CHAPTER ONE

FRAMING PRECARITY: CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES

The aim of this chapter is to create a critical framework of precarity to approach post-9/11 landscapes. In doing so, it engages with the scholarship of precarity as well as seeks to link it with concepts that assists in locating, analyzing, and critiquing different post-9/11 geographies.

The objectives of this chapter are as follows

i) To trace the trajectory of precarity and link it to contemporary discourse;
ii) To explore the compatibility of precarity with other critical concepts and observations;
iii) To draw an association between precarity and the post-9/11 period; and
iv) To identify and study the geographies of precarity and contextualise it in terms of the post-9/11 novel.

The chapter adopts the following hypotheses

i) Precarity is an extreme form of othering; and
ii) Precarity is a lens to cater to the scholarship for all crisis management.

The chapter will address the following research questions

i) Is precarity different from other forms of vulnerability?
ii) Is precarity a condition or a consequence, or both, in the post-9/11 context?
iii) How does post-9/11 precarity differ from and align with precarity's neoliberalist-economic linkages?

Review of Literature

This section is formulated taking into account the links to be established, firstly precarity with an extreme kind of othering; secondly, precarity with concepts that strengthens the former claim; thirdly, precarity with post-9/11 landscapes.

Etymology and Definition

The *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) dates the appearance of the term 'precarity' to Marian Cox's *The Crowds and the Veiled Woman* published in 1910. While this English

term came into popularity later, such as addition to the *OED*'s repository only in 2018, its forms in other European languages can be traced back to a relatively earlier time. The term 'precaritè' was used by European social and labour movements in the 1970s that conveyed the changes that late-capitalism tagged along, such as "more flexible, contingent, and irregular work" (Allison). According to the *Encyclopedia of Critical Psychology* (2014), the term is the English translation of the Italian "precarieta," the Spanish "precariedad," and the French "precarite" (1488). The *Online Etymological Dictionary* cites that its allied English forms "precarious" and "precariousness" are derived from the Latin "precarius" that denotes something gained through prayer (prex) or petition, and in general practice refers to circumstances that could be marked as uncertain, insecure, and unstable (Biglia and Marti 1488). The *OED* records precarity as "precariousness or instability; esp. a state of persistent uncertainty or insecurity with regard to employment, income, and living standards." According to the *Cambridge Dictionary* (online), precarity entails "the state of being uncertain or likely to get worse" and as "a situation in which someone's job or career is always in danger of being lost." In this sense then, precarity not only embodies a general condition of risk and unpredictability but their source can be tethered to one's relation with their employment.

Before venturing into precarity, it is important to distinguish between vocabulary associated with the term, such as precarious, precarity, precariousness, precarization, and precariat. In contrast to precarity, precarious as understood in dictionary terms, refers to something considered dangerous and uncertain that may correspond to any situation. Precarity then can be simply understood as a precarious job situation. Precariousness refers to a state that is precarious in nature. Precarization designates a "living with the unforeseeable, with contingency" (Lorey 1). According to Guy Standing in *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (2011), to be precariatised means being subjected to conditions that contribute towards the life of a precariat, defined by a life consisting of no secure identity and lack of growth through work and lifestyle. Precariat, formed out of 'precarious' and 'proletariat' (7), refers to people who are affected by precarious work in their everyday lives comprising every sphere that makes up living. Standing observes how the term has changed in the contemporary period. Such as, based on Grimm and Ronneberger (2007), he observes how the 'precariato' in Italy has moved beyond the people with casual labour and low incomes that indicates a precarious existence as a normal state of living (qtd. in Standing 9). Again, in Germany the term also encapsulates

the jobless without any hope of social integration (9). In Japan, the term has evolved from meaning 'the working poor' to designate the 'freeters' marked by casual labour (9). According to Brett Neilson and Ned Rossiter in "From Precarity to Precariousness and Back Again Labour, Life and Unstable Networks" (2005), precarity encompasses "all possible shapes of unsure, not guaranteed, flexible exploitation: from illegalized, seasonal and temporary employment to homework, flex- and temp-work to subcontractors, freelancers or so-called self-employed persons" (2), also including aspects beyond work such as housing, debt and the inability to build affective social relations.

Precarity in today's understanding is a condition that emerged due to the changes in the labour regime, the move from Fordist to the post-Fordist working principles. Fordism in the economic domain refers to the 20th century labour model, marked by mass production and consumption, state participation to establish a welfare state, stable work status, workers paid higher to be able to purchase what they produce along with benefits, etc. The post-Fordist era, in the later decades of 20th century, oriented towards neoliberalism, characterized by flexible labour model, lack of protection from union or state, backed by "globalization, deindustrialization, and financialization" (Kasmir 4) in North America, western Europe and Japan, and precarity marks the ensuing anxiety, insecurity, and feelings of un-belonging in its wake. Sharryn Kasmir in "Precarity" (2018) observes that insecurity was also prevalent in the Fordist regime both within and outside the "Fordist compact."

The terms discussed here are understood primarily in the parlance of economics and sociology. It can therefore be inferred that precarity embodies a negative connotation and it being a defining feature of populations invites our attention. Judith Butler presents a different vein of precarity and distinguishes it from precariousness which she characterizes as an ontological and shared condition. She designates precarity as a politically induced condition wherein some populations are affected socially and economically as they differentially lie at risk of injury, violence, and death, including disease, poverty, starvation, displacement, violence without protection mostly from arbitrary state violence (*Frames* 25-26). Its inequal distribution is catered by phenomena such as "neoliberalism, war, climate crises" (Kasmir 2-3), thus implicating that the former discussion on precarity and Butler's exposition are not exclusive and discrete, rather they work together, or one induces the other.

Kasmir in "Precarity" bridges the two threads of precarity, one rooted in ontological set-up, precariousness/precarity, while the other in the history of global capitalism. While the first focuses on social marginality and vulnerable lives, and that acceptance of universal precariousness and rejecting selective precarity ensures enfranchisement, however the same cannot be said regarding the struggle for security or working-class power. Kasmir presents the latter political imaginary based on capitalist accumulation in which labour history proves a useful guide, while contemporary heterogenous labour is to be studied to "determine how distinctions among labourers are made, unmade, and remade, through ongoing struggles among workers, capital, and the state" ("Precarity" 10).

Taking the cues from these facets of precarity, this thesis engages in creating a comprehensive account of precarity by identifying, analyzing, and critiquing its diverse combinations. Thus, this chapter formulates a frame to explore the different dimensions of precarity in select primary texts.

History and Background

In the economic domain, the world is privy to the periodical alterations in terms of market principles, policies, and ideologies at different junctures to meet the drawbacks of the previous system. However, akin to any reconfiguration, new pitfalls emerge alongside the desired benefits. The political and economic turn in the late 20th century in the form of neoliberalism ushered in a new world order which is also a source of precarity's incoming into public speech and demonstrations.

The term as it is understood today can be located in theology, particularly to that of Catholicism. Its introduction is indebted to Léonce Crenier, a monk, and Dorothy Day, cofounder of the Catholic Worker Movement (van der Linden 11). In her May 1952 article titled "Poverty and Precarity," published in *The Catholic Worker* newspaper, Day supplies us with interpretations and glimpses of lives in poverty and opines how people often happen to lose sight of it. According to her, "Precarity is rejected everywhere, and precarity is an essential element of poverty" (6). She advocates people to try and adopt poverty voluntarily, help one another and put themselves in a path of divine glory. While talking about the poor, Day talks about Puerto Ricans who are "doubling up in unspeakably filthy, dark, crowded tenements," in the areas of the lower east side and Harlem, undergoing

"hardest work," against "lowest wages," marked as "little and undernourished," owing to the "generations of privation and exploitation by us" (2). Though Day's views are theologically grounded, these instances evince the modern-day connotation of precarious living.

It is a fact that though the term precarity is new in usage, it has always been present in different societies. Linden traces the history of casual labour from a parable in the New Testament to modern day. According to him, the thetes, landless labourers of ancient Greece, constitute the earliest precarious workers due to lack of protection from any organization/institute ("Precario" 12). The popularity of the term 'precarity' in the last part of last century owes to the post-Fordist changeover in the West. In the 1970s, the European social and labour movements were the first to make use of '*precaritè*' to capture the transformations in late-stage capitalism (Allison). According to Guy Standing, the demonstration led mostly by the youth in Milan in 2001 and then across Europe on 1st May 2005, marking the Euro May Day, with demands such as free migration and a universal basic income can be noted as the beginnings of the global precariat. The term 'precariat' in its descriptive sense was first applied by French sociologists in the 1980s for temporary or seasonal workers. Kasmir observes that the notion that precarity is novel and seen as a distinctive phase associated with neoliberalism in the broader capitalist order, is criticised owing to its ignorance or neglection of how precarity has always been a feature of capitalist societies while precariousness has always been a definitive characteristic of working people's lives, especially of those in the Global South ("Precarity" 1).

The following texts concerned with precarity helps in forming the foundation of the thesis:

Judith Butler's *Precarious Lives: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (2004) structured into five essays, meditates on violence and the kinds of responses towards it. Especially placed in the post-9/11 landscape, Butler engages in topics such as war on terror, mourning, state policies, media politics, censorship, indefinite detention, and so on. These explorations are pertinent to understanding precarity in the line of this thesis. It is undeniable that the US was hit by a sudden violent action, resulting in enormous loss, and as a means to exact retribution it waged the war on terror on a global scale premised on rooting out terrorism. Butler advances the question of what could be made out of grief apart from waging more violence in reaction. Butler also alludes to the United States'

failure to reflect on its vulnerability to consider others who undergo similar atrocities, and as a super power to acknowledge this interdependency and base it to forge a global political community. According to Butler, lives are accorded different values and their losses undergo different kinds of treatment. Butler views how some losses are recognised and grieved publicly, some are not grieved as those lives were never considered as lives in the first place, leading to the politics concerning "what counts as a liveable life and a grievable death" (xv). Butler notes, while the loss of American lives in the war on terror featured in obituaries, other lives lost on the same grounds lacked public display. The 9/11 novels discussed in the thesis deals with the hierarchised relationships at individual and collective levels.

Butler's *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable* (2009), extends this discussion to reflect on what formulates some lives worth living and others perishable, especially during wars. She accords precariousness and precarity as closely linked concepts, the former denoting "living socially" (14), that is, lives are interdependent, and that it is "coextensive with birth" (14) and shared by all, while the latter refers to that "politically induced condition in which certain populations suffer from failing social and economic networks of support and become differentially exposed to injury, violence and death" (25-26). Butler maintains that grievability is a presupposition of life that matters, that is, it deems a life as living. The discussion forwards how the universal sense of precariousness makes one to be potentially threatened by the other who are also precarious, hence leading to different forms of control. Again, this sense of precariousness leads to exploitation of certain populations with their loss "deemed necessary to protect the lives of "the living"" (31). Butler dwells on how wars ignore the shared precariousness by trying to be a means of survival of one population over the other to commit a "systematic error" wherein certain populations who are rendered as threatening are seen as "threats" (43) rather than living beings. Butler also pursues the politics around the apparatus of photography concerning war crimes, how it exposes inhumane practices yet grants grievability to the dead which were not considered lives. This discussion is central in exploring the war on terror in the thesis and its link with the dynamics of precarity—how and when it is constituted and distributed.

Isabel Lorey in *State of Insecurity: Government of the Precarious* (2012), engages with the concept of precarity with relation to government. The book sheds light on how

precarization, owing to neoliberalism, has become a form of governance, thus affecting all. She maintains how along the transformation of the welfare states a new form of government is fashioned on the "greatest possible insecurity" (2), while claiming no alternate means to tackle it. Lorey here distinguishes among the dimensions of the precarious that occurs in "historically differently posited relations" (14)—precariousness, precarity, and precarization. Following Butler's socio-ontological concept, she sees precariousness as a relational and an existentially shared condition inherent to human and non-human life, while she designates precarity to the "functional effect arising from the political and legal regulations that are specifically supposed to protect against general, existential precariousness" (22). She attributes domination to the attempts to safeguard some from existential precariousness, while this shows a privilege based on the differential distribution of the precarity of those in the lower rungs of the hierarchized relations, and viewed as the other. She puts precarization in the ambit of governmentality, especially after the inclusion of life into politics—biopolitics. She reflects on how the biopolitical framework fostered a creation of relations with the self, including workers to realize their labour-power and use it to improve their lives and lessen precariousness. In this sense, in neo-liberal system precarization has been normalized. She sees it as going beyond one's insecurity regarding employment to consume their whole being.

Lorey illustrates the relationship between precariousness and precarity as when the former, a socio-ontological level is projected as "a threat against which a political community must be protected, immunized" (14), and in so doing, the protection of one group generally requires striating the precarity of the 'other.' The precariousness of all life forms is seen or placed in inequal or hierarchical order, and this gives rise to all kinds of insecurities that are therefore attached differently with different lives. The need for protection that arises from the shared condition is availed only by select groups that occupy the top positions in the ranking. Lorey also indicates the potentialities of resistance that can be made against this kind of exploitation at the hands of the system. Lorey's work provides the convergence between the existential and political dimensions of the precarious, and the government as a site of producing and in some cases inducing them. It helps in understanding the post-9/11 US atmosphere, where the atmosphere saturated with fear, suspicion, and insecurity assisted the administration to carry out their mission to root out their sources.

Dario Gentili in *The Age of Precarity: Endless Crisis as an Art of Government* (2021), by drawing on several thinkers throughout history examines the present state marked by the permanence of crisis. By tracing the genealogy of crisis, Gentili unpacks precarity in the neo-liberal set-up wherein the precariat is the figure of the neo-liberal crisis. He shows how the precariat is left without any choice, or given a forced choice concerning politics and policy making.

Standing's *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (2011), discusses the birth, present and the potential future of the eponymous socio-economic "class-in-the-making." He charts the origins of the precariat to the 1970s inclination towards neo-liberalism and globalisation, wherein market-competitiveness, including market flexibility, was of primary importance that pushed market principles to go beyond the economic domain to enter everyday lives, exposing workers and their families to insecurity and instability. He deems it a "Faustian bargain" (58) in the globalization era, wherein workers adopt such flexible job arrangements while the majority reap the benefits. While anybody can be under this category, migrants are more susceptible to it, constituting "the light infantry" (100) of it. The precariat lacks job security, job benefits, and those rights otherwise enjoyed by the society making them overall vulnerable. According to Standing, the precariat experiences the four 'A's—anger, anomie, anxiety, and alienation, while also being objects of surveillance and demonization. According to him, if left unattended, this class or their demands may cater to a "politics of inferno," which should be avoided by making amends via a "politics of paradise" (16). This book provides a nuanced understanding of the output of neoliberal economy, an emerging social class that is impinged by precarity starting with their employment status that ultimately subsumes their overall lives. In the context of this thesis, the othering of the migrant precariat is a useful lens to interpret specific kinds of precarity. Sharryn Kasmir in the discussion of precarity cites Jan Breman's critique of Standing in the latter's primary focus on the labour markets of the US, UK, France, Germany, Japan, and South Korea, instead of the Global South wherein capital has always based on "insecure, unprotected and super-exploited workforces" ("Precarity" 8), such as in India. In view of the thesis, the precariat can be identified among the immigrants, especially illegal ones in the US post-9/11, including the war topographies where people were devoid of opportunities.

Om Prakash Dwivedi in his introduction to *Representations of Precarity in South Asian Literature in English* (2022), advances its claim that "neoliberal strategies of accumulation and aggrandizement are programmed in a way to generate, sustain, and nourish selective valued lives thus rendering other lives precarious" (1-2). Again, this monopoly over "almost everything as resources" corresponding to this "selective group of valued lives" has resulted in the emergence of a "superstructure" that only sustains on "its unregulated power to dispose and eliminate weak bodies" (2). He sees how due to such "extreme life conditions, morality and social justice are no longer viable" (2). The text provides diverse approaches on precarity created by the neoliberal regime that has added insecurity, vulnerability, and uncertainty to lives and bodies in the South Asian fabric. The specific geography assists in understanding the intricacies of precarity privy to that backdrop.

Dwivedi's article "Bioprecarity, Disposability, and the Poetics of Hope in Swarga" (2022), aims to show how the bios, that according to him, constitutes of "humans, more-than humans, and natural resources" (15), and in the context of the Global South, are exploited under neo-liberalism which in turn pushes all life forms of the planet to a precarious existence, termed as "bioprecarity." This thesis concentrates on the materialities of precarity—how it is not a cosmic existential collapse of distinction between self and other, but rather material collapse of material boundaries.

Pramod K. Nayar's *Ecoprecarity: Vulnerable lives in Literature and Culture* (2019), offers a form of precarity that extends to the ecology, that is, ecoprecarity. He takes Butler's notion of "precarious lives" as a departure point to lay out the idea of 'ecoprecarity'—"the precarious lives humans lead in the event of ecological disaster…and also about the environment itself which is rendered precarious due to human intervention in the Anthropocene" (7). According to him, ecoprecarity represents the "intertwined set of discourses of fragility, vulnerability, power relations across species and imminent extinction" (6). The discussion of precarity moving beyond the human realm to encompass other entities serves as a site of study in the post-9/11 novels.

Allied Concepts

Biopolitics and the Homo Sacer

The concept of biopolitics can be applied to understand precarity in the current political landscape. Biopolitics refer to a political state that focuses on managing life and populations in order to "to ensure, sustain, and multiply life, to put this life in order" (qtd. in R. Adams), while biopower is the way biopolitics come into operation and which designated a power "to foster life or disallow it to the point of death" (R. Adams). The political control and regulation exerted over lives was witnessed in the post-9/11 scenario, wherein the US government exercised it both within and outside its territories.

The figure of the "homo sacer" used by Giorgio Agamben in *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (1995), dominates contemporary geo-politics. The homo sacer is a creature marked as sacred, that is precariously positioned in that it can be 'killed' but yet cannot be 'sacrificed.' This resonates with modern-day political dynamics wherein 'bare' lives are seen as 'normal' and are brought under control. In a similar vein, the concept of "state of exception" introduced by Carl Schmitt in the 1920s to refer to a situation wherein the sovereign takes over the law to meet certain needs for the society. Agamben in *State of Exception* (2003), draws on it to reflect on the contemporary state of affairs. He discusses how juridical order is suspended due to a crisis/threat to the state, thus increasing the power of the government. He draws an instance of the Nazi concentration camps displaying how certain lives were not seen at par with other lives. He also sees similarities in the state activities in the contemporary period evident in its stance against threats, such as the war on terror wherein suspected detainees were often held without a fair chance at trial. These concepts illuminate the injustices faced by individuals in the wake of 9/11, which are discussed in the chosen primary texts.

Necropolitics and 'Deathworlds'

Achille Mbembe advocated the concept of necropolitics in his *Necropolitics* (2019), which serves us with an allied discourse on precarity. Mbembe argues that necropolitics is a framework of governance wherein lives are valued differently. His work presents modern-day democracies that engage in necropolitics, creating "deathworlds" or "new and unique forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to living conditions that

confer upon them the status of the living dead" (103). Mbembe's projection of this critical thought is an extension of Foucault's biopower/biopolitics and Agamben's 'state of exception.' However, necropolitics in today's form "blurs the lines between resistance and suicide, sacrifice and redemption, martyrdom and freedom" (92).

Surveillance

The concept of panopticon as a disciplinary mechanism in a hierarchical social order can be employed to study the post-9/11 American landscape. Here, panopticon is an apparatus that controls entire communities without visibility but letting the surveilled know that they are under constant monitoring. As a result, they not only have to conduct themselves even if no one is watching, but also get otherized in this system. If not in the sense of architectural framework proposed by Jeremy Bentham, the essence of this otherized mechanism resonates with the post-9/11 hypervigilant American society. Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* (1975), sees how visibility is a trap in this apparatus, and in the aftermath of 9/11, select groups were at the receiving end. He observes (a) that the panopticon is a "'power of mind over mind'" (206), and (b) that the major effect of the panopticon is to foster a conscious and permanent visibility in the subject that assists the automatic operation of power. It is seen that the panoptic state maintains its surveillance not by deploying any physical means but by the power of its "'discursive practices'… which circulates its ideology throughout the body politic" (Barry 169-70). In this sense, Foucault's concept of "docile bodies" can be included here. Foucault sees the docile body as a body that "may be subjected, used, transformed and improved" (*Discipline* 136). It becomes an output of 'discipline,' of which surveillance is a structural part. The sense of surveillance was both overt and covert in the wake of 9/11, not just in the American landscape but in a transnational geography. The thesis studies such surveillance operations that render the subject to be cautious and be in a state of fear of being watched both at 'home' and abroad.

Justice, Dreams, Othering

The just war theory, rooted in Christian theology—St. Augustine credited with formulating theory on war and justice—is instrumental in critiquing the war on terror post 9/11. The theory is based on conditions and reasons behind a warfare, stating justifications in favour or against it, and mostly acts as a preventive guide. On the one hand, there is a just war

fought by the just. On the other hand, there are wars fought on 'unjust' principles—then by the other. Headey Bull's review of Michael Walzer's *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (1977), points to the author's perception that no war is fought without a foundational morality. He shows how Walzer concentrates on aggression in war, which he clearly sees as a crime. He presents wars waged in self-defence either to enforce the law against aggression or to punish those who practice aggression as justifiable. Walzer also focuses on the rules of war which apply in both cases of just and unjust causes equally, including the role of soldiers and the noncombatants. In "Michael Walzer's Just War Theory: Some Issues of Responsibility" (2002), Igor Primoratz critiques Walzer's moralistic take on warfare especially because the author seems to be overly lenient on soldiers and civilians. Walzer's reading of just and unjust war offers a window to the war on terror that generated different geographies of precarity in landscapes away from America.

'The Great American Dream' comes under scrutiny in the wake of 9/11, as the American nation's mythic force does not hold. The phrase 'American Dream' gained popularity with James Truslow Adams's book *The Epic of America* (1931). According to Adams, America has always carried itself as the "land of promise," and offers the dream in which "life should be better and richer and fuller for every man, with opportunity for each according to his ability or achievement" (404). He credits the influx of millions of people across the world to America in the 19th century to the American dream, how they have contributed in the development of it, which offers not just the potentials of material strength but also the possibilities "to grow to fullest development as man and woman, unhampered by the barriers which had slowly been erected in older civilizations, unrepressed by social orders which had developed for the benefit of classes rather than for the simple human being of any and every class. And that dream has been realized more fully in actual life here than anywhere else, though very imperfectly even among ourselves" (405). Unity critically is the key to this dream, now not towards making it bigger but better. In the climate of 9/11, this dream turns sour for many. It emerges as a hollow dream, exposed to prejudices and xenophobia. Precarity is seen to emanate in the lives of people, especially "the others" in the 9/11 context, who oriented themselves towards achieving this dream, even resulting in fatal consequences.

Edward Said's representation of the other provides support to frame the foundation of this study. His *Orientalism* (1978), is notable for drawing linkages between precarity and the post-9/11 scene. It presents a critique of the West's portrayal of the East since antiquity. The Orient, from this point of view, is mostly a pejorative construct. These have culminated in rendering and perpetuating the East as culturally inferior and possessing a barbaric demeanour, in contrast to the "civilized" West. Said's take on modern-day orientalism encompasses the role of the US formerly played by European powers. On a larger scale then, the political and territorial interventions led by the US in foreign regions premised on battling terrorist elements seem to echo Said's take on how Orientalism helped in colonial and imperialist exercises in history. Such distorted and deeply entrenched homogenisation of nations, populations, cultures, traits have been a source of impinging precarity on individuals, groups and lands in the 9/11 aftermath. The perpetrators of the event were identified with their geographical, ethnic and religious ties that further went on to absorb larger groups that shared their tags. Said does not consider it a simple clash of civilizations, but ascribes it to the study of the Orient or Orientalism that have established "that this is the Orient's nature, and we must deal with it accordingly" (xiii). In a similar vein, Said's *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World* (1981), is a critique of the West's portrayal of Islam in media. His accounts throughout history show how media filters and disseminates the happenings in its Eastern counterpart. In the wake of 9/11, the belligerence and a homogenous attitude surfaced towards Islamic and Arab populations fuelled by such distorted representations.

Chasing the Hyperreal

In this context, Jean Baudrillard's *Simulacra and Simulation* (1994), especially the key concepts, help us understand the aftermath of 9/11. According to Baudrillard, our society has resorted from all reality and meanings to symbols and signs: "It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal" (1). In the 9/11 context then, this can be studied to understand the reality that was constructed by different apparatuses. Primarily, the role of media and political rhetoric created imaginaries that also shaped public perceptions and opinions, that ensured in partaking certain decisions of international importance, such as war.

Globalization and Hostipitality

The advent of globalization is intricately tied to the creation of precarity to be discussed in the thesis. In trying to understand globalization and its mechanisms, the thesis takes into consideration Arjun Appadurai's concept of the "scapes." In "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy" (1990), Appadurai dwells on the interactions that have been taking place since antiquity on a global level. However, in contemporary times the type and intensity of such exchanges have changed significantly owing to several modern developments. Appadurai observes that the complications pertaining to the new global cultural economy fails to fit into the hitherto considered relational models such as center-periphery, push and pull, surpluses and deficits, consumers and producers, etc. He considers that it has to be perceived as "complex, overlapping, disjunctive order" (6), and advances five facets of global cultural flows and the relationship among them to study the disjunctures between different aspects, economy, cultural and politics—ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, finanscapes, and ideoscapes. These landscapes cater to understanding the implications of each domain and their combined effects that shape the global order. In the context of this thesis, it would be helpful to understand these "scapes" in the pre- and post-9/11 world, and analyse how they give rise to different forms of precarity.

In the aftermath of 9/11, we see a new surge in marking oneself from the other. For instance, the war on terror translated into making the outsider—especially those of Islamic, Arab, Middle East origins and those resembling them—more vulnerable in their 'homes' and at large. There was a convenient disapproval of hospitality that was previously ongoing, especially in terms of illegal immigrants. Kant's *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch* (1795), draws on definite terms that ensure peace among nations and populations. Among them, he proposes hospitality as a right wherein an individual is not to be seen as an enemy when they arrive in one's land. He maintains that they can be turned away without causing them any destruction while they should not be treated with animosity if they conduct themselves peacefully. Given that earth as a shared space, people should not discriminate against one another and that they may exercise their will to associate or belong to a different country, thus inducing a cosmopolitan constitution. This can be read along with Jacques Derrida's take on hospitality that moves beyond Kant's hospitality also encompasses its unconditional or absolute form. According to him, only

an “unconditional hospitality can give meaning and practical rationality to a concept of hospitality (qtd. in Trinh b21). For him, conditional hospitality refers to an arrangement of reciprocity, whereas unconditional hospitality is an open form, makes no discrimination, not reliant on any rule or norm, and even without the expectations of reciprocity. In the first kind, the host assumes the superior position in the relationship, and the guest’s visitation depends on the host’s rules and norms. For this, he has to be a citizen of a different country and must behave peacefully in the host country, and his entry is limited to visitation and not stay. Derrida however is aware of the possibility of risks associated with unconditional hospitality, and hence he sees it working in sync with conditional hospitality. In this context, his concept ‘hostipitality,’ a combination of hospitality and hostility shows how hospitality will always be accompanied by a sense of hostility. The concept of hospitality is relevant after 9/11 wherein any foreign entity was perceived as a threat while borders were tightened to protect the territory from such calamities.

Lives Linked by Precarities

The events of 9/11 link traumatised lives to geographies of precarity. The event was deemed a ‘global tragedy’ owing to the enormous loss of life and property, they put a lot of pressure on the US as a superpower. 9/11 can be seen in terms of personal tragedies in the lives of individuals in its wake. Here, precarity is to be understood in terms of psychological and emotional trauma as discussed by Cathy Caruth in *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996). Moreover, the definition of precarity highlights the absence of “psychological wellbeing.” This makes trauma and precarity allied terms in post-9/11 fiction. Based on Freud, Caruth advances the idea of trauma as a “double wound” (3) that manifests not in the body but also in the mind. She observes how Freud saw trauma, that is, it is “always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available” (3).

The notion of identity surged in the post-9/11 landscape and also shaped public consciousness. In fact, the Bush rhetoric in the wake of 9/11 asked the people all over the world to identify themselves with “us” or “them.” The migrant population, particularly those who positioned themselves as ‘x-Americans’ sensed a failure to belong to either culture, that is, their host America and their places of origin. In many cases, their allegiance was also put to test, thus creating conditions of precarity at large. The concepts of trauma,

identity, hybridity are to be understood as a whole in relation to precarity in the wake of 9/11—symptomatic of—different situations.

The concepts discussed above assist in understanding the sources and continuation of the term precarity. They all generate conditions not just of marginality but create an extreme form of the other. In the novels discussed in the thesis, they feature as recipients, producers or distributors of precarity. In other words, instead of understanding precarity in the light of neoliberalism and capitalism, this dissertation sees precarity as an umbrella term that covers various modes of otherization in contexts not necessarily related to globalization and competitive post-capital. The thesis argues that as much as globalization produces what is otherwise known as the precariat, there are conditions leading to and following conflicts that produce 'different' precarities. These differences include environmental precarities, not necessarily created by human breed but as an indirect consequence of wars in different places. While it is true that globalized economies disallow military campaigns to operate or affect lives in isolation—9/11 is seen as a test case here—there is no doubt that America's war on terror has complex beginnings and endings that go beyond established cartographies. A good example is the disintegration of lives and livelihoods in countries that were not directly linked to the events of 9/11. We may refer to countries in South Asia that did not participate in direct warfare either as allies or antagonists in the battle against terror. That said, geographies of precarity do not necessarily refer to scenes of direct destruction. Given that aspirational economies are invariably linked to the global market, any disaster interpreted as global by the American ideological apparatuses gets globalized. A small company producing microchips in one such unrelated setting (say, India), finds itself in a precarious situation as the supply chain gets permanently disrupted. Similarly, in non-combatant areas of Pakistan young men with indirect links to businesses catering to the global market find themselves alienated from everything that was meaningful, including family, livelihood and progress. It is in this frame that biopolitics, necropolitics, surveillance, justice, and globalization link lives but ironically link them to processes and scenes of precarity.