

Vibrant Refuse, Spectral Returns: Material Agency and Haunting in Krishan Chander's "*Kachra Baba*"

Aneeza Batool¹

Abstract

This paper aims at exploring the binary between human and matter. The purpose is to unpack the agency of nonliving matter especially the plastic waste. While anthropocentric world-view projects waste as a discard and thus unnecessary commodity to be taken rid of, the research will show how the plastic is a vibrant matter (a term used by Jane Bennett) that has a unique agency to change the fate of humans thus subverting the boundaries of human vs. non-human. To support this argument, a critical analysis of Krishan Chander's "*Kachra Baba*" is done through the critical insights of "material ecocriticism" (the work of Serpil Oppermann and Serenella Iovino on "storied matter"), "vibrant materiality" by Jane Bennett, "trans-corporeality" by Stacy Alaimo, the theory of haunting and the concept of "ghostly matters" by Avery Gordon. This integrated approach will foreground how "*Kachra Baba*" challenges the anthropocentric narratives of power and agency and foregrounds the generative and disruptive vitality of waste within the complex surroundings of Postcolonial ecologies. The research will add to the discourses of nonhuman subject matters, showcasing how they possess agency in their own way and in turn shape human identities in the context of environmental and social inequalities.

Keywords: plastic agency, vibrant matter, material ecocriticism, Postcolonial ecologies

Introduction

The urban topographies of South Asian fiction mainly depict environmental debris as a testament to mal-development, uneven distribution of wealth or resources or a symbol of poverty. However, texts like "*Kachra Baba*" by Krishan Chander challenges these conventions of waste. Rather than presenting it as a mere backdrop, he projects "kachra", urban refuse, with its modern components like

¹Department of English, International Islamic University Islamabad – Pakistan

plastic, not as a lifeless, non-agentic residue but as a vibrant, dynamic force that further reshapes human experiences. Along with that, waste has been projected as reshaping social hierarchies and ecological understandings. The story, originally written in Urdu language, revolves around the unnamed protagonist who becomes *Kachra Baba* due to his residency alongside a garbage tub. Ironically, the garbage which people discarded as "unnecessary" or "waste" not only sustains him but also brings about a shift in his life. This research aims at unpacking the presence of waste in the text "*Kachra Baba*", highlighting the enduring yet problematic materiality of "non-living" substance of life like plastic (a byproduct of capitalist consumerism) and showing how discarded matter exercises an unsettling and profound agency. In this way, the text transforms the human subject and the larger social boundaries.

This article argues that "*Kachra Baba*" portrays waste not as a lifeless residue but as a vibrant, and spectral force that sustains as well as transforms the protagonist, hereby, challenging the anthropocentric distinction between subject and object; human and waste. The idea is explored through a multifaceted theoretical lens that incorporate "material ecocriticism" (the work of Serpil Oppermann and Serenella Iovino on "storied matter"), "vibrant materiality" by Jane Bennett, "trans-corporeality" by Stacy Alaimo and the concept of "ghostly matters" by Avery Gordon. This integrated approach will foreground how "*Kachra Baba*" challenges the anthropocentric narratives of power and agency and foregrounds the generative and disruptive vitality of waste within the complex surroundings of Postcolonial ecologies.

By reading Chander's work through this interdisciplinary lens, this research contributes to Postcolonial Ecocriticism in two ways. First, it foregrounds the role of nonhuman matter as an active agent in South Asian literary contexts that possess agency in its own way and in turn shape human identities. Second, it showcases how the spectral presence of waste functions as a social and ecological critique. In this way, this analysis reveals the text as both a localized story of survival and a parable for the global environmental injustice, foregrounding a more attentive ethics toward the discarded and the nonhuman.

Krishan Chander's *Kachra Baba* has been examined largely for his humanitarian concerns and socialist realism. Critics note his portrayal of marginalized figures such as the garbage collectors or other working class, in revealing the systematic neglect and its effect on human lives (Ali, 2023; Hashmi, 2016). His work is also praised for the versatility and emotional depth. Raza Hashmi, in his article on Chander's work

observes how his story, “*Kachra Baba*” addresses alienation, class struggle and social turbulence within the rapidly changing south Asian societies.

In South Asian literary ecocriticism, the focus of the environmental dimension of urban waste tends to focus on waste as a symbol of poverty or failed development. For instance, recent works have linked disposability to capitalist extraction, class geographies and Postcolonial marginalization (Sharma, 2020). However, waste as agentic matter with the capacity to shape human identity and social relationships is something discussed less.

In this article, the gap will be addressed by offering an ecocritical reading of “*Kachra Baba*” through the lens of material ecocriticism and Posthuman theory. This shifts the focus from that static symbolic representation of waste to the dynamic agency of waste, and represents the narrative at the intersection of Postcolonial urban ecologies, spectral ethics and vibrant materiality. In this way, the research unpacks the dimensions of SA Literature that opposes anthropocentric assumptions and foreground the complex entanglement between human and nonhuman actors.

Analysis

The concept of material ecocriticism is described well by Serpil Oppermann and Serenella Iovino and their insights are central to the engagement with waste in the text. While the earlier waves of ecocriticism deals with questioning about the pristine nature, material ecocriticism focuses on the agency and narratively of matter itself. It does include the abject or residual forms of nature such as urban waste. Material ecocriticism, as discussed by Oppermann and Iovino in their work *Material Ecocriticism*, foregrounds the idea that matter is not something passive, that waits for human inscription rather it is an active agent that has the ability to create its own stories. For them, “Every element of matter is a text in itself, a story inscribed by time, space, and interaction” (Iovino & Oppermann, 2014, p. 7). This idea pulls us out of our bias towards nature and make us realize how human entities, despite having no life, have a unique agency in themselves. For instance, the plastic waste or other decaying organic matter in *Kachra Baba*’s world, “write themselves into the world” and of course into human narratives. As Ursula K. Heise (2008) has debated for a more planet-focused literary criticism, a thorough understanding of these material stories is crucial for incorporating our place, as a human, within complex ecological systems, mainly in urban settings where the culture and nature are mixed.

Looking at the text from this angle, the physical characteristics of waste such as its volume, its smell and olfactory impact, its composition including the non-decomposability of plastic components, all of them are not just a symbolic representation of environmental issues. Rather, they actively shape the narratives and the protagonist existence.

The argument that waste has agency in its own which further shapes the fate of the characters, can further be grounded by Posthumanist theories that questions the typical traditional divide (humanist divide of course) between human and non-human, subject and object, culture and nature. Jane Bennett's concept of "vibrant matter," as discussed in her phenomenal work *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*, is of worth discussion here. Her argument is not centered on devaluing humans rather she asks for recognizing the inherent agency and vitality of all material forms. She also includes those forms which were typically considered as inert, like the discarded commodities. She explains "thing-power" as the capacity of nonhuman bodies "to act as quasi agents or forces with trajectories, propensities, or tendencies of their own" (Bennett, 2010 p.8). In this way, she destabilizes anthropocentric claims to be the center and thus having agency and mastery over non-human objects. Bennett's notion of "assemblage" as "groupings of diverse elements, of vibrant materials of all sorts" (Bennett, 2010 p.23) is also crucial to understand the garbage tub as a dynamic ecological system in which the protagonist is a participant, not the whole. Assemblage again reminds of the fact that agency is not an inherent property rather it emerges from an ongoing, mutually constitutive encounters between these various materials, as discussed by Karen Barad in her definition of "intra-action" (Barad, 2007 p.33).

The concept of assemblage and narrative building aspect of waste is incomplete without the discussion of Stacy Alaimo's theory of "trans-corporeality" developed in *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self*. It provides a framework for understanding the profound material entanglement between human bodies and their environments, especially those saturated with waste and toxins. Author mentions that human subjectivity is inherently porous. It is not something fixed rather it constantly interchange matter and energy with the surrounding world. "The environment," she writes, "is not located somewhere out there but is always the very substance of ourselves" (Alaimo, 2010 p.2). In "*Kachra Baba*" the protagonist's physical appearances, his sensory experiences and his sanctity, all can be analyzed through his lens. Note that his body itself becomes a living testament of human flesh and discarded matter and thus challenging the notion of an

autonomous self. His life circumstances are a reflection of what Rob Nixon terms as “slow violence” leading to unforeseen forms of visibility and adaptation.

These notions are further related with the haunting impact of the narrative. Avery Gordon in his work, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* projects haunting not as a mere supernatural phenomenon rather a social and historic construct, a signal that calls, “something is to be done” (Gordon, 1997 p.16). *Kachra Baba*’s condition becomes a haunting reminder of larger social refuse and violence that attempts to discard and render what’s invisible, either it’s poverty, environmental decay or the lives that are associated with them. Moreover, the discarded material in the text also refers to the presence of haunting past. Like the plastic waste, the discarded food, and other objects and the child, they all stands for one symbol; the discarded-waste-non-agentic.

Combining this haunting with assemblage and transcorporeality highlights how these discarded objects have an agency in themselves and they bring agency to those who are associated with them one way or the other. Furthermore, material ecocriticism’s focus on storied matter added to the prior discussion will provide a nuanced multidimensional analysis of the text. It will show how plastic and waste in general is not something lagging agency. Rather they co-construct the identities of people associated with them and paradoxically, these discarded objects bring a unique subjectivity and a rise in social status of the protagonist. This, questions the human centeredness of anthropocentrism which prefer control over matter along with the Postcolonial imbalance in urban ecologies. The next part of the article will use this framework to analyze the thematic as well as structural aspects of the text, “*Kachra Baba*” by Krishan Chander to foreground the central argument. Krishan Chander’s “*Kachra Baba*” presents a narrative where waste undergoes transformation from its inert state to an agentic active matter force that ultimately shapes human existence and perceptions. Analysis of the “kachra” or the garbage present in the text, with its various forms or components like organic food, textiles, metals, plastics, and the discarded child, shows the transformation of the garbage to an agentic self that gives agency to the waste and a subjectivity to the protagonist.

The story is set on a garbage dump that becomes *Kachra Baba*’s residency. Initially he has been a “discarded soul” who is not physically fit and has no place to survive. When he sees that place he settles there. The waste at the site is not just a discarded pile of items rather an assemblage, an ad hoc, a grouping of human and non-human elements whose interactions result in emergent effect. The text describes this assemblage as:

A huge open rectangular iron tub...filled with all kinds of rubbish: rotten fruit peels and dirty pieces of bread and tea leaves and an old jacket and dirty baby diapers and egg shells and pieces of newspaper and torn pages of magazines and pieces of bread and iron rods and broken plastic toys and pea peels and mint leaves and a few half-eaten puris on banana leaves. (Chander, 2016 p.3)

The place is observed and seen by everyone yet they still maintained it, making it a heterogeneous mix that is constantly in flux, reflecting what the text observes as the economic pulse of the city, as "When sugar became expensive...he would not see a piece of sweets...When wheat became expensive, he would not even find a piece of double roti." (Chander, 2016 p.4)

This assemblage of human and non-human elements presents itself as a narrative engine. The protagonist's initial encounter with it is a result of the "thing power" of its smells. "The symphony of smells" as differentiated by his senses, between the "appetizing aroma of puris and potatoes" and other intolerable smells of waste, acted as an irresistible lure that collapses "the last walls of civilization." Significantly, the waste is not a passive entity; it impacts olfactory senses of the protagonist, it allures, directs and governs him, as observed by Bennett in her work. Once he settles himself with the waste, his life is transformed because of that assemblage, a "groupings of diverse elements, of vibrant materials of all sorts" (Chander, 2016 p.23). As the author mentions, the place as his "livelihood, his day and night, his life's protector," defining his "world, fifteen feet long and thirty feet wide." (Chander, 2016 p.3) his life is impacted and directed by the cycle of replenishment and the municipal acts of emptying or cleaning the place. It is important to note that he does not resist any of the change, understanding its inevitability, "goodness can end in this world, but filth cannot" (Chander, 2016 p.4). His belief itself adds much to the relentless, vital persistence to the assemblage that surpasses human ephemerality. The materiality within this assemblage, such as the rigidity of plastic, the texture of food, the absorbency of paper, and the sharpness of matter, all of them adds to the overall character and its active impacts on *Kachra Baba's* sensory world, and survival.

This relationship of *Kachra Baba* with his surrounding, or with the waste present around him extends beyond mere utility, rather it becomes a profound instance of "trans-corporeality" in Alaimo's terms. The way he reached the place, he had no agency of his own. He was a discarded body just like the waste around him. Once he enters the place and lives there, his body starts becoming "porous" and, materially starts becoming a continuity with the refuse. The narrator describes this event as,

"his clothes become indistinguishable from the grime, and his own body is described as appearing to passersby like a pile of garbage that sometimes moved and spoke." (Chander, 2016 p.4) note that, this description is not a metaphorical description rather it signifies a very deep material interpretation. It can be argued that the waste, the grim, the smell, the texture of waste and the nutrition from those discarded organic foods all becomes a part of his body and reconstitute of not reconstruct his failing body, a body that was initially a "soaked cotton". The grime, the smells, the textures of the waste become part of his physical being, and the nutrients from discarded food literally reconstitute his failing body, which was initially described as "soaked cotton."

This trans-corporeal entanglement further questions and challenges the Cartesian dualism of self/environment and mind/body. The protagonist's subjectivity is not a result of his opposition to his material surroundings, rather it is through and with them. His senses of smell, increased by his hunger turned to that of a "wild animal", that further shows the deep attunement to his material world. The material exchange between the protagonist and the environment is emphasized by the discovery of the baby in the garbage tub. *Kachra Baba's* initial interaction with the baby shows a knowledge system that is linked with the waste. He picked up a mango pit to relax the child, which shows his understanding and acceptance of discarded material. This trans-corporeality is important to understand his later sanctity. His body is then saturated with the abject, and thus paradoxically becomes a site of perceived insight that embodies the messy and intermingled life and society often denies. This further shows how non-normative bodies reveal the fictions of bodily autonomy and the reality of our shared material vulnerabilities (Kafer, 2013).

On one hand, the story gives a wide range of "kachra" that highlights the particular role of plastic as a modern waste. On the other side, the specific material properties of the plastic add to the narrative themes of haunting and persistence as observed by Avery Gordon. Gordon defines haunting as a social reminder that "something is to be done" (Gordon, 1997 p.16). The non-biodegradability of the plastic and its capacity to endure inevitably for a very long period of time makes it a material force. The narrative describes plastic presence as, "discarded plastic bags, wrappers, and broken containers, shimmering with a strange light". Here the "strange light" could be seen as a visual manifestation of plastic's uncanny vitality; its resistance to erasure. The agency that lies within such persistent materials actually lies in their intractability. While organic matter decays with the passage of time, the plastic objects often remain as it is, retaining their form and they often accumulate and

create new everlasting topographies of waste, as depicted in the text. This everlasting ability of plastic waste structures and impacts *Kachra Baba's* environment. In addition to that, the accumulation of plastics might also contribute to the "labyrinthine" nature of larger dumps, or within the tub, especially the plastic items like the "broken plastic toys" which might offer unique affordances or hazards. Broadly saying, the plastic's persistence in the surrounding reveals that it is a testament to patterns of consumptions and disposal, in a way materializing the social memory literally. His engagement with the surrounding that has plastic as a visible yet enduring component means that his life lies amidst a constant reminder of societal excess and a long-term consequences of material choices of individuals of the society. This power of plastic, called "thing power", along with its capacity to live through and continually affect the environment in return, all of it contributes to the overall agency of plastic or waste assemblage. It further adds to the modern yet troubling dimension of "storied matter" which Heather Davis discusses in relation to plastic's fossil lineage and of course its unsettling temporal implications, binding us to deep pasts and uncertain futures (Davis, 2015).

This material agency of waste in the text is not just limited to decay or threat, it is generative in itself. The garbage dunk that becomes the home to the protagonist is a repository of society's cast-offs. It is a source of life and sustenance for the protagonist as it is an, "open market for him, where he would roam around...taking whatever he wanted...for free." (Chander, 2016 p.3) this presentation subverts the traditional economic logic where worth is assigned on the basis of formal systems of production and exchange and nothing else. But in the text, the value emerges directly from the tub that is discarded, and from the perspective of material affordance of things, from something that is deemed worthless. The discarded food nourishes him, thrown away clothes over him, and the overall assemblage provides a source for his survival.

This generative capacity further culminates in the discovery of the newborn baby in the garbage tub. The baby is the ultimate symbol societal discard in this context, which is found amidst the "pieces of double root, crushed bones, old shoes, pieces of glass, mango peels," (Chander, 2016 p.5) and becomes the catalyst for *Kachra Baba's* deep emotional and social reawakening. Here, in Jean Fisher's words, the baby, as the cast-off returns with disruptive force (Fisher, 2006 p.32). By nurturing the discarded infant, the protagonist embodies a spectral resistance that refuses annihilation. The assemblage here results in sustenance as well as the chances of renewed human connection and responsibility. Here, waste is becoming an

instrument of care (the mango pit used to calm the baby down). This scene underscores Bennett's argument that agency is distributive, emerging from the "confederations" of human and nonhuman actors. The mango pit, the baby, *Kachra Baba*, and the surrounding, all of them refuse all act in concert to produce a new trajectory for the narrative. This generative potential, that arises from the very site of abjection, further challenges any simplistic understanding of waste as merely passive, negative or inert, uncovering its capacity to foster the unexpected forms of life and sociality.

This material agency of waste, as discussed above, does more than sustaining life or simply structuring the narrative. What it does more is that it propels the narrative into the realm of spectral. The protagonist's entanglement with refuse, especially with the materials that resist easy erasure, changes him and the surroundings full of waste itself into haunting presences. The modern waste, especially plastic, lends to a spectral reading. The descriptions like "ghostly fluttering wrappers" or "shadow-like forms catching the wind," (Chander, 2016 p.3) explicitly inspire discarded plastic with a phantom-like quality. Avery Gordon's (1997) understanding of haunting as the persistent return of unresolved social issues, is very useful here. Plastic waste with its longevity, and permanence becomes a material ghost. It further serves as a visible reminder of consumer society's excesses, its "progress" based on disposability, and its shortsightedness, environmentally. Significantly, the ability of plastic to last forever and its refusal to integrate into natural ecological cycles of the earth makes it even more powerful symbol of ever-increasing problems. Plastic pollution here would be a "hyper object" in Timothy Morton's terms that far outlasts human's intentions and measurements and induces a sense of unease and haunting due to its omnipresence nature and incomprehensible temporality. The garbage dump is the text, is not just a physical sight. It's more than that, and is a spectral landscape that is populated by the lingering "ghost" of past consumerist consumptions. Moreover, this quality is not just limited to plastic. It extends to the olfactory landscape described in the text. The "symphony of smells" that the protagonist navigates is also contributing to an atmosphere of haunting. Smells, itself are ethereal and then evoke memories and of course effect moods in a very powerful way, a way that is subconscious as well; invisible yet powerful. The smell of food reminds and reflects the societal condition in the mind of *Kachra Baba* that again alludes to the haunting idea discussed earlier. The decaying food producing the decaying scent along with the aroma of past meals produces an environment laced with traces of what has been thrown off or discarded; a constant reminder of consumptions, and forgotten stories told by the refuse.

The primary spectral figure throughout the text is the protagonist himself. From his initial deplorable state to his final better self, he is a spectral. He is a jobless, homeless individual having no family. His body is sick and his future is nothing but a "void". He, by all societal metrics, is a figure meant to be forgotten or erased. But, his immersion with waste results in his uncanny return. During his life at the garbage tub, he not just survives, rather he transforms. He, with his entanglement with the waste, is an embodiment of what society deems to expel. As Gordon (1997 p.26) argues in his work that haunting often involves "a social figure through which repressed or unresolved histories make themselves known." The protagonist too re-emerges from the discard or the refuse as a figure that makes local curious. His spectral quality is further enhanced by his physical appearance, "like a pile of garbage that sometimes moved and spoke." Furthermore, he blurs the lines between animate and inanimate, human and nonhuman, thereby unsettling the very categories through which society orders itself. The reaction of locals to him, a combination of awe, fear, respect, is typical response to a spectral.

Visibility functions paradoxically in the narrative. While society strives to keep waste out of sight and separate from human, confining it to marginalized spaces, still, it is through his immersion in the abject (the decay, filth or the discarded) that made *Kachra Baba* gain what's an undeniable and unsettling form of visibility. The point to be noted here is that his visibility is not a conventional success rather it is a hypervisibility of anomaly, presenting him as a figure who transcends boundaries. He is a product of waste having spectral power which is derived from his association with what is feared and rejected. Jean Fisher has also mentioned this thing in his work. In relation to art and the abject, he mentions that the cast out can return with a powerful, disruptive force, compelling attention.

Here, the protagonist recognition as "Baba" is significant as it further strengthens his spectral power. In south Asian context, "Baba" can be a holy man, as someone who has transcended ordinary worldly concerns. The protagonist's transcendence, is not an outcome of retreating to a pristine mountain cave but by immersing deeper into the profane heart of urban refuse. This further subverts the traditional notions of purity and sanctity. Defilement and perceived holiness, is lined to his immersion in "filth". His spectral visibility serves as a constant, yet unspoken critique of societal values; the values that equate cleanliness with godliness and materiality with moral failing.

The protagonist's haunting presence amidst the waste gives a form of spectral resistance. Not in a political or active sense, but his resistance lies in the refusal to

be erased, or being silent, or to simply conform to the societal narratives of disposal. The plastic or the waste in general resists decomposition and disappears only with great difficulty, just like *Kachra Baba* and thus materially enacting this refusal. *Kachra Baba*, becoming one with this waste, inherits the stubborn persistence of the waste. His transformation, existence and the eventual act of nurturing a new life (the baby) from within the refuse, everything speaks to a profound life-affirmation that rejects and challenges the social and material forces of annihilation. Such a resistance can be a speaking form the place of the unspeakable as discussed by Shoshana Felman when discussing testimony emerging from trauma. *Kachra Baba's* existence becomes the living testament to the lives and materials that exist beyond societal (material) concerns. His spectrality is a "mode of affective disruption" exercise an unsettling and profound agency (Gordon, 1997 p.8) that in result forces a confrontation. Importantly, the narrative does not give easy solutions by making the discarded visible, rather it questions the ideologies that underpin environmental injustices. In this way, the discarded not only seeks agency and exercise its potential, but also brings personality transformation in the protagonist. The ending of the story suggests that his resistance is not about overcoming waste, rather it's about recognizing the enduring presence of the discard and our entanglement with it. In this way, it compels a more ethical and attentive way of living in the world.

Conclusion

Krishan Chander's "*Kachra Baba*" offers a compelling yet unsettling exploration of the intricate relationships between the living and the non-living, between the humans and the waste. The narrative skillfully demonstrates that waste is something beyond apolitical, powerless, discard rather it is an agentic "vibrant matter" having potential to not only sustain itself but also change the fate of humans and thus shattering the anthropocentric boundaries between human and non-human, subject and matter. An integrated theoretical lens incorporating material ecocriticism, Posthumanist thought, and spectral studies, is sought to illuminate how "kachra," with its diverse and persistent components like plastic, actively shapes *Kachra Baba's* trans-corporeal existence, his social trajectory, and the very fabric of the narrative. The story reveals waste as a dynamic assemblage, a "storied matter" that reflects and influences the socio-economic rhythms of the city while providing the very conditions of survival and transformation for its central character. *Kachra Baba's* deep entanglement with this refuse, his body becoming porous to its influences, underscores a trans-corporeal reality that challenges anthropocentric notions of bounded subjectivity and highlights our fundamental

material interdependence with the environment, however degraded. The agency of waste is not merely destructive; it is also paradoxically generative, fostering new forms of life, value, and social recognition from the heart of societal abjection, culminating in *Kachra Baba's* care for the discarded infant.

Kachra Baba is more than a story of individual survival; it is an ecological parable for our times. It urges a radical rethinking of our relationship with matter, demanding that we recognize the agency and vitality of the nonhuman world, even in its most devalued forms. It calls for an ethics of attentiveness to the "slow violence" (Nixon, 2011) of environmental degradation and social marginalization, and to the unexpected ways in which life persists and finds meaning amidst ruins. By foregrounding the entangled destinies of humans and their waste, Krishan Chander's story enriches the landscape of South Asian literature. It also contributes significantly to broader global conversations about environmental justice, Posthuman ethics, and the urgent need to acknowledge our profound and often uncomfortable kinship with the material world we create and discard. The spectral echoes of *Kachra Baba*, and the vibrant refuse that defines him, linger long after the story concludes, urging a more responsible and compassionate co-existence.

References

- Alaimo, S. (2010). *Bodily natures: Science, environment, and the material self*. Indiana University Press.
- Ali, Y. (2023). Celebrating Krishan Chander: The storyteller of the oppressed. *South Asia Journal*. South Asia Journal
- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the universe halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning*. Duke University Press.
- Bennett, J. (2010). *Vibrant matter: A political ecology of things*. Duke University Press.
- Chander, K. (2016). *Kachra Baba* (M. Ashar, Trans.). Sang-e-Meel Publications. (Original work published n.d.)
- Davis, H. (2015). Life & death in the Anthropocene: A short history of plastic. In H. Davis & E. Turpin (Eds.), *Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters among aesthetics, politics, environments and epistemologies* (pp. 347–358). Open Humanities Press.
- Fisher, J. (2006). Toward a metaphysics of shit. In J. Kristeva (Ed.), *Documents of contemporary art: The abject* (pp. 30–37). Whitechapel Gallery.
- Gordon, A. F. (1997). *Ghostly matters: Haunting and the sociological imagination*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Hashmi, R. (2016). Centenary of Krishan Chander. *Daily Times*. Daily Times
- Kafer, A. (2013). *Feminist, queer, crip*. Indiana University Press.
- Malik, A. (2022). Versatility and humanism in Krishan Chander's fiction. *Makhz Journal of Urdu Studies*, 3(2). Makhz Journal of Urdu Studies article
- Mbembe, A. (2003). Necropolitics. *Public Culture*, 15(1), 11–40. <https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-15-1-11>
- Morton, T. (2013). *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and ecology after the end of the world*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Nixon, R. (2011). *Slow violence and the environmentalism of the poor*. Harvard University Press.
- Paravisini-Gebert, L. (2002). Colonial and postcolonial Gothic: The Caribbean. In J. E. Hogle (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Gothic fiction* (pp. 229–257). Cambridge University Press.
- Punter, D. (1996). *The literature of terror: A history of Gothic fictions from 1765 to the present day* (Vols. 1–2). Longman.
- Sharma, A. J. (2020). Water, waste, land: Environment and extractivism in South Asian fiction. *Journal of South Asian Literature*, 49(1), 112–129.

Article Information:

<i>Received</i>	16-Mar-2026
<i>Revised</i>	13-May-2026
<i>Accepted</i>	10-Jun-2026
<i>Published</i>	30-Jun-2026

Declarations:

Author's Contribution:

- **Conceptualization, and intellectual revisions.**
- **Data collection, interpretation, and drafting of manuscript**
- The author agrees to take responsibility for every facet of the work, making sure that any concerns about its integrity or veracity are thoroughly examined and addressed

▪ **Conflict of Interest:** NIL

▪ **Funding Sources:** NIL

Correspondence:

Aneeza Batool

aneezabatool2917@gmail.com
