



MEMORYSCAPES BEYOND TRAUMA IN PAKISTANI POETRY: INTEGRATING POST-9/11ISM AND (POST)MEMORY STUDIES

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Abstract

Contemporary Pakistani poets including Harris Khalique, Rizwan Akhter and Imtiaz Dharker in the last two decades (2001-20) have translated the event of 9/11 and its offshoots into individual, communal, public, prosthetic and transcultural memories of violence, and determined their own paths to manage the turmoil different from the one witnessed by the post-9/11 American poets. This research negotiates with the poetics and politics of difference while highlighting the polyphonic aesthetic structures of (post)9/11- memory in Pakistani poetry. It entwines trauma, memory, and cultural studies, and scaffolds its argument upon the thematic concerns of the selected Pakistani poetry around the four concepts of public fantasy, communal memory, identity displacement, and transculturality. Squaring the theoretical canvas, it traces the repercussions of 9/11 beyond trauma in prosthetic contexts. It further maps how natal alienation – a disconnection of historical memory from the cultural context – not only augments mnemohistory in subjectivity but is also indelible in influencing social, political, and territorial contexts of analogical 9/11 memory. This way, this study will contribute to the understanding of forms of memory and thematic concerns of post-9/11 Pakistani English poetry. Here, unlike Marianne Hirsh's use of the term in the context of intergenerational memory, the parenthesized 'post' of '(post)memory' refers to the space where my research engages with memory studies theoretically on the rhetoric of difference through which poets construct post-9/11 poetic memorials in Pakistan. In other words, within the canvas of this research, the parenthesized '(post)' provides theoretical space to the diversity of Pakistani poetic voices to 9/11 and its offshoots.

Keywords

(Post) memory, Pakistani post-9/11 poetry, natal alienation, transcultural memory, collective memory, national memory, prosthetic memory

1 Introduction

The 9/11 attacks in the U.S. and subsequent American invasions in Afghanistan and the Middle East left indelible footprints on the global socio-political order. 9/11 and its offshoots have been aestheticized by the American memorials as a “traumatic past” (Erl1 2) to accumulate the dust of Twin towers for social, mythical and national solidarity through poetry, fiction, film and other forms of literature. Further, the global impact of 9/11 has affected the metaphor of representation in the literature of Global North generally and in

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Pakistan particularly. Precisely diluting to the issue, Pakistani poetry produced in last two decades has attempted to develop the post-9/11 memory that can be interpreted into individual, communal, public, prosthetic and transcultural terms. “Individual, communal and public memories” (Hunt 114; Lorenz 95) of 9/11 and its aftermath in Pakistani poetry has given rise to the representation of violence, disturbance of identity and turmoil in post-9/11 context. “Prosthetic memory” (Bell 5; Landsberg 32) of 9/11 addresses those memorials that are not based upon the personal experiences of poets. In the context of Pakistani poetry, most of the memorials are prosthetic. Further, “transcultural memory” (Erl 2; Bond 61; Moses and Rothberg 30) in post-9/11 Pakistani poetry represents the variant forms of aestheticizing the cultural metaphor. Building the argument upon the above issues, the contention of this research is to negotiate with the poetics and politics of difference in post-9/11 Pakistani poetry by addressing the ways, individual, communal, public, prosthetic and transcultural memory of 9/11 and its offshoots are aestheticized by the poets. The above five variant forms of memory, in this research, are put under an umbrella term (post)memory that refers to the chain of memories approaching 9/11 and its aftermath in post-9/11 context. Generally, the parenthesized ‘post’ in ‘(post)memory’ refers to the space between the ways, the aforementioned encapsulated theories of memory studies address the rhetoric of difference through the post-9/11 poetic memorials of America and Pakistan. More precisely, the difference between ‘(post)memory’ and ‘memory’ is the difference of poetic responses that imagine 9/11 and its impact in Pakistani literature diversely. In other words, within the canvas of this research, the parenthesized ‘(post)’ provides theoretical space to the diversity of Pakistani poetic responses to 9/11 and its offshoots.

The nascent contributions in memory studies have turned this field into an interdisciplinary subject sharing the spaces of history, literature, memory, and trauma. Recent developments in memory studies have turned the focus of research on how knowledge is processed and remembered. This important shift helps to understand the ways a narrative of traumatic event reshapes the past. The impact of 9/11 and its repercussions have strengthened roots in Pakistani literature particularly fiction and poetry in regional, national, and international languages. Pakistani literature provides narratives of violence, cultural displacement, and identity crisis as offshoots of 9/11.

This research explores these narratives in Pakistani poetry (produced in English or translated in English) to highlight the images of violence, turmoil and cultural crisis that are the strong reflection of post-9/11 memory. In Luis Ignacio Garcia words, “The reflexivity of the image is mirrored in the reflexivity of a memory that focuses on itself” (Garcia 2011, 95). Marek Tamm, in his article, limelights the most recent theoretical contributions in memory studies along with a bulk of references. In his words, to resynthesize memory studies in cultural terms, it is important to understand the function of history. This way, he connects history with cultural memory and introduces a new term “mnemohistory”ⁱ (Tamm 2013, 458). This new avenue helps to conceptualize an alternative framework of cultural memory studies. Since the beginning of postcolonialism, Transculturalism as a term starts strengthening its roots in South Asia, particularly Bangladesh, Pakistan and India. Cultural memory, in Astrid Erl’s words, is “the interplay of present and past in socio-cultural context” (Erl 2010, 2).

1.1 What is (Post)memory?

To understand (post)memory as an emerging avenue in memory studies, it is important to see how memory studies as a discipline analyzes “the media of remembering, from the written text to the human body” (Tamm 2013, 460). In “How to Make a Composition: Memory-Craft in Antiquity and in the Middle Ages”, Mary Carruthers’s foregrounds, “memory is a “variety

of investigation, the invention and recreation of knowledge [...] – a new understanding of an event created by human minds” (Carruthers 2010, 16). Following up, in “Memory, Temporality, Modernity: Les lieux de memoire”, conceptualizes modern memory, Bill Schwarz highlights the role of memory in modern society and its historical transformation. He evinces an important function of modern memory and challenges it faces while embodying the dislocation of original memories and an experience of loss (Schwarz 2010, 43). This experience and embodiment have deprived the modern memory of its intimacy and spontaneousness that it must reflect while connecting to any event in the past for its originality and fidelity. This deprivation brings a significant transition in modern memory the way, it turns more prosthetic, individual, transcultural and translingual. These pillars squared postmodern memory that serves as a tool to recreate the knowledge beyond cultural, national, language borders. Particularly, recollecting the ashes of twin towers, this square establishes a new shelter, i.e., ‘(Post)memory’. Michael Rothberg qualified it as multidirectional memory the way it echoes the collective but distance memories of 9/11 and its repercussions (Rothberg 2013, 10); that traverse in the public and individual’s consciousness global literature with articulating any metaphor of singularity in the experiences for the magnitude of 9/11 offshoots that has affected the world order adversely.

The term of (post)memory with hyphens rather than parentheses i.e., ‘post-memory’ is first time used by Marianne Hirsch in 1992 to recall the stories of Holocaust survivors of first generation and to transmit these memories to the second generation. These stories are the objects of Holocaust memory that are transmitted from one generation to the next generation (Hirsch 1992, 3). On the contrary, here (post)memory has a parenthesized ‘post’ to discuss the objects of post-9/11 memory that are in transition across cultures, and to trace the poetic rationalization of post-9/11 memory and its offshoots in Pakistani literature produced in the last two decades.

1.2 How (Post)memory works?

To understand how (post)memory works, it is necessary to discuss the function of memory at individual and collective level the way it plays a role in individual and collective consciousness to build a perception of an event while revisiting it or the ways, that recollection of past responds to one’s consciousness. Roger Kenndy, in “Memory and the Unconscious”, emphasizes upon ‘this revisiting past’ and centralizes it as the pivot that triggers trauma, not the occurrence of the event, itself (Kennedy 2010, 179). This process interweaves fantasy and reality that further complicates the threads of memory. For example, victims of the second world war to the 9/11 and its repercussions today, face trauma on individual and collective level through the memory which is produced through fiction, film, poetry and other forms. At that heat of the moment, four anthologies of 9/11 American poetry were produced that contain thousands of poems commemorating the events that envisioning trauma within hem.

Adding into what Kennedy says above, memory as a process of recollecting past is influenced by the social context that produces a difference in the perception of an event (Sutton, Harris and Barnier 2010, 213); the way post-9/11 Euro-American poetry is different from post-9/11 South Asian and Middle Eastern poetry albeit the literature of the both approaches the same event but they extract the different portion of the event according to the social context that it is surrounded by. This different extraction gives birth to trauma in its own ways. Giving this birth to trauma connects the people with their social context of that event. In this whole process, including poetry, each genre of literature has played its important role to produce these memories in post-9/11 context.

In the light of the above discussion, postmemory can be foregrounded in the form of vertical and horizontal bridges between Euro-American and South Asian literature and post-9/11 and pre-9/11 literature respectively. In other words, vertical link will develop an understanding of post-9/11 memory across Global South and Global North; however, the horizontal link will develop the space between time lapse i.e., pre- and post-9/11 literature. The point of intersection from both axes x and y will project a transcultural and transnational poetic narrative of post-9/11 memory encompassing the experiences of loss, turmoil and violence beyond cultural, national and territorial borders (see Fig. 1).

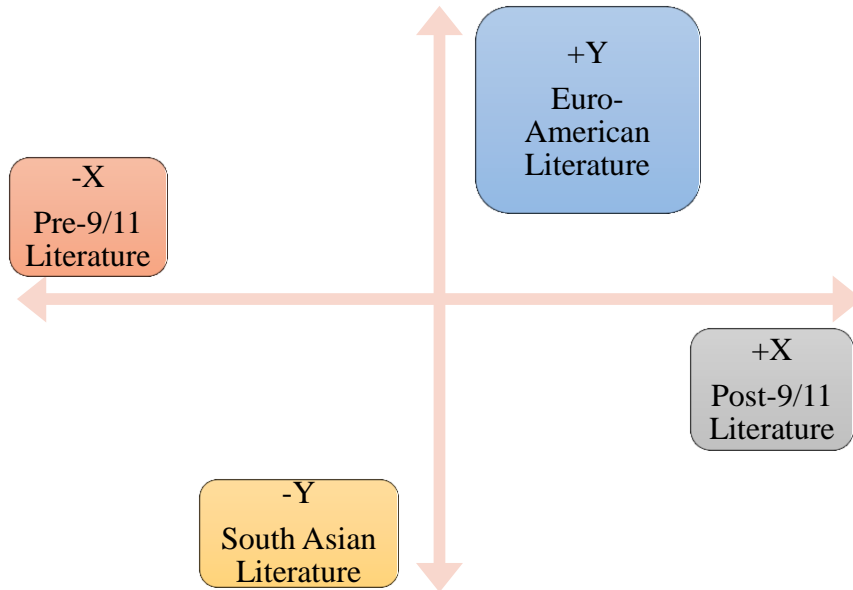


Fig. 1: Mapping Global Literature and its Thematic Concerns

Global mapping of (post)memory in the above fig. 1 helps to further delineate the mapping of (post)memory at local level and understand the forms of memory and thematic concerns, Pakistani Anglophone and Vernacular literature assimilates in its poetic responses to 9/11 (see Fig. 2).

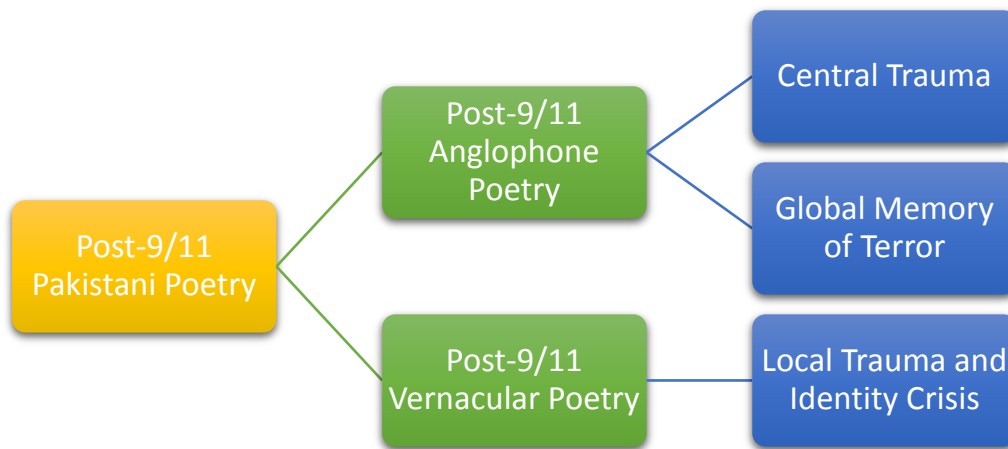


Fig. 2: Mapping Thematic Concerns of Post-9/11 Anglophone and Vernacular Poetry

(Post)memory revisits the reconstruction of violence, identity, and cultural displacement in individual and collective memories. It further gives the transcultural bent to the displacement of cultural metaphor in post-9/11 south Asian context.

The focus of this study is to explore the Pakistani poetry produced during last two decades (2001-20) in post-9/11 context. From theoretical standpoint, this research conceptualizes its theoretical canvas by entwining the below-discussed concepts across memory, trauma, and cultural studies. This section provides a scaffolding by which the understanding of the various theoretical concepts in post-9/11 context challenges the memory of 9/11 as a “traumatic past” and foregrounds the theoretical aspect of post-9/11 memory and trauma that is discussed by approaching the ways, post-9/11 memory is turned into the individual, collective, public, traumatic, prosthetic, and transcultural memories.

In “Experience and Memory”, Steven D. Brown and Paula Reavey discuss the concept of experience and memory in the post-9/11 context. They explore how remembering acts as the conditions of reflective experience and how memory is the active reconstitution of some aspect of the past in the present for current purposes (Brown and Reavey 2013, 46). They emphasize the importance of material mediation through artifacts and settings, as well as embodied participation in the worlds that are made actual through recollection. They also highlight the role of shared cultural imaginary in creating a habitable world produced in recollection.

1.3 Fantasy of 9/11 Memory

The event of 9/11 has been retrieved by many authors and critics across the Global North and Global South since its occurrence. Later, it has fanaticized into a collective memory that has taken the shape of public memory having an established American rhetoric about 9/11 and war-on-terror around the globe. That public memory has controlled and influenced the individual memory of 9/11. Beginning from the first and immediate response to 9/11 by the American president George W. Bush, he has established the very rhetoric of American war-play in post-9/11 context in the following words: “[America would] go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just [in the world]” (Bush 2001). Bush’s speech, on 11 September 2001, is an attempt to reterritorialize the public memory of 9/11 by situating it as a traumatic event in terms of cultural, social and political upheavals that cannot be forgotten in post-9/11 era. Adrian Parr explores the reterritorialization and deterritorialization of the



public memory of 9/11. He believes, “the repetition of 9/11 images throughout mass culture generated a transcendent memory” (Parr 2008, 78). At another place, he highlights role of news coverage of 9/11 to make it an unforgettable memory, “The repetitive news coverage of 9/11 produces a command to never forget” (79). In other words, Parr’s study helps to explore the understanding that the “endless repetition of 9/11 image of Twin towers’ collision” turned into the public memory of 9/11 (80). Further, it can also be observed in the light of Parr’s study that public memory of 9/11 is an attempt to fill the gap imaginatively that has appeared right after the disappearance of Twin towers.

His study also brings into limelight the ways, the public memory of 9/11 becomes authoritative fanatisizingly and “a repressive force to drive people’s consciousness” (83). For this, he refers to Zizek and Lacan’s theorization of the above idea in the following words: “we fanaticize our lost objects of significance and what we cannot fanaticize becomes prohibited object of our desire” (qtd. in Parr 83). The public memory of 9/11 is fantasized and has filled the loss of the physical structure of Twin towers and has established its authority being a repressive force by the repetition of 9/11 images through media and literary works representing it as a traumatic past of American history. This literary representation of 9/11 in America is not letting the world to forget the event of 9/11.

1.4 Communal and Public Memory of 9/11

Communal memories are the memories of a group of individuals living in a common place with sharing characteristics of lifestyle. However, public memories are more general as they address the memories of a nation about a particular event in history. Communal memories are the part of social memories as Nigel C. Hunt links individual narrative with social context to understand the patterns of a social memoryⁱⁱ (Hunt 2011, 114). Hunt makes this point clearer by highlighting the sources that shape a social memory with an interaction between a social context and an individual i.e., “media, academic argument, history, sociology, government policy” and the rest of sources where an individual interacts (114). Hunt’s study helps to understand that the above-mentioned sources develop a communal context by interacting with the consciousness of an individual. By this way, to understand communal memory, one must look at the ways it transforms from individual memory to communal memory. However, later this social context takes the shape of a collective memory by the “flexibility and fluidity of the sources” that change the narrative of an individual’s understanding of past (114). In other words, this change in narrative changes the public memory of an event.

Federico Lorenz studies the construction of the individual and the collective memory of Malvinas War, occurred in 1982, and identifies the ways, the memory constitutes the social image of the war (Lorenz 2002, 95). In his study, he explores the structure of social myth that, in his words, is the product of a strong relationship between the individual and the collective memory (96). In the search of recognizing the elements of social imagination of a memory, he discusses the ‘official’ history of a society that transforms into a collective memory through ‘a specific historical process’ that contains staging of a few elements from a society’s past by a government (96). Later, this historical process constitutes a social myth. Lorenz’s study provides a background of the ways a memory is constructed through a state’s narrative. His study helps, in the present research, to engage the debate of post-9/11 memory in exploring the thematic pursuits in Pakistani poetry of last two decades to identify the rhetoric of difference establishing its own narrative against the issues raised in Global South and Global North as the aftermath of 9/11.

1.5 Identity and Trauma: Politics of Post-9/11 Memory

The relationship of memory, trauma and identity is significant in post-9/11 context. Identity plays an elemental role by the ways it is politicized through traumatizing and memorizing the

past. Duncan Bell discusses the politics of identity in terms of its role in establishing the rhetoric of traumatic past (Bell 2003). He highlights the connection between trauma and identity and their role in understanding the past. Referring to Mary Carruthers's study, Bell equally believes in "" (qtd. in Bell 5). However, Bell's study helps to understand the job of a researcher in exploring the avenues of memory and trauma studies is to develop an understanding of a past by analyzing a narrative and builds a link "between present and past while locating society and self" simultaneously (Bell 5). By highlighting this, he has made clear the theoretical position of memory in understanding the past. It means that the construction of communal memories, which are cultural or collective memories in terms of Astrid Erll, are the product of "powerful mechanisms for generating and sustaining social solidarity" (Bell 5). Now putting Bell's study differently, it is significant to make this statement in post-9/11 context, the construction of public, collective, communal, or cultural memory of 9/11 is based on imagining 9/11 as a traumatic past and prosthetically engaging it for the solidarity of American social, national, political, diplomatic, and economic narratives across the world.

Bassela A. Van Der Kolk and Ono Van Der Hart highlight the ways narrative memory and traumatic memory are rationalized in memory studies. They explore that narrative memory is a social act and "integrated with other experiences" (Kolk and Hart 1995, 169). On the contrary, traumatic memory is neither flexible nor variable. Kolk and Hart go on to say that it neither rationalizes its components in any social behavior nor does it approach anybody. Their study helps to understand that traumatic memory is not a social activity rather it is triggered by certain circumstances which are, in Pierre Janet's terms, known as 'restitutio ad integrum'ⁱⁱⁱ (qtd. In Kolk and Hart 163). Most important and last part of their study questions the flexibility and variability of the traumatic memory by insisting that by imagining the alternative scenarios, traumatic memory starts losing its power over the current experience (Kolk and Hart 178). Their study helps us to understand the aspect of my research by the ways Pakistani Poetry has imagined the experiences overlapping the traumatic memory of 9/11 and its aftermath by aestheticizing disturbance of identity, displacement of cultural metaphor, violence, and turmoil.

Dominick Lacapra defines trauma as an indication "shattering break or cesura in experience which has belated effects" (Lacapra 2014, 186). At another place, Lacapra's attempt to defining trauma leads the term to 'a disruptive experience that disarticulates the self and creates holes in existence; it has belated effects' (Lacapra 2014, 41). Following the definition, he labelled the works, who are going to write about trauma, by traumatic or post-traumatic writing. Further, differentiating 'writing (about) trauma' from 'writing trauma', he argues: ['Writing (about) trauma'] is an aspect of historiography related to the project of reconstructing the past as objectively as possible, [however,] 'writing trauma' is a metaphor, in that writing that indicates some distance from trauma (even when the experience of writing is itself intimately bound up with trauma). (Lacapra 2014, 186)

In the light of the above words, Lacapra intends to highlight two ways of enacting trauma in writing: 'acting out'^{iv} and 'working through' to relive traumatic experiences in any literary work (Lacapra 2014, 65). These two ideas are used to give voice to the portion of traumatic experiences that achieve the aesthetic articulation of trauma and the traumatic articulation of writer's experiences respectively, to the extent that relive trauma^v. 'Acting out' and 'working through'^{vi} can also be referred to action-centred and emotions-centred coping mechanism to relive trauma. 'Acting out' is emotions-centred as a survivor remains in a cell and its memory is consumed. Survivor imagines getting freedom from itself but not physically and reconnecting its emotions to normal its life. However, working through is action-centred as a



survivor mourns the loss of trauma to normalize itself. To my research, LaCapra's concept of 'reliving trauma' helps to theorize memory studies in post-9/11 context by means of conceptualizing the ways, 9/11 memorials encompass traumatic experiences of 'Acting out' and 'Working through'.

Graham Dawson discusses the relation of trauma with a memory by means of cultural representation. Dawson believes that the memory of a trauma is always remembered incompletely (Dawson 2006, 185). Dawson's study helps to figure out the forms of representations to memorize a trauma and identifies culture as the most influential form of them. According to his study, the incapacity of a culture to memorize trauma is because of the disturbing content that a survivor wants to remember; however, later that effect of remembering causes the manipulation of factual details. Dawson's study helps to organize the representation of the cultural memory of 9/11 and its aftermath in Pakistani poetry produced in last two decades.

1.6 Transcultural Bent to Post-9/11 Memory

Transcultural bent to Post-9/11 memorials is a contemporary avenue in post-9/11 memory studies. Astrid Erll, highlighting new directions in literary and memory studies, explores the perspective of transcultural memory in 9/11 context and emphasizes upon the need of tracing the historical, cultural, economic and political threads of "traumatic pasts" in fiction, poetry and plays (Erll 2). Erll's study helps to examine two important perspectives in memory studies in post-9/11 era. One is to identify the form and nature of the memory of the cultural history of war on terror and violence around the globe after 9/11 represented in the literary works. Other is to explore the ways, cultural trauma is affecting the individual memory of 9/11 and its offshoots at the hands of poets, novelists and playwrights. As far as the first perspective is concerned, Lucy Bond, while discussing the types of transculturality, highlights the narrative frameworks and commemoration of 9/11. In her words, "memories of 9/11 have taken disparate forms and served divergent agendas since 2001, the commemoration of the attacks has been dominated by certain narrative frameworks with established prominence in the American public sphere" (Bond 2014, 62). Further, she also believes that these frameworks arranged the event of 9/11 in a specific chain of thematic concerns and cultural tenets (62). By believing this, she argues that the memory of 9/11 has produced "a superficial transculturality enlisted as a foil for the resurgent nationalism" (62). In the above context, she discusses the memory of 9/11 in analogical terms and gives it a transcultural turn. Referring to A. Dirk Moses, she explains the ways, the analogical memory of 9/11 gets transculturality to establish a more hegemonic rhetoric of the event. In words of Moses, Bond highlights that the variation of cultural responses to unburden their sufferings after 9/11 has made its memory transcultural, otherwise, it could not be the part of "the common sense of public sphere" (qtd. in Bond 62). From this statement, the purpose of calling the memory of 9/11 analogical is to make a comparison between the memories of 9/11 produced in different cultures. Bond, Moses and Erll's studies help, in this research, to engage the debate of comparing the American and Pakistani memories of 9/11 in cultural context. Taking their studies as a point of departure, this research has devoted one chapter to explore the transcultural memory of 9/11 by taking Pakistani poetry in comparison with the American critique upon (post)9/11 American anthologies having an elemental role in responding and memorizing 9/11 and its offshoots.

In Erll's words, "Nine Eleven is conceived of as a global traumatic event" (Erll 2). He believes that this event has given a new bent to the literary representation of cultural memory by the ways Don DeLillo, Jonathan Safran Foer, Mohsin Hamid and Ian McEwan has attempted to canonize 9/11 fiction around the globe. Erll's study criticizes "the project of



conceiving traumatic pasts through literature” and highlights contemporary dimensions from the perspective of prosthetic memory (Erl1 3). By doing so, he suggests exploring those literary productions of 9/11 memory whose authors are nor directly neither immediately involved nor affected by the event of 9/11. He also highlights the need of analyzing the transcultural aspects of 9/11 memory in the works of diasporic novelists, poets and playwrights by tracing the ways, they have represented the disturbance of identity and displacement of cultural metaphor (Erl1 4). Erl1’s study is a significant departure towards opening the avenue of post-9/11 transcultural memory with reference to the Pakistani poetry produced in last two decades i.e. (2001-20).

1.7 Vernacular Memory and 9/11

In “Between Official and Vernacular Memory”, Sabina Mihelj discusses the relationship between official and vernacular memory in a post-socialist context. She highlights the plural and dynamic nature of vernacular memory, which differs from the rigid and uniform representations of the past found in official, nation-level memory (Mihelj 2013, 62). Mihelj explores how interviews can reveal the diverse ways in which individuals engage with and remember the socialist past, and how these memories can be influenced by the interview conversation. She also addresses the ethical implications of studying memory and the challenges researchers face in analyzing vernacular memory.

In “Vernacular Remembering”, Pickering and Keightley discuss the role of vernacular remembering in the context of television programming designed to commemorate significant events like 9/11 and its repercussions. They explore how memory is constructed and reenacted through personal and public memory, with a focus on local and particular experiences. They emphasize the use of visual media, such as photography and recorded music, in shaping and informing vernacular remembering within social and cultural contexts (Pickering and Keightley 2013, 110). They highlight the importance of visual media, such as home movies, family albums, and recorded music, in practices of vernacular remembering. Their study suggests an approach that considers these practices from the perspective of participants and interpretative agents. This way, they focus upon the need to further investigate vernacular remembering and the value of studying different technologies of remembering alongside each other. Their study helps to incorporate the vernacular poetic responses towards 9/11 and the effects of ‘War on Terror’ that are produced in local languages in Pakistan having more direct experiences of terror and turmoil and loss of culture and identity. These indigenous poetic responses centralize the memory of 9/11 beyond the borders of USA and reenacts the experiences of terror and violence in Pakistan.

1.8 Conceptualizing (Post)memory in Post-9/11 South Asia

Building upon the works discussed in the above four sections, the concept of (post)memory is an initial coding by digesting in itself the essential aforementioned four concepts in the following terms: “fantasy of 9/11 memory” (Parr 2008), “individual and communal memory of 9/11” (Hunt 2010; Lorenz 2002), “identity and trauma: politics of post-9/11 memory” (Bell 2006; Kolk and Hart 1995; Lacapra 2014; Dawson 2002) and “transculturality in post-9/11 memory” (Erl1 2011; Bond 2014; Moses and Rothberg 2014). Theoretically, this reconceptualization of the theories of memory and trauma in post-9/11 context under one term ‘(post)memory’ establishes a link between memory studies, South Asian studies, and 9/11-ism in general, and (post)memory studies, Pakistan English literature and post-9/11-ism.

It contextualizes the post-9/11 memory, and states that there is a difference in rhetoric between America and South Asia (in general and Pakistan in particular) because of the different social, economic, and political structures and the ways of imagining and aestheticizing the memory of 9/11 and its offshoots. Following the above statement, this



research is an attempt to explore the rhetoric of difference through Pakistani poetry produced in last two decades by looking at the ways, it is different in aestheticizing and narrativizing 9/11's offshoots.

2 Tracing Post-9/11 Memory Beyond Trauma in Pakistani Literature

A significant difference in eliciting post-9/11 memories in Pakistani literature and world literature is to identify the central point of remembering past. Precisely, if I say, through (post)memory, I attempt to state that trauma is not the only pivot to trace in the works of Pakistani indigenous and diasporic poets. Since, rather connecting us with accurate memories, trauma in fact displaces the original memories and makes them ineligible to be accessed by us efficiently. Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering also challenge the reliability of trauma as the only source to access the painful past. Through "Painful Pasts", They argue that trauma is not the only source to remembering pasts in memory studies. Since trauma is –"amnesiac rather than memorial"– an experience of loss that can disrupt the remembering process (Keightley and Pickering 2013, 153). In other words, they believe that being a dominant form of remembering past, trauma "is used to cover all recollections of painful pasts" (153). This way, they opine that now trauma is a go-to concept in memory studies that is also considered an "aesthetic valorization of trauma" (154). To overcome this methodological challenge (problem) in memory studies, Keightley and Pickering suggest "remembered narratives and representations as the empirical resources" to access the painful pasts.

Keightley and Michael share a deep account of the methodological problems that trauma – as a resource of remembering painful past – can possibly come across in memory studies. In attempting to doing so, they seem minimizing the scope of 'trauma' in post-9/11 memory studies where particularly the phenomena like Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) are strengthening their roots in literature, psychology, and other disciplines. But theoretically if it is observed, Keightley and Michael's argument is based on the works of Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman, Dori Laub, Wulf Kansteiner, Roger Luckhurst and Michael Rothberg who have proposed the multi-dimensional application of trauma in memory studies, so they both in fact do not reject the earlier studies rather have made an addition by highlighting important empirical resources of remembering past that include remembered narratives and their representations in literature.

Keightley and Michael's way of conceptualizing trauma in memory studies is a useful source to develop a theoretical underpinning of the present research since it helps to identify the other forms of post-9/11 memory beyond trauma in South Asian literature. The relevance of Keightley and Pickering's concept to the existing research is more justified by the ways it helps to develop new meanings from the individual and collective memories of remembered narratives other than traumatic ones in the new contexts exploring South Asian poetry and Pakistani poetry in particular.

This way, it is significant to highlight the variant forms of metaphorical representations and conceptualizations of pain, terrorism, survivor, perpetrator in pre- and post-9/11 Pakistani poetry. Mansoor has contributed to the understanding and conceptualization of significant metaphors and thematic concerns: Identity, identity crisis, resistance identity, other, terrorist in post-9/11 Pakistani literature. In post-9/11 context, 'identity' refers to "self out of a sense of alienation and difference from the hegemonic community" based on religious fundamentalism in the rise of 'War on Terror'; 'identity crisis' refers to "drastic alternations in the social order" that affects the 'marginalized individual'; 'resistance identity' refers to "self-developed [identity] by the group or individuals of marginalized community [as a] shield of resistance"; 'other' refers to "sense of being different" in post-9/11 context that



Muslims experience individually and collectively; and ‘terrorist’ refers to “a person engaged in illegitimate violence and instilling mass fear” and in post-9/11 context, it encapsulates the callings of Muslims (Mansoor 2012, 10). With the above recontextualization of important terms, Mansoor’s research helps to reposition the variant forms of conflicting metaphors in post-9/11 Pakistani literature which have different understanding and context in post-9/11 Euro-American literature.

2.1 Prosthetic Memory and Natal Alienation: Mapping Poetics and Politics in Post-9/11 Pakistani Literature

A literary work is the product of the social context and the individual’s sense of the world. Through fictional accounts, the historical experiences are turned into collective memory of mass audience. These collective memories, Arthur Neil opines, are augmented as historical memories of those generations who have not lived that past themselves. This augmentation makes these historical memories prosthetic and polyphonic in understanding past. Prosthetic in the sense of artificial memories that are fictionalized, and polyphonic by means of diversity in point of views. Prosthetic memories shape the person’s subjectivity and their point of view towards the past that they have not lived in. Understanding a prosthetic memory requires a deep analysis of author’s attitude towards the past and their construction of the subjects and objects for differing points of view. This function of prosthetic memory, in Orlando Petterson’s words (Landsberg 2004, 2), is ‘natal alienation’ that disconnects individuals with their historical memory, and a historical memory from the cultural context. It does not only augment mnemohistory in subjectivity but is also indelible in influencing social, political, and territorial contexts of analogical 9/11 memory in Pakistan.

Tracing these kinds of features in the available texts of post-9/11 Pakistani poetry is useful to understand how prosthetic memories overlap original pasts with the artificial ones; experienced with the unexperienced; lived with the not lived; and real with the imagined. These memories give an individual the pasts – they have not experienced themselves – at the cost of forgetting their original pasts. After this interpolation, they develop a historio-social bond with prosthetic ones and can hardly recall the original ones.

Here, I allude to post-9/11 Pakistani poetry and explore the forms of memory in connection to how natal alienation, prosthetic memory, and polyphonic memories recreate an incredible influence on the conscious of poets by the use of different narrative techniques and poetry. Mainly, this chapter discusses three recognized poets of Pakistani anglophone poetry: Harris Khalique, Rizwan Akhtar, Imtiaz Dharker. Doing so, I mainly evince the poetics and politics of difference in accentuating the memory that articulates identity disturbance and cultural turmoil while conveying the influence of political events on personal and collective memory of Pakistani people. Their poetry assimilates critique, resilience, and resistance against external factors shaping memory.

This section will provide a brief in-depth analysis that explores the polyphonic nature of poetic experiences attempted to universalize them leaving an influential and indelible impression; transcending national and cultural borders – subjected to the social, political, and territorial contexts of a certain region.

2.2 Encroaching Natal Alienation in Polyphonic Memory of Violence and the Politics of Identity

Polyphonic memory refers to the idea that multiple perspectives and narratives coexist within a collective memory of a historical event or period. In the case of 9/11, there are a variety of perspectives and experiences of the terrorist attacks and their aftermath, including those of the victims, first responders, and the broader American public.



In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, there was a significant increase in violence against Muslim, Arab, and South Asian Americans, as well as those perceived to be members of those groups. This included physical assaults, vandalism of mosques and other places of worship, and harassment. Some argued that the attacks were used as a justification for discriminatory policies and actions, such as the implementation of the USA Patriot Act and the creation of the Department of Homeland Security.

In the years following 9/11, the United States launched military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, leading to increased tensions and violence in those countries. Additionally, the U.S. government's use of enhanced interrogation techniques, such as waterboarding, on suspected terrorists sparked debate and controversy over the use of torture. Overall, the attacks of 9/11 and their aftermath have had a profound and lasting impact on American society, and the multiple perspectives and experiences of the event are an important aspect of the national memory of the attacks.

This section discusses the variant forms of metaphors carrying high magnitude and dilemma in Pakistani English poetry of last two decades. Exploring post-9/11 Pakistani poetry as an account of the communal and the public memories of terrorist and suicide attacks, the killing of innocent people and memories of the missing people, this section also provides an in-depth analysis of the poetic rationalization of violence and turmoil in post-9/11 context. For this, it discusses the poetry of Rizwan Akhter, Harris Khalique, Peerzada Salman, Ejaz Rahim and several Pakistani vernacular poets translated into English and published in *Pakistani Literature*^{vii}, and the national and international literary magazines in the last two decades i.e., 2001-2020.

Rizwan Akhter's collection of poetry, *Lahore, I Am Coming*, published in 2017 includes more than 150 poems that help this research to enlarge the canvas of capturing the forms of violence in Pakistan after 2001. His poems resonate with the experience of loss, replacement of socio-political memory, cultural displacement, identity crisis, question of language. His poem "Pakistan Meets a Terrorist" reconstructs the public memory of 9/11 in Pakistani context. This poem is full of metaphors of violence and chaos like "peeled and hooked bodies", "ripped end-lines pelleted syntax", "cities full of fear". Polyphonic nature of these metaphors enlarges the very canvas of capturing forms of violence in Pakistan right after 2001. His poem shares a collective memory of violence encompassing 9/11 and 7/7 (London bombing) and revisits them beyond their historical and geographical borders by connecting them with the present.

Akhter's poetry casts natal alienation upon history and the act of re-experiencing it. Here it is significant to see the ways a prosthetic memory in Akhter's poetry erases the original/experienced past or overlaps it with the crafted/unexperienced past partially or completely. With this prosthetic bond – transcending time and place – the memory of 9/11 in the poem is nataly alienated the way Akhtar tries to equate the violence happening in Pakistan and the world in the last two decades. This attempt helps to understand the nature of polyphonic 9/11 memory beyond any national or special borders. For example, the second line of the poem: "we live through them each moment" develops a transhistorical and transnational memory of violence. And following up, the third line: "every day rehearse a dumb-show", emphasizes the frequency of transmitting memory threads that are subscribing more chaotic syntax day by day.

Akhtar's poetry helps us understand the prosthetic framing of Pakistani post-9/11 social and national consciousness after 2001 following up Arthur Neal's commentary upon Alison Landsberg's *Prosthetic Memory* that shares the universalization of historical experiences of Holocaust, First and Second world wars and American immigrants in 1930s and 40s. In

Neal's words, these experiences are not indigenized any more rather have got a global scope and attention in literature and history through prosthetic memories. It can be observed through the cultural and literary representations of Holocaust in American films, novels, memorials and museums since Holocaust has received a set of universal dimensions. These universal dimensions have liberated Holocaust from its points of remembering in Jewish and German Memories. Now, Neal believes, it has become a universal and immortal historical memory to remember atrocities in all times of history.

Returning to the sixth and fifth last couplet of Akhter's poem, "In TV footages virtual reconstructions/thrice removed from reality" and "cameras run through smoke as ghosts/find a way of communication", Akhtar points out that media and technology has played its part in deconstructing 9/11 memory, transporting it beyond national borders and facilitating its transnational acquisition across the world, including Pakistan. So, this poem helps in understanding the way 9/11 is turned into a transcendent memory for the Global South circumscribed simultaneously by cultural forgetting.

Similarly, Harris Khalique in "In the Heart of Darkness" engages the notions of natal alienation and mnemohistory with despair and search for hope and salvation. Before delving into ways, Khalique commemorates post-9/11 memory, it is important to highlight the way, alienation is understood as a sense of detachment or estrangement from one's homeland in his poem. Encapsulating these notions of detachment in 'mnemohistory', as a collective memory of violence and its overall influence on a society in his poetry, Khalique deals with and appropriates these concepts within his poetry. It is also visible in this poem. For example, in the poem, the narrative's sense of belonging with the homeland is detached and his bond is broken. In this poem, envisages this sense of detachment from his homeland.

The poem conveys a harrowing picture of a desolate place where violence drips from the mouths and beards of its inhabitants. So, this imagery is chilling with other imagery of graves and corpses which are left to dry on lamp posters and vultures serenading the Macabre Symphony. These depictions give a sense of trauma and despair prevailing in his homeland.

There are vivid descriptions of violence with different images representing the traces of suffering that shape Khalique's homeland and its people which are inhabiting there. This memory of violence alluding to the atrocities through these chilling and vivid images questions the conventional notions of good and evil by foregrounding different aspects of darkness, which is the prevailing force in his homeland. So, this inversion of light and darkness symbolizes the brutality and the oppressive apparatuses which are functional in the land.

The poem gives articulates the memory of lynching, stoning, rape and murder that evokes a sense of desolation and tries to encapsulate the traumatic experiences in the landscape the poet is a living. These all images serve as the mnemonic imprints of suffering and as a very significant symbol of a mythical force that has conquered the land.

The poet yearns and seeks for something transcendent amid overwhelming despair keeping in tune with the themes of natal elevation, alienation, memory, the immersion of light and darkness, and the search for hope. In this poem, he tries to showcase the depths of human suffering using local images. Through these evocative local imageries, the poet challenges readers to witness and confront the harsh realities of a land marked by violence. In this poem, there is an underlying urge to look for compassion, love and empathy in this world of suffering.

While talking about poetic understanding of these issues, we have another poet a who also deals with these issues in his poetry. For example, he is one of his significant poems and



Damascus Knife of Zaba. So in this poem, the poet tries to capture the, the, the historical importance of the blasphemy in visa who replicate the famous Damascus knife.

Khalique offers the enfolding of prosthetic memory through the lens and image of blared Syme and the Damascus knife, and centralizes the interplay between tradition, history and violence. But in, in, in comparison to her colleague, this one actors you know, dealing the teams ah with these themes, give us a very distinct perspective. He tries to explore different facets of memory, uncertainty and social political landscape in the aftermath of significant events.

Both these poets, Akhtar and Khalique give a rich tapestry of Pakistani poetry while shedding light on different aspects and experiences of memory and history in the poems with the emphasis on land full of darkness, desperate and violence. They wanted to forego and explore the alienation in the traces of collective memory of violence underscored by the quest for hope. Their imagery evokes variant forms of trauma and notions of good and evil. While addressing violence and memory, their focus is obviously different in certain aspects as discussed in their poems that give a bleak and dark experience of the homeland. It means, these different sociopolitical contexts, offer different aspects of human experience and shedding light on diverse facets, and employ language effectively with local symbols and image to convey different aspects of memory.

In a nutshell, referring to the coverage and experiences of 9/11 repercussions in Pakistani poetry is a threat to the national identity that brings a discussion over immigration policies in Congress, too. In short, this is how the identities and histories are mapped in the post-9/11 vernacular, national memory, and the recurrent themes in the national literature through prosthetic memories that created diversity in point of views to remember past.

2.3 Prosthetic Memory, Aporia and Creativity: Post-9/11 Pakistani Poetry and Rising Postcolonial Suffering

When a post-traumatic subject articulates the traumatic memories through colonizer's language, this act gives rise to postcolonial suffering. Most postcolonial critics argue that the English language, as the colonizer's language, is foreign to the postcolonial subject. From Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Wole Soyinka, Homi K. Bhabha and Bill Ashcraft believe that English language is the property of the colonizer. However, Jacques Derrida questions the originality of a language in his autobiographical account of his relationship with the French language. He believes that every language is a colonial language since the speakers of that language see their language as a 'possession' and, as such, more precious than other languages. In *Monolingualism of the Other*, Derrida writes "When I said that the only language, I speak is not mine, I did not say it was foreign to me" (Derrida 1998, 5). Derrida's interpretation of monolingualism develops an ironic critique upon the relationship of postcolonial subjects with their languages and their use. Another way around, Derrida's ironical attitude towards monolingualism can also be elaborated in his very use of the term 'aporia': An internal irresolvable conflict towards deciding the foreignness and colonial nature of a language that does not relate easily to cultural or historical origins.

Here, it can be argued that this very conflict raises an aspect of creativity among postcolonial writers that makes them write freely without predetermining their political roles or recalling the colonial past of the English language. Most of the post-9/11 Pakistani poets - particularly anglophone ones - return the memories of violence, turmoil, cultural displacement, and identity crisis to the global audience using English language not simply as a medium of communication - but as a postcolonial irony. Akhter's "My Languages" is one of such example that reflects the postcolonial irony of writing in English language, lamenting upon the loss of ancestral, national and indigenous languages at the same time. The poet also

highlights this idea in the ending lines: “I am often/Prisoner and custodian/Straddles with its fortunes/Falling and running/Across the English Channel” (Akhtar 2017, 139). In the landscape of post-9/11 Pakistan poetry, the poems Akhtar, Darker, Khalique provides window and insights into prosthetic memory, natal alienation and polyphonic memories. Most significantly, these poets contribute to the understanding of the relationship between politics and poetry, for example, Akhtar’s ‘My Languages’, Dharker’s ‘Right Word’ and Khalique’s ‘Mother Tongue’ signify the ways, identity formation and cultural memory erode through the influence of foreign language, cultural hybrid and memory of cultural displacement.

Resonating a sense of loneliness and displacement and disconnection, and hinting at the influence of memory and identity which comes from external world, these poets allude to these ideas differently with different style and metaphors. But at the same time, they converge in providing a glimpse into the nuances of post-9/11 Pakistani poetry by exploring polyphonic nature of memory, the influence of language and the quest for shared cultural values.

Dharker’s poem ‘Right Word’ highlights the limitations of language and the polyphonic nature of memory. The poem tries to encourage the reader to transcend already conceived notions and divisions which are basically based on the apparatus of language. She advocates the principles of common and harmonious humanity and reflects on the polyphonic landscape, these different language and experiences associated with, having the influence of foreign language and identity. But significantly, she alludes to the prosthetic nature of the memory the way she shows external factors such as language, cultural courses and narratives shape one’s perceptions. Similarly, Khalique, in “The Mother Tongue”, explores the tension of cultural heterogeneity, displacement and natal alienation in post-9/11 context. He tries to capture a sense of alienation in a state where normal conversations are not able to establish meaningful bonds. Again, the poem alludes to the influence of external factors. Here, the external factors contribute to the fragmented and prosthetic memory, and their engagement with politics, interface.

These, three poems converge to reflect on the complexities of post-9/11 Pakistan literature. They show a sense of cultural and historical shifts while engaging the memory of alienation, social injustice and the consequences of political events in local and global context. Understanding the above poems in post-9/11 context, conveys the influence of political turmoil on the personal and collective memory, and showcases the power of the poetry as a medium for critique and resilience and resistance in the face of different external apparatuses.

2.4 From Mnemohistory to Analogical Memory of Violence: Understanding History and Memory from Cultural Perspective

Mnemohistory is a concept that Marek Tamm talks about in cultural memory analysis to help us to understand the function of history in memory studies. The understanding of mnemohistory is based on understanding the relationship of ‘history’ and ‘memory’ and role of ‘culture memory’ in understanding this relationship. To Tamm, ‘history’ and ‘memory’ are two different concepts since history, for him, is representing a specific event in the past. However, ‘memory’ refers to the study of the past in relation to the present in a specific socio-cultural context. But history contributes to the production of cultural memory by giving an account of religion, literature and myths of a certain time and space. So, ‘mnemohistory’ is to look at history as a cultural memory by asking a question: what is known of the past in the present? Why is it that some versions of the past dominate over others?



In terms of mnemohistory, the affective language in Harris Khalique's *No Fortunes to Tell* published in 2019 creates a prosthetic memory, that though an artificial one, still cultivates a search for hope, solace and a messiah in the time of despair among the people living in the peripheries of Pakistan. It is a poetic account of his last twenty-year experience that discusses the vagaries of religious and cultural beliefs among the people of Pakistan at the strengthening and the weakening end simultaneously. For example, Khalique's "The Magician and the Boy – Waziristan" is based on a dialogue between a magician and a boy after a bomb blast in Waziristan. Waziristan is in northwest Pakistan bordering Afghanistan and has been subject to thousands of airstrikes, including by drones, since 2001. Tens of thousands have fled the bombing & have become refugees in their own country.

The poem talks about a boy who carries her mother's dead body and requests the magician to reconstruct her mother's body - which is cut in half - and bring her back to life the way he has cut down the bodies in half and connected them back in the circus show. Understanding this poem helps us to understand the magnitude of violence, chaos and turmoil in Waziristan.

This poem tells us the ways violence altered the memories of music, culture, and art in Waziristan. His work is not about writing history or representing the past. Having no specific historical reference, Khalique's poem has a more affective interpretation of violence through a metaphorical language in the poem, like "the boy covered in dust and smell" carrying her mother's body in a "cumbrous sack" that's hard for him to handle in harsh winter and finding his mother's body among the charred ones, that is not fully burnt and still recognizable.

Similarly, Khalique's poem "The Palm Reader: Aleppo" is the first poem of his collection *No Fortunes to Tell* reflects the memory of persecution and suffering. In the title, "Palm Reader" is the poet himself who retrieves the past by revisiting an unknown place that has the traces of genocidal destruction. Aleppo is a city in Syria that is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. This city may have been inhabited for six millennium BC. It is one of the striking examples of medieval Islamic architecture preserved into the 21st century. The poem itself does not narrate any specific historical event but the act of remembering in the poem resonates with the erasure of memory and deterritorialization of Muslim cultures.

Analyzing the above poem in terms of analogical memory helps to understand the retrieval and recollection of painful past, that Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering refer to in their work, and responds to an experience of irrevocable loss of Muslim culture, art and aesthetics that the Muslims are experiencing in the present world after religious fundamentalism. Analogical memory constructs similarities between diverse experiences and events. Comparing the magnitude of violence that 9/11 and the downfall of Aleppo carry, manifest a transcultural experience of demise and lamentation across the Global South and Global North.

Assigning himself the role of a palm reader, dwelling back into a memory of violence full of scattered fresh corpses, looking for their fortunes and discovering none, and coming up with their fate that is not less than an epoch of hopelessness and despair, the poet develops a link between past and present through the analogical frames of memory the poem shares, and these analogical frames construct suffering and chaos transcending their time and space. Similarly, Khalique's another poem "Condemned" shares a nine-year experience of Aasiya in prison. She was a Christian peasant in Shaikhupura, Punjab, Pakistan who was convicted of blasphemy and prisoned for nine years until Supreme court of Pakistan reversed her conviction in 2018.



Another Akhtar's poem "Gulnaz of Waziristan" discusses the magnitude of violence that shapes the collective memory of Waziristan^{viii} after Drone attacks in succession of war-on-terror engaged by America. The title includes the heroic metaphor "Gulnaz" that reflects the heroic memory of sacrifice and bravery through the sacrifices of those people who fought till their last breaths and did not leave their demographical and cultural origins against the war-on-terror. Akhtar's use of metaphors: Barbed wires, drone's carcass, broken periphery, choppers' blades, umbilical cord, dark caves, bearded men, and chanted allegiance (Akhtar 2017, 83). In Naazir Mahmood's words, this poem tells us the ways "chauvinism, jingoism and violence" altered the memories of music, culture and art in Waziristan (Mahmood 2019, para. 4).

Dharker and other poets develop a link between the memory of ambivalence and the ways it questions the notion of knowledge and generosity. She reflects the consequences of giving and taking, particularly in the context of the Palestinian conflict. The line "Who gave the gift of Palestine?" highlights the ambiguity and complexity of the situation. With this complex form of memory, she reveals an internal conflict that the poet experiences as she mentions "their hands are turned to "knives" by the generosity and responsibility they feel. Here, a tablecloth becomes "fire" that symbolizes the emotional turmoil and the burning desire for justice and resolution in connection to the conflicting and deteriorated memories triggered after 9/11 and its shoots. In the poem, "the rain in Jerusalem" serves as a collective image that the poet experiences from the violence upon and suffering of people in distant lands (Dharker 22). In this poem, Dharker emphasizes the universality of human experiences in the face of violence and conflict.

This way, the present study explores post-9/11 Pakistani anglophone poetry in relation to polyphonic memories, prosthetic memory and natal alienation. It also focuses upon the intersection of poetry and politics in post-9/11 Pakistani literature that needs a comprehensive analysis of works of poets who have written within a specific cultural and regional context. While dealing with the polyphonic memories, it examines that how each point tries to incorporate different voices and ideas while reflecting the complexity of memory, each of the poets you know, mentioned in this chapter depict collective memories, personal memories and also historical events with different prisons.

This research offers a deep understanding of theoretical and thematic evolution that post-9/11 Pakistani English poetry has contributed to South Asian English literature along with the new sense of prosthetic memory. Theoretically, it maps postmemory as the product of four concepts: Fantasy of 9/11 memory, communal and public memory of 9/11, politics of identity and trauma in post-9/11 memory, and transcultural post-9/11 memory. These concepts provide theoretical underpinning to the study that further alludes violence and turmoil as major thematic concerns over the layers of transcultural bent to the social and political context that demarcates the pre- and post-9/11 ways of memorizing the event of 9/11 and its offshoots in the selected poetry. This study negotiates with the ways Pakistani poetry helps memorizing the transnational experience of global remembrance by giving a detailed analysis of the use of language and the forms of memory in the poetry in the last two decades.

Notes

i Study of cultural memory as history.



- ii Difference between social memory and communal memory is that social memory is the product of the memories of a group of people living in a society; however, communal memory refers to the memories of various communities living in a society.
- iii "Restoration to the original condition" (Lewis and Short, 1583, 27, 973)
- iv 'Acting out' is 'the melancholic way of writing about trauma' (Lacapra 2014, 65). It describes the writing process of unfolding traumatic experiences where the witness is in severe depression and stuck with the event.
- v Relive trauma is 'to remember something so clearly that the emotions are felt again as felt earlier' (Lacapra 2014, 46).
- vi 'Working through' is the 'mourning way of writing about trauma' (Lacapra 2014, 65). It may be conceived as 'a limited process of integration or introjection of the past which may never fully transcend the acting-out of trauma or achieve full integration and closure' (Lacapra 2014, 147).
- vii Pakistani Literature is the literary journal published by Pakistan Academy of Letters, Islamabad, Pakistan since 1992.
- viii Waziristan is a region in northwest Pakistan that has experienced significant violence in recent years as a result of the ongoing conflict between the Pakistani military and Taliban and other militant groups. The violence has included targeted killings, bombings, and military operations, and has resulted in the displacement of many local residents. The region has also been heavily targeted by drone strikes by the United States, which has further escalated the violence and contributed to the suffering of the local population. The memory of this violence is likely to remain a significant issue for the people of Waziristan for many years to come.

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