belonging to their own local and rustic culture and glorify the Western way of life. On the other hand, they roam around in the Raja Bazaar of Rawalpindi and find it humorous how crowded and outdated it is. Later on, they also discuss who should be given charity; Bobby argues that charity must be given to someone one loves, not to someone who is inferior or economically dependent on others, because that means they are detestable and seen as lesser. Since they are seen as lesser, the charity given to them does not come from love but from pity. Hence, Bobby decides not to help the poor and the needy, which again highlights how the issues and challenges of the economically struggling class are belittled and disregarded for irrational reasons. The segregation in the bus for males and females comes from the cultural norms of the country, but Bobby and Rabab see that as morally inappropriate and somewhat discriminatory; hence, they judge people around them for sitting on the bus in segregation (Ahmad & Khan, 2019). The contrast between the personalities of Rabab and Bobby is evident and seen as the contrast between the coloniser (west) and the colonised (east) by Ahmad and Khan (2019).

Rahman's work has also been a keen interest of researchers attempting to analyse linguistic elements and the role of language in the context of the plot making and the intended message of the author. One such example is of Batool et al. (2021), who applied the interpersonal metafunction of Halliday to the short story "The Patient" by Rahman, analysing the language for the elements of tenor in relation to "contact, affect, and status" (p. 3462). The study concluded with the declarative clause being used the greatest number of times, followed by the imperative clauses and interrogative clauses. This signifies that the author relied more on conveying information, which means the author relied on telling as much as possible. However, if we look at Rahman's work, whose produced fiction ranges from post-apocalyptic literature to all sorts of social satire, his works yet lacks the exploration required for a thorough understanding of the writer's philosophy of work and his representation of the local perceptions of different social and environmental issues. Since his works include many stories that involve politics and nature both at the same time,

that being the reason, it becomes a suitable case to study in order to lay the foundations for better alternative modes of interactions between humans and nature. His literary work lacks ecocritical and Marxist critiques, with very few exceptions. The reviewed literature establishes that there is no such large-scale work that looks at his work as an anthology and studies more than 12 pieces of fiction from his book.

In recent times, much fiction around the globe has addressed the issue concerning climate change and environmental degradation. Environmental crises and deteriorating climate changes are causing large-scale global ecological problems, which have caught the attention of researchers. Many researchers have analysed Pakistani writings in English from the perspective of ecocriticism in order to understand the dynamics of global warming and the growing perception of climate change that reflects the local understanding of the issue at hand such as Shoaib (2019); Mishra (2022); Afzal (2020); Aleem et al. (2018); Irum (2020) and Janjua (2022). Ever since the recent consequences of climate change in the form of the nationwide flood of 2022, critics have again turned to an ecocritical lens to highlight nature's exploitation and accuse humans of destroying it (Carrington, 2022). However, there seems to be negligence in existing literature analysing climate change concerning the mode of production. It is not always necessarily humans who deteriorate the nature around them. According to the Eco-Marxist perspective, it is the one per cent of humans, the bourgeoisie, who control the mode of production and regulate the conditions of a natural environment with the help of infrastructures introduced. In the newly established production process, infrastructures such as roads and guest houses introduce the concept of wage labour that eventually impacts the social environment. The purpose of the study is to generate debate about how the human vs. nature relationship works because the issue cannot be seen in terms of black and white. The problem is nuanced and requires it to be explored and investigated critically.

Zainal (2016) studied four Malaysian novels from the Eco-Marxism perspective: Keris Mas' *Jungle of Hope* (2009), Yang-May Ooi's *The Flame Tree* (1998), KS Maniam's *Between Lives* (2003), and Chuah Guat Eng's *Days of Change* (2010). Zainal's study saw the selected texts as a byproduct of what the author actually thinks, hence analysing the biopolitical unconsciousness and seeing the text as a specific message that helps in nation-building, the importance of the texts and the study both raised. While there were manifold issues discussed in each of the novels, but they all agreed in the sense of revolting against the industrialisation of the land as a developmental plan. The authors were concerned about the development of the country, but at the same time, they expressed enough worry and established a strong biopolitical unconsciousness regarding environmental degradation and not setting environment preservation as a priority. For instance, Zainal (2016) highlights the causes of environmental degradation to be infrastructural and technological advancement. The third world countries are seen as a resource reservoir for the first-world nations. The attitude of the authors came from the past and present understanding of the given subject. Then, their works were a demonstration of their present and future endeavours regarding the sudden industrial wave in Malaysia, the developmental projects, technological overhaul, the materialistic and wealth-centered modernisation, and the entire world becoming a global village that faces the problem of not having sustainable green initiatives to preserve the environment (Zainal, 2016). The authors recommend a strong sense of commitment to save the deteriorating condition of the environment, which will eventually save humans from any misfortune and natural calamities. The recommendations focus on humans as well as nature due to the interdisciplinary nature of the theoretical framework, which helps look at the problem from a different perspective. A similar interdisciplinary approach was carried out by Muhia (2020), who approached Kulet's play "Vanishing Herds" through an Eco-Marxism lens. Muhia declares his study as a "campaign" for environmental degradation. According to him, the rural setting presented at the play's outset displays how the environment is deeply involved in the farmers' daily activities. Muhia concludes that environmental degradation comes from rapid agricultural

capitalism, mass consumerism, and exploitation of resources. It is recommended in the study that humans need to reconsider their actions and approach in order to grow and metabolise with nature side by side, which is the only sustainable way forward for a peaceful co-existence of the two. Similarly, the study conducted by Helmy (2018) on Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl* (2009) highlighted the massive manipulation by the capitalist class and the unfortunate role of the economically dependent class in it. The quest for material gain leads humans to feelings of alienation from nature, which is their actual treasure, as opposed to material gains. While these studies add value to the theoretical discourse of Eco-Marxism, yet what seems evident is the lack of any exploration in the Pakistani context that attempts to look at the natural in relation to the social.

The above-reviewed literature establishes that Rahman's fiction is rich in social aspect. The social aspect comprises of class division and stratification, feudal modes of maintaining hegemony, exploitation of resources by humans, and the never-ending struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. In contrast to social aspect, the natural aspect relates to environmental activism and preservation, calls for better alternative modes of production, and the beneficence of natural treasures if taken care of by humans. However, there is still a lack of research from the perspective of Eco-Marxism, which connects the social with the natural. While Marxism alone is considered a theoretical approach to study the literature, and even ecocriticism alone is looked at in Pakistani fiction, yet the blend of the social and natural is missing. It can be argued that the social aspect in the context of Pakistan can be related to postcolonial discourse since that focuses on the social, and then combining that with ecocriticism would result in better outcomes. However, it should be noted that a) post-colonialism focuses not on society entirely; it is the politically social aspect where the context of colonisation and its aftermath is considered; hence, the theory comes with a limited scope; b) postcolonial discourse primarily sees the coloniser as the exploiter and abundant literature is already available in the context of Pakistani fiction that studies the ecocritical in context of postcolonial such as studies conducted by Khan and Ahmad (2022), and Yaqoob (2019), and c) there are multiple studies that explore the postcolonial world from a Marxist perspective as well such as works of Javaid and Munir (2022), and Karim (2018).

There is a gap in existing literature connecting two disciplines to study the same phenomena. The short fiction produced by Rahman deals with the environment, and the characters are, one way or the other, interacting with the environment, framing a biopolitical unconscious. The interdisciplinary approach to studying life-like phenomena is called for by many critics (Klein, 2007). Hence, this study highlights a gap in the above-discussed existing literature. An Eco-Marxist approach adds another dimension to studying the relationship among humans and the interaction between humans and non-humans. Furthermore, in the wake of a recent natural disaster causing massive floods across Pakistan, there is a need for an in-depth study to determine and generate an academic debate about climate change issues. The current study aims to investigate how the dynamics of environment are impacted at the detail and mass levels while exploring the characters' social class, their relationships with each other and their accumulated perception of the environment as a result of that relationship. The study also attempts to analyse the biopolitical unconsciousness operating as a subtext in the selected short stories. The study aims to explore these variables and provide an in-depth understanding of the topic while also bringing the much-needed discussion regarding climate change to mainstream academic discourse.

Material and Methods

The study analyzes the text selected from Tariq Rahman's collection of short fiction, *Animals* (2002). The study would first summarize the short story, *Animal* with regards to its characters, their relationship, the settings, and the relationship between the settings and characters, thus, connecting the biosphere of the setting with human life. The study is

qualitative as it focuses on interpreting the text and is situated in the interpretive paradigm. The interpretation would be analyzed under the selected theoretical framework with the help of the set of research variables. The research variables would be defined and set under the theoretical underpinning of the Eco-Marxist theory and research question.

The theory of Eco-Marxism proposed by Medovoi (2013) critiques Ecocriticism and Marxism for their limitation in their theoretical perspectives. The approach of Ecocriticism focuses on the relationship of human beings with the environment while disregarding the human dynamics where not all humans are equal. Similarly, Marxism focuses on the human-to-human relationship based on capital rendering different hierarchies while overlooking that capital/wealth depends on natural resources/environment. The two identified limitations required further theorization; hence, the Eco-Marxist perspective (Medovoi 2013) proposes a triad of “population/environment/capital” (86) where ecocriticism meets with Marxism. It focuses on the missing link or, in Medovoi’s words, the “absent cause” (79) between humans and the environment. It connects the human dynamics identified by the Marxist theoretical perspective with the environment humans exploit. The point of intersection between humans and nature is historical materialism, where the mode of production throughout history (agrarian, industrial, Fordism, etc.) builds and decides the relationship between the two. Hence, the Eco-Marxist perspective becomes biopolitical because the power of biopolitics is used to regulate the population, which emerges in a “calculable milieu” (88), i.e., non-human factors influencing the natural and social surroundings, where the population lives and seeks to flourish (Medovoi 2013).

The political unconscious (Jameson, 2013) advanced into the bio-political unconscious (Medovoi, 2013), building on the concept of governmentality (Foucault, 2007). It considers class conflict in terms of its environment, disregarding other ideological stances. Biopolitics aim to regulate the human population by interfering with and managing their mode of production, which is specific to a particular region or territory. In a globalized world, the capitalist mode of production aims to transcend geographical territories to accumulate wealth globally. The concept of the environment, instead of territory, plays a crucial role in the accumulation process. Hence, Foucault’s governmentality is expanded in the theory of Eco-Marxism to highlight the importance of the environment to the capitalist mode of production. It proposes that similar to Jameson’s concept of hidden social and political meaning in the text, the Eco-Marxist nexus of population, environment, and capital finds its space in the literature.

Literature is an amalgamation of characters and settings produced by an author in a particular production mode. Tariq Rahman’s fiction reflects the lives of ordinary men – the working class population – in Pakistan who are affected by interference in their natural and social environment. Under Eco-Marxism, the population is regulated at the mass and detail levels. At a detailed level, Eco-Marxism investigates the root causes influencing the environment. It is not the humans who exploit nature; instead, it is the substrata of these humans or the one percent of humans (Khazoeva et al. 2019) who exploit it. It even suggests that the human - bourgeois exploit other humans - the proletariat as a fuel or the input resource for mass production that eventually benefits the one percent. At the detail level, i.e., on the individual level, the bourgeoisie utilizes disciplinary power to regulate the population.

On the contrary, the population is regulated through biopolitics at the mass level. According to Medovoi (2013), biopolitics aims to manage the relationship between humans and other non-human existence, such as “food, contagion, competition, or resources” (84). It also suggests “strategies deployed for maximizing the productive forces unleashed by demographic or aggregate relations, both between human beings, according to class, race, gender, sexuality, and between human beings and other species.” (85).

The identification at the mass and detail level builds the environment of a society. The environment generally refers to the story's setting that forms the calculable environment with which the characters, with all their anatomy, are in a dialectical relationship.

The Eco-Marxist's environment differs from the conventionally understood sense of the environment as it is a blend of 'the natural' and 'the social.' The natural aspect of the environment includes natural structures such as land, water, climate, forest, and other non-human species, which can be used as an input resource for the production process. The meddling with natural resources ultimately provides the capitalist bourgeoisie access to a society's social environment. The meddling is usually achieved through the projects of infrastructures, which are introduced under the guise of advancement and progress. Blending the two environments looks at human social hierarchies based on the resources capitalized. Hence, Eco-Marxism negates any possibility of the existence of a sustainable capitalist system.

The text is interpreted through textual analysis in context of Pakistani society (Griffin 2013). The short story selected is analyzed under the theory of Eco-Marxism to highlight the "meanings, value and message" (Smith 2017, 1) behind the production of the text. The variables of the analysis depend on the study's research questions. Hence it is an inductive approach, which is pertinent for an emerging framework, i.e., Eco-Marxism. Furthermore, a textual analysis will lead to one of the many educated guesses about the text under study. It does not nullify or suspend other possible interpretations of the text.

Results and Discussion

Animal (Rahman, 1999) revolves around the character Lal Din, a shepherd living with his father rearing goats around the valley. The valley, with its green mountains and rush stream, attracts visitors during summer. One of the visitors, Sahib, meets Lal Din and warns him about losing his "trees, springs, and even mountains" (p. 37) if he keeps on living like a goat. The prophecy of Sahib is realised when the valley's vast land is owned as private property and Lal Din ends up drinking with goats from a muddy pool where the onlookers, the tourists, call him and those like him "Animals-." (p. 44)

The story seems to be set in northern areas of Pakistan known for their scenic beauty. The scenic beauty attracts tourists, providing the setting for the characters to interact with each other and the environment. The following opening paragraph of the story highlights the complexity of these interactions:

There was a time when the roads were so bad that only a few jeeps ever ventured to intrude into the valley. A rattling bus brought the ordinary people and the sahibs in English clothes with sun hats on their heads came in jeeps (p. 35)

The road's intrusion into the valley's natural environment promises a progression to its inhabitants as access to distant wants is ensured. The road symbolizes the exchange of resources that benefits the involved actors, such as the villagers, investors, and the overall economy of a state. The exchanging of resources efficiently increases the opportunity for prosperity for all those involved in the process, especially the villagers and the investors. The valley's resources can range from material resources such as land, water, and minerals to cultural resources such as customs and language, which can benefit the valley's inhabitants through exchange and exposure. During the exchange process, the state acts as a mediator between the two because it has juridical power that ensures the exchange process is successful and does not harm the participants involved. However, the juridical power/political system in many third-world countries is shaped by their dependent relationship with capitalism, "which is often referred to as the state being beholden to the interests of capitalists." (Zainor, 2016, p. 116). They make it feasible for the bourgeoisie to

hunt limitless resources on earth. A particular area's inhabitants can choose between capitalism or juridical power, which leads to the same end goal. This infers that people's choice is nothing but a facade that either compels the citizens to adhere to the state or attracts their wishful contribution to capitalism. In both ways, the state and its policies facilitate the capitalist system.

In the story, Pakistan's scenic valley, as part of a third-world nation, can be seen exploited by the capitalist bourgeoisie through different means. One of the ways the exploitation is facilitated is through capitalism's awareness of the state's role and the right to provide the public with the infrastructure to facilitate movement. These infrastructures change the valley's natural environment, making it vulnerable to pollution and interfering with its demography i.e. social environment as well. With the help of infrastructures, the social environment is further fragmented, making it possible for the bourgeoisie to commodify and exploit the working class for their own advantage. The connection between infrastructure and social structures is a concept endorsed by Smith (2010) as well, who argues that infrastructure projects can significantly impact people dealings with social and economic inequality. Hence, with the help of infrastructures, the bourgeoisie accumulates wealth at the expense of cheap labour and the degrading natural environment.

The road facilitates the urbanisation of a particular area, as seen in the story where Lal Din's village gradually transforms into a tourist destination. The village is initially introduced to automobiles and guest houses as some of the initial proposals by the capitalist consumerist society. These bids eventually interfere with the natural environment and the mode of production that changes the status of the valley's indigenous population. They become what Muhia (2020) calls the "subject-object of the free market society" (p. 133), affecting their individuality. As stated by Marx et al. (1974), the mode of production defines an individual's way of life and, collectively, the culture of a society. Any interference with the mode of production harms the valley's environment. This can be seen as automobiles and tourists pollute the environment with various impurities. The interference also displaces its inhabitants internally concerning their profession and lifestyle.

The Sahibs – the entrepreneurs, on the other hand, benefit from the infrastructure more than the indigenous population. The sahibs "in English clothes with sun hats" (p. 35) introduce the concept of wage labour, which at the detail level becomes a tool to regulate an individual. Surreptitiously, wage labour acts as a disciplinary power. Lal Din's labour of bringing water to the sahibs for "a whole rupee" (p. 35) highlights two factors of the capitalistic environment. Firstly, the value of labour is not based on experience, skill, or quality; instead, it is an unproductive and cyclic labour which is paid to highlight the hegemony of the bourgeois over the working class. Lal Din, even as a kid, finds it unproductive because "[water] came **only** six hundred yards away. But the sahibs never did carry their water themselves" (p. 36). Despite realising the unproductiveness of his labour, Lal Din chooses to linger and live like a goat. Secondly, it gives him temporary monetary benefit, i.e., exploitation of his labour. For the working class, labour exploitation has detrimental effects such as ill health and poverty. It compels them to live in appalling conditions because they cannot meet their basic needs, such as food. Eventually, Lal Din becomes the victim of the exploitation and leaves him susceptible to the newly constructed environment. To survive, he has to rely on begging – a byproduct of the capitalist environment, because "nobody was prepared to employ a decrepit old man on a permanent basis" (p. 40). Hence, it can be seen that wage labour acted as a disciplinary power at the detail level to subjugate an individual living in the built environment. This subjugation is not limited to an individual rather according to Medovoi's triad of "population/environment/capital." (p. 86), capitalism is concerned with the population as a whole. Therefore, bourgeoisie utilisés narratives, which help them to intervene with the valley's biopolitics at the mass level.

At the mass level, the population is regulated through the narratives of biopolitics under the guise of prosperity, development, and empowerment. These narratives are used to intervene with the demography of the valley. The valley is seen as “very backward (p. 39)”. And the population’s way of life is “... little savage. [and] had to be taught to respect private property...” (p. 40). The inhabitants, who are already made accustomed to unproductive labour through disciplinary power, are offered negligible amounts, “a crispy banknote of a hundred each” (p. 38) by the capitalist to acquire their land. The inhabitants find the deal appealing because “after all, who would be much interested in mountains where it snowed for the most part of the year. But who would not want banknotes for just snowy wastes. The thing was clear to all men of sense...” (p. 38). It made sense to all the villagers because they faced harsh conditions during winters as “the silvery snow blocked even the entrance to the houses so that even the tops of the mountains which were so green in the summer were not visible then” (p. 35). The winter disturbed their livelihood. Sometimes, a blizzard would block the road, which would make it impossible for the population to reach the nearest towns or cities for public services such as hospitals. The road blockage also became a reason for Lal Din’s father’s death. Even the “pine jungle moaned under the weight of the snow” (p. 38). Instead of improving the condition for the villagers during winters, the infrastructure propels uneven development in the valley, exacerbating existing inequalities between different social groups (based on caste, class, gender, education, or ethnicity).

The capitalist commodifies certain regions rich with resources, such as beautiful grass and lakes. The communities around them either benefit from it or are left to be mistreated and neglected. For instance, in the story, we see some of the inhabitants’ becoming servants and guards, who were also “...rough [men] from the plains” (p. 39), enjoying the opportunities offered by the developments and technology. In contrast, other traditionalists like Lal Din are left to the generated environmental risks. The infrastructure acts as a tool to intervene and manage the valley’s demographic, i.e., the characters in the story. Even though the characters convey individual destinies, they also possess an inherent statistical quality around them. The inhabitants of the valley are forming the foundation for a new commercialised mode of production. Barriers and giant buildings which are constructed by the sahibs bring with them regulatory practices that limit access to resources. Lal Din meets his downfall because the barricades around the land and spring affect his health and of his livestock, which he keeps losing as days go by, pushing him down the hierarchy where “servants wore better clothes and ate better than shepherds” (p. 40). This intervention displaced the population and made them available for commodification. Therefore, we see the inhabitants changing professions as the mode of production changes. Lal Din, a traditionalist at heart, is amazed when a fellow guard, “a rough man from the plains as his speech betrayed,” stops him from entering the meadow with his goats. Lal Din laments:

The idea that someone should prevent him from doing what everybody had always done; what his father had done all his life and his father before him ... that idea was so foreign that it left him uncertain of all he thought he knew. (p. 39)

The biopolitics at the mass level estranges the population from their natural environment through the intervention in the mode of production. The valley’s mode of production is seen as *backward* in the consumerist society, i.e., the whole population of the valley is seen as backward because, according to Marx et al. (1974), what defines individuality “coincides with their production, both with what they produce and how they produce.”

The author further emphasises the estrangement when Lal Din, owner of goats after a long time, gets stale meat to eat from Sahib, “who was about to throw it away” (p. 41). This shows the shift in power dynamics where the mode of production is in the hands of outsiders/ or Sahibs. The indigenous population now depends on outside resources to

survive because, ironically, the same infrastructure that promised them advancement, ended up acting as a barrier to home-grown resources. The land and spring, which Lal Din roamed around once freely with his goats, were no longer accessible to him. Due to the newly built environment, he became a stranger in his own land.

Along with the exploitation of the population, the environment is also degraded. The tourists who come to visit the valley pollute the surrounding with debris. The trash is in significant numbers as Lal Din “got a month’s supply of salt from such find [toys and packet of biscuits]” (p. 42). The working class is conscious of their environment because their mode of production is based on mutual benefits. On the other hand, the capitalist mode of production focuses on the accumulation of wealth. They have an opportunistic relationship with the natural environment and the inhabitants. Hence, the bourgeoisie is ignorant of the damage inflicted upon the environment.

Rahman shows the gradual change in the mode of production, which focuses on regulatory intervention at the detailed and mass levels. Under the narrative of development and progress, the environment of the valley is left more vulnerable than before. The infrastructure reimburses the bourgeoisie– the elite and the wealthy tourists in the valley, who can access clean water and food. On the other hand, the villagers are banned from entering the gated territories built to restrict access to resources. In the beginning, the villagers suffered a hard time during winters, but after the investment from the bourgeoisie class, they could not even survive during summers.

Along with environmental degradation, the village faced social consequences as well because now “wives were even more difficult to come by than goats” (40). The family unit of the valley is disturbed and fragmented. Lal Din’s declining health makes him a chance victim of environmental risk. However, we realise that he was restricted from accessing clean water, food, and air, making him a calculable victim who would have died from a disease or starvation because the built environment’s infrastructures sustained certain social strata. This stratum of society is the capitalist bourgeoisie who invest in these structures for capital accumulation and their own benefit.

Conclusion

The Eco-Marxist textual analysis of the selected short story, *Animals*, details different results compared to the studies of Marxism and Ecocriticism. The settings and the characters of the short story form a relationship driven by the capitalist element extracted from Marxism, connecting the fiction to the natural environment, i.e., with the aspect of Ecocriticism. The exploitation of nature usually happens at the hands of humans. However, the interpretation provides a different perspective. When the story is observed at a mass and detailed level, the analysis shows that not all humans are responsible for exploitation. Instead, certain population strata, the bourgeoisie, through infrastructures, exploit and form hierarchies in society. This further links it to Pakistan’s natural and social environment. In the social environment, the hierarchy is established based on capital, further exploiting the natural environment and the working class. Hence, the nexus of Pakistan’s natural and social environment generates a newer, unknown environment in Pakistan.

Recommendations

Research on Rahman's story illustrate that displacement brought about by capitalism development is both feasible and necessary. The current study provides room for further investigation to find further works by Pakistani authors that illustrate the marginalization and relocation of the nation's indigenous population. Scholars may discover a range of perspectives regarding the impact of development projects on various stakeholders by investigating the diverse and captivating narratives. The psychological and social coping and resistance tendencies of displaced persons can also be revealed by this

research. Policymakers may use these studies to assist guide their discussions on how to lessen the negative effects of development or how to provide all societal segments with an equal chance to gain from development initiatives.

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