

ECHOES OF EMPIRE: DETERRITORIALIZATION AND TRAUMA IN NADEEM ASLAM'S THE WASTED VIGIL.Muhammad Ansar Ejaz¹, Dr. Ayesha Asghar Gill²¹ Visiting Lecturer GCU Faisalabad, niaziiejaz@gmail.com² Assistant Professor UAF, ayesha.auaf@yahoo.com**Abstract**

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach to investigate the themes of empire, deterritorialization, and trauma in Nadeem Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil*, primarily leveraging the Wmatrix tool for semantic analysis. The novel was selected for its nuanced exploration of the impact of imperialism on Afghan identity, and it was formatted into a digital corpus for in-depth analysis. The Wmatrix tool facilitated semantic tagging, categorizing key terms by thematic domains such as governance, distance, weapons, dark, disease, and emotional states, resulting in visual representations of these themes. Grounded in Bal's (1997) narrative stylistics, the analysis focused on how narrative techniques shape reader engagement and interpretation, revealing significant passages that reflect characters' experiences of dislocation and identity crisis. The study contextualizes its findings within Afghanistan's socio-political landscape, particularly historical events like the Cold War and post-9/11 interventions. Through semantic domains, Aslam's language emerges as a powerful vehicle for articulating the complexities of identity, belonging, and power dynamics in a landscape marked by imperial influence, ultimately inviting readers to reflect on the enduring scars of empire and the search for connection amidst trauma.

Keywords: The Wasted Vigil, Empire, Deterritorialization, Trauma, Semantic analysis Wmatrix tool

Introduction

In 2008, British Pakistani author Nadeem Aslam released his third novel, *The Wasted Vigil*, which received significant critical acclaim. Set against the backdrop of the post-9/11 era, the novel intricately explores Afghanistan's troubled history. Flannery (2013) points out that Aslam emphasizes the persistent historical traumas that continue to affect regions like Afghanistan, arguing that events such as 9/11 cannot be viewed in isolation from their historical context. Instead, Aslam connects the violence associated with American hegemony during the Cold War to the rise of extremism in Afghanistan, ultimately leading to the post-9/11 invasion.

As a work of world literature, *The Wasted Vigil* seeks to amplify marginalized voices, challenging the often simplistic and reductive portrayals of Afghanistan and Islam prevalent in Western media. By depicting the cultural trauma experienced by its characters—whose narratives are frequently overlooked by mainstream media—Aslam underscores the lasting consequences of the U.S. presence in Afghanistan during the Cold War. This focus on individual experiences allows readers to engage with a more nuanced understanding of the complex socio-political landscape, moving

beyond stereotypical representations to highlight the region's more profound emotional and historical resonances of the empire's deterritorialization and trauma.

Nadeem Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil* (2008) intricately weaves themes of empire, deterritorialization, and trauma within the backdrop of Afghanistan's tumultuous history. Set against the post-9/11 landscape, the novel reflects the immediate aftermath of that tragic event and delves into the deep-rooted historical narratives that have shaped the region. This paper explores how Aslam articulates the echoes of imperialism and the resultant trauma experienced by individuals and communities in Afghanistan.

The concept of deterritorialization, as coined by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, refers to the process by which social, cultural, and political structures are destabilized, leading to a loss of connection to one's land and identity (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). In *The Wasted Vigil*, Aslam portrays the dislocation of Afghan characters through their fragmented identities and disrupted connections to their homeland. The narrative underscores how imperial forces, particularly during the Cold War and its aftermath, have contributed to the disintegration of Afghan society, leaving characters grappling with a profound sense of loss.

As Flannery (2013) notes, Aslam reveals the "continuities of history that continue to scar remote corners of the world, like Afghanistan" (p. 299). This continuity highlights how the traumas of the past are not isolated events but rather part of an ongoing struggle against the forces of imperialism. The characters in *The Wasted Vigil* embody this struggle, often reflecting a longing for their homeland while simultaneously navigating the harsh realities imposed by external powers.

The trauma depicted in *The Wasted Vigil* is deeply personal, reflecting the broader societal impacts of war and imperialism. Aslam's characters experience not only physical violence but also emotional and psychological scars that resonate throughout their lives. The narrative effectively captures the interplay between individual trauma and collective memory, illustrating how personal stories are often marginalized in contemporary media representations of Afghanistan.

Aslam challenges reductive portrayals often seen in Western narratives by foregrounding the experiences of characters who bear the weight of history. He gives voice to those whose stories are frequently overlooked, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of Afghan identity and culture. This approach aligns with the arguments made by scholars such as Duvall (2010), who emphasizes the importance of incorporating marginalized perspectives in discussions of global literature. In *The Wasted Vigil*, Nadeem Aslam artfully explores the themes of empire, deterritorialization, and trauma, shedding light on the complex realities faced by individuals in Afghanistan. Through rich character development and poignant storytelling, Aslam provides a vital counter-narrative to dominant representations of the region, emphasizing the enduring impacts of historical injustices. As such, *The Wasted Vigil* is a literary work and a critical commentary on the legacies of empire and the ongoing quest for identity and belonging in a fractured world.

Research Questions

How does Nadeem Aslam represent the themes of empire and deterritorialization in *The Wasted Vigil*?

How does Nadeem Aslam represent the theme of trauma in *The Wasted Vigil*?

Research Objectives

To analyze the representation of empire and deterritorialization in *The Wasted Vigil* through semantic domains.

To analyze the representation of trauma in *The Wasted Vigil* through thematic and narrative techniques.

Literature Review

Nadeem Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil* (2008) is a poignant exploration of the themes of empire, deterritorialization, and trauma, particularly in Afghanistan's complex socio-political landscape. This literature review synthesizes existing scholarly discourse on these themes, emphasizing the novel's contribution to understanding the impacts of imperialism and cultural dislocation.

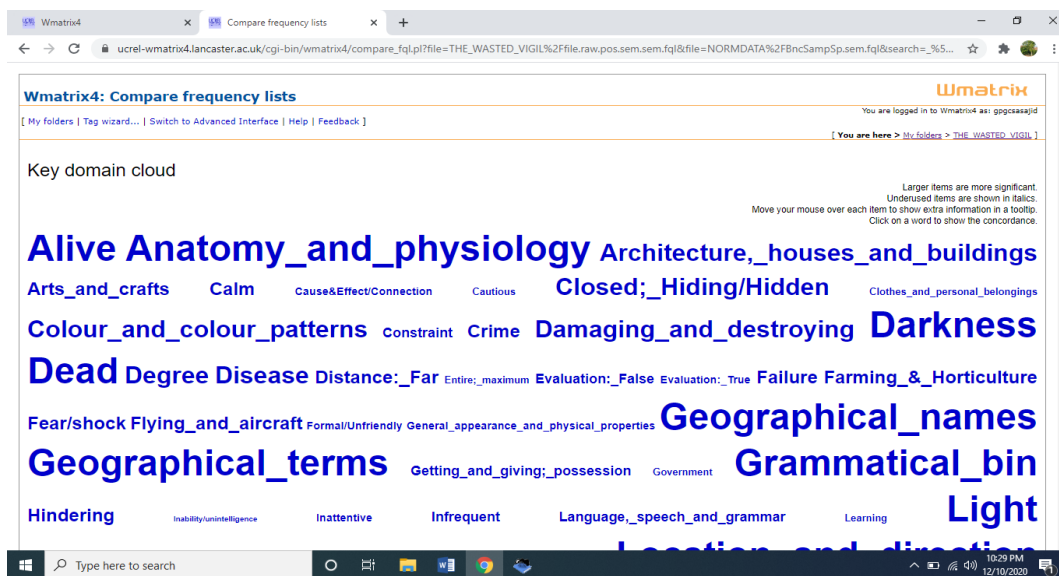
The concept of deterritorialization, as discussed by Deleuze and Guattari (1987), refers to the process by which social, cultural, and political boundaries are destabilized. In *The Wasted Vigil*, Aslam illustrates this concept through the experiences of characters who grapple with their alienation from their homeland due to the violent impositions of the empire. Flannery (2013) posits that Aslam effectively portrays the "continuities of history" that contribute to Afghanistan's current turmoil, suggesting that the legacy of imperialism has profound implications for individual and collective identities (p. 299). Aslam's narrative critiques the simplistic representations of Afghanistan prevalent in Western media, revealing the nuanced realities of life under imperial influence. Scholars such as Shamsie (2014) have noted that Aslam's work resists reductive narratives, presenting a rich tapestry of Afghan culture and resilience in the face of external pressures. This complexity is essential in understanding the layers of trauma that permeate the text. Trauma is a significant theme in Aslam's novel, particularly in a post-colonial context. The characters' experiences reflect a collective trauma that is deeply intertwined with the historical and political realities of Afghanistan. According to Caruth (1996), trauma disrupts the narrative of the self and complicates the process of storytelling. Aslam embodies this disruption through his characters struggling to articulate their grief and loss against ongoing conflict. The interplay of personal and collective trauma is further explored by scholars such as Hiddleston (2015), who argues that Aslam captures the psychological scars left by war, highlighting how these scars affect individual identities and community bonds. The narrative reflects the trauma of displacement, where characters experience a profound sense of loss—not only of physical space but also of cultural and emotional roots. The *Wasted Vigil*'s theme of government and bureaucratic control reveals the oppressive dynamics inherent in imperial governance. Aslam critiques the dehumanizing aspects of bureaucracy, emphasizing how governmental structures prioritize control over compassion. Scholars like Said (1993) and Bhabha (1994) have extensively discussed the relationship between power and representation, which resonates in Aslam's portrayal of the Afghan experience under imperial rule. Nadeem Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil* intricately depicts characters navigating bureaucratic obstacles, Aslam illuminates the alienation and frustration that often accompany such systems. This portrayal not only underscores the impact of imperial governance on individual lives but also challenges readers to consider the broader implications of power dynamics in post-colonial contexts. The research studies of Ejaz, Ahmad, Mathroma, and Anwar, (2024); Ejaz, Abbas, and Khalil, (2024); Ejaz, Ahmad, Ali, and Nazeer,(2022) have produced similar results. The existing literature highlights the novel's critical engagement with historical narratives and its contribution to understanding the complexities of identity and belonging in the face of imperial influence. As scholars continue to explore these themes, Aslam's work remains a vital resource for comprehending the enduring impacts of empire on contemporary life.

Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to delve into the themes of empire, deterritorialization, and trauma in Nadeem Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil*, primarily utilizing the Wmatrix tool for semantic analysis. The novel was selected for its rich thematic content, particularly regarding the impact of empire and trauma on Afghan identity, and was formatted into a digital corpus for analysis. Through the Wmatrix tool, the text underwent semantic tagging, categorizing words and phrases by themes such as governance, distance, location, violence, and emotional states. This process allowed the researcher to create semantic domains, visualizing key thematic elements through semantic clouds. A qualitative framework by Bal (1997) grounded in stylistics was employed to interpret the data, facilitating a thematic analysis of significant passages that reflect the characters' experiences with empire and dislocation. This model examines how narrative techniques and stylistic choices influence reader interpretation and engagement with the text. It can be particularly effective for analyzing how semantic domains affect character development and thematic depth. Additionally, the findings were contextualized within Afghanistan's broader socio-political landscape, particularly about historical events like the Cold War and post-9/11 interventions. Overall, this methodology aims to deepen the understanding of how Aslam's language constructs and reflects the complexities of identity and power within a landscape marked by imperial influence.

Analysis and Discussion

The software Wmatrix has generated clouds of various semantic domains in the novel *The Wasted Vigil*. Wmatrix gives results in the form of clouds for various semantic domains. Wmatrix has generated clouds for the words that are thematically important.



Following are the key semantic domains produced by the W matrix.

Wmatrix4: Compare frequency lists

You are logged in to Wmatrix4 as gpgcsasajid
[[My folders](#) | [Tag wizard...](#) | [Switch to Advanced Interface](#) | [Help](#) | [Feedback](#)]
[**You are here** > [My folders](#) > [THE WASTED VIGIL](#)]

Key domain cloud

Larger items are more significant.
Underused items are shown in italics.
Move your mouse over each item to show extra information in a tooltip.
Click on a word to show the concordance.

Alive **Anatomy and physio**
logy **Architecture, houses and buildi**
ngs **Arts and crafts** **Calm** **Cause&Effect/Connection** **Cautious** **Clo**
sed; Hiding/Hidden **Clothes and personal belongings** **Colou**
r and colour patterns **Constraint** **Crime** **Damag**
ing and destroying **Darkness** **Dea**
d **Degree** **Disease** **Distance: Far** **Entire; maximum** **Evalu**
ation: False **Evaluation: True** **Failure** **Farming & Horticulture** **Fe**
ar/shock **Flying and aircraft** **Formal/Unfriendly** **General appearance a**
nd physical properties **Geographical nam**
es **Geographical terms** **Getting an**
d giving; possession **Government** **Grammatical b**
in **Hindering** **Inability/unintelligence** **Inattentive** **Infrequent** **Language, speech**
and grammar **Learning** **Light** **Living creatures: a**
nimals, birds, etc. **Location and**

direction Long, tall and wide Long, tall and wide M
Measurement: Area Mental actions and processes
Moving, coming and going No respect No constraint Non-
existing Objects generally Open; Finding; S
howing Parts of buildings Peo
ple: Male People: Female Personal names Pers
onal relationship: General Personality traits Places Plants Psychological Act
ions, States And Processes Putting, pulling, pushing, t
ransporting Quantities: little Relationship: Intimacy and sex R
eligion and the supernat
ural Respected Sad Safe Sailing, swimming, etc. Seen Sensory: S
ound Sensory: Smell Sensory: Touch Sensory: Sight Sh
ape Short and narrow Social Actions, States And Processes Sound: Quiet
Speech acts Speed: Slow Speed: Fast Stationary Substance
s and materials: Solid Substa
nces and materials: Liquid Substances and materials: Gas
Temperature: Hot / on fire The universe The Med
ia: Books Time: Late Time: General Time: Old; grown-
up Unethical Unexpected Unmatched Unnoticeable Unse
en Vehicles and transport on land Violent/Angry Warfare,

defence and the army; w eapons Weak Weather

Here, the above clouds indicate that the words that are theme generators are produced in more enormous clouds. In Nadeem Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil*, the themes of empire and deterritorialization are intricately woven into the narrative through "distance" and "location." These elements illuminate the profound alienation experienced by characters in their homeland, reflecting imperialism's far-reaching impacts on personal and collective identities.

Distance

The novel's notion of "distance" symbolizes physical separation and emotional and cultural estrangement. As characters navigate their war-torn environment, the physical distance created by conflict and imperial presence emphasizes their disconnection from the land that once provided a sense of belonging. This distance manifests in various forms: the estrangement from their heritage, the disruption of familial ties, and the alienation from the community. The portrayal of such distance underscores the disempowerment felt by Afghan citizens as they grapple with the realities imposed by imperial forces.

Location

Geographical references throughout *The Wasted Vigil* ground the narrative in a specific cultural and historical context while highlighting the disconnect between imperial forces and the Afghan people's experiences. Locations mentioned in the text carry deep significance, often evoking memories of beauty and history that starkly contrast with the devastation of war. Aslam's use of location illustrates how empire disrupts individuals' inherent ties to their land and heritage, rendering familiar spaces unrecognizable and fraught with loss.

Alienation and Heritage

The disconnection between characters and their geographical roots reflects a broader theme of alienation inherent in the experience of deterritorialization. The narrative poignantly captures the internal conflict of characters who feel displaced in their homeland, emphasizing their longing for a sense of belonging amidst the chaos. This alienation is physical and deeply psychological, as characters struggle to reconcile their identities in a landscape that external forces have irrevocably altered. The themes of empire and deterritorialization are further explored through the dynamics of "government" and "formality/unfriendliness." These elements reveal the bureaucratic and often oppressive nature of the imperial rule, shedding light on the dehumanizing effects of governance within the context of occupation.

Government

The portrayal of governmental structures in the novel reflects the complexities and harsh realities of life under an imperial regime. Characters navigate a labyrinthine bureaucracy that often prioritizes control over the needs and welfare of the local population. This engagement with the government highlights individuals' disempowerment as they confront systems that view them as mere statistics rather than as human beings with unique stories and struggles. The bureaucratic

machinery is a barrier to the agency, illustrating how the empire operates through impersonal policies disregarding local contexts and cultural nuances.

Formality and Unfriendliness

The references to "formality" and "unfriendliness" further emphasize the cold and often hostile interactions between imperial authorities and Afghan citizens. The formalities of governance are depicted as rigid and unyielding, reinforcing a sense of alienation and distrust. Characters frequently encounter officials who embody a bureaucratic indifference, making it clear that compassion and understanding are often sacrificed for control. These dynamic critiques the superficiality of bureaucratic interactions, revealing how such formalities can mask more profound inequalities and injustices inherent in imperial rule.

Dehumanization and Alienation

As characters engage with these formal governmental structures, they confront a system that dehumanizes them, stripping away their individuality and agency. The oppressive nature of bureaucracy leads to feelings of alienation as individuals grapple with their insignificance within a larger imperial framework. This disconnection is compounded by the realization that their voices and experiences are marginalized. It highlights the emotional and psychological toll of living under an empire prioritizing regulation over recognition.

Critique of Empire

Through these portrayals, Aslam critiques the nature of governance under the empire, illustrating how it often prioritizes control, surveillance, and compliance over empathy and understanding. The novel invites readers to consider the broader implications of such governance, prompting reflections on how imperial rule shapes not only the physical landscape but also the emotional and psychological experiences of those living under its shadow. The themes of empire and deterritorialization are intricately woven through the concepts of "government," "formality," and "getting and giving" related to possession. These elements illuminate the complexities of identity, belonging, and agency in the context of imperialism.

Government and Formality

The bureaucratic nature of governance under imperial regimes creates a cold, impersonal atmosphere where local populations often feel alienated. The formal interactions between authorities and Afghan citizens emphasize the oppressive structures of power that prioritize regulation over empathy. Characters encounter a dehumanizing system where their needs and identities are subsumed by bureaucratic procedures, reflecting the broader critique of imperial governance as lacking compassion and understanding.

Getting and Giving; Possession

The themes of "getting and giving," along with possession, delve deeper into the struggles surrounding identity and ownership within an imperial context. Aslam examines how imperialism alters relationships to land and resources, redefining what it means to possess something. The struggle for agency becomes apparent as characters navigate the complexities of personal and collective ownership, grappling with their desires in a hostile landscape.

The Tension of Possession

This struggle for possession extends beyond material resources to encompass cultural heritage and personal agency. Characters often conflict between the colonizer's assertions of ownership and

their intrinsic ties to their land and identity. As they seek to reclaim their sense of belonging, the tension between giving and taking emerges prominently. The desire to "give"—whether through acts of kindness, sacrifice, or sharing cultural narratives—starkly contrasts the "taking" associated with colonial power dynamics.

Acts of Generosity and Connection

Amidst this pervasive sense of loss and alienation, Aslam portrays moments of giving that serve as acts of resistance and reclamation. These acts of generosity highlight the potential for connection and community, allowing characters to assert their agency in an environment that seeks to diminish it. Through these interactions, the narrative emphasizes that even small gestures of kindness can empower individuals, fostering a sense of belonging and identity amidst the ongoing impacts of imperialism.

Using geographical terms plays a crucial role in exploring the themes of empire and deterritorialization. These terms are not mere locational markers; they evoke a profound sense of cultural and historical significance that underscores the deep ties between Afghan identity and its landscape.

The Significance of Geographical Terms

Aslam intricately weaves specific geographical references throughout the narrative, illustrating the richness of Afghan heritage and the intricate relationship between the land and its people. Each geographical term evokes memories of cultural practices, historical events, and the emotional resonance of home, reinforcing the idea that the land is integral to the Afghan identity.

Juxtaposition with War and Oppression

However, these references are often juxtaposed with the harsh realities of war and oppression. The beauty and significance of the landscape are marred by the scars of conflict, reflecting the devastating impact of imperial actions. The terrain, which should symbolize stability and belonging, becomes a site of violence and trauma, highlighting the dislocation experienced by the characters.

The Landscape as a Character

In this way, the landscape itself emerges as a character within the narrative. It embodies the physical scars of conflict and the emotional and psychological toll on its inhabitants. The recurring imagery of the land reinforces the longing for a return to normalcy and a sense of home that the forces of empire have disrupted. Nadeem Aslam employs motifs of location and direction to illuminate the profound physical and emotional dislocation experienced by characters in war-torn Afghanistan. The frequent references to specific places anchor the narrative in a landscape embodying beauty and violence, creating a rich backdrop for the unfolding drama.

Physical and Emotional Dislocation

As characters navigate this tumultuous environment, the shifting terrains symbolize geographical dislocation and a profound loss of cultural roots. Locations that once held significance for the characters now serve as reminders of what has been lost due to the ravages of war and imperial intervention. The beauty of the Afghan landscape contrasts sharply with the horrors inflicted upon its people, reflecting the duality of their experience.

Ambiguity of Direction

The ambiguity of direction in the narrative further emphasizes the existential crises faced by individuals in a society fractured by conflict and imperialism. As the characters move through familiar yet altered spaces, their sense of direction becomes uncertain. This lack of clarity mirrors their struggle for identity and belonging in an irrevocably changed world. The characters grapple with where they fit within this shifting landscape, highlighting the emotional toll of living in a state of perpetual instability.

The Search for Belonging

The exploration of location and direction thus serves as a metaphor for the broader search for belonging. Aslam portrays a world where the characters' ties to their homeland are continually undermined, creating a profound sense of alienation. In this context, moving through space becomes fraught with meaning; each step taken is a reminder of both the past and the uncertain future. The characters' journeys reflect a longing for connection and stability in an increasingly hostile landscape.

Crime Damaging and destroying Darkn ess Dead Degree Disease Distance: Far.

There is complete darkness in the minds of the people who are involved in the war and killing of the people. It is a hideous thing to kill people for the sake of nothing. Word darkness in itself is a complete semantic domain.

Nadeem Aslam intricately weaves themes of shared graves and trauma, utilizing various semantic domains generated by the WMatrix tool—explicitly focusing on crime, damaging and destroying, darkness, death, degree, disease, and distance. These domains collectively enhance exploring the characters' psychological and emotional landscapes in war-torn Afghanistan.

The screenshot shows the Wmatrix4 web application interface. The browser address bar displays the URL: `ucrel-wmatrix4.lancaster.ac.uk/cgi-bin/wmatrix4/do_search.pl?type=word&workarea=THE_WASTED_VIGIL&file=file.raw.pos.sem&string=darkness&width=80`. The page title is "Wmatrix4: KIIC context results darkness". The interface includes navigation menus for Tagging, Folders, Options, and Help. A search results table is displayed with the following columns: "77 occurrences", "Extend context", and "More | Full". The table lists 23 occurrences of the word "darkness" in various contexts, such as "er, as though some of the worlds darkness had attempted to enter her there" and "tion by invading in 1979. In the darkness soon after four a.m. one night, L". The bottom of the screenshot shows the Windows taskbar with the search bar and system tray.

Crime and Damaging and Destroying

The references to crime and the acts of damaging and destroying reflect the pervasive violence that characterizes the characters' realities. Aslam's narrative reveals how systemic violence shapes the lives of Afghan citizens, leading to a sense of collective trauma. The ongoing conflict not only inflicts physical harm but also fractures communities and relationships, manifesting in a deep-seated sense of loss and despair. The recurring motif of destruction is a backdrop against which individual stories of grief and resilience unfold.

Darkness and Death

Aslam employs darkness as a metaphor for despair and hopelessness, capturing the emotional weight of trauma experienced by the characters. This thematic darkness often correlates with death—not just the literal loss of life but the death of hope, dreams, and cultural identity. The imagery associated with death underscores the inevitability of loss in a landscape ravaged by conflict. Characters grapple with their mortality and the haunting presence of the deceased, leading to a shared grief that binds them together.

Degree and Disease

The semantic domain of degree highlights the varying intensities of trauma experienced by different characters. Some are more deeply affected by the horrors of war, while others attempt to navigate their suffering in less visible ways. This gradient of trauma suggests that while suffering is universal, its manifestations can differ significantly among individuals. Additionally, the notion of disease can be interpreted both literally and metaphorically. The physical ailments inflicted by war intertwine with psychological scars, indicating that trauma can permeate both body and mind, becoming a chronic condition that affects the characters' lives long after the violence has subsided.

Distance

The concept of physical and emotional distance is crucial in understanding the characters' experiences of trauma. A sense of alienation permeates their relationships as they navigate a landscape marked by loss and destruction. The distance created by war not only separates individuals from their loved ones but also from their cultural heritage and sense of identity. This disconnection intensifies feelings of grief as characters mourn not only the dead but also the remnants of their former lives and connections.

The themes of shared graves and trauma are intricately explored through the semantic domains of violent/angry warfare, defense of the army, and weapons. These elements deepen the narrative's examination of the conflict's psychological and emotional impact on individuals and communities.

Violent/Angry Warfare

The depiction of violent warfare is central to understanding the trauma experienced by the characters. Aslam presents war not just as a backdrop but as a pervasive force that shapes the lives of the Afghan people. The frequent references to violence evoke a sense of chaos and despair, illustrating how relentless conflict erodes the fabric of society. Characters are often seen grappling with the memories of violence, which haunt them and influence their actions. This persistent anger and violence contribute to a collective trauma that binds the characters as they navigate their grief and loss in a war-torn landscape.

Defense and the Army

Defense and the military are pivotal in the narrative, representing protection and oppression. Military forces often symbolize the imposition of power and control over Afghan lives. As characters encounter soldiers and military operations, they are confronted with the duality of seeking safety while also facing the threat of violence. This relationship complicates their understanding of security and agency, highlighting the trauma that arises from living under constant surveillance and aggression. The army's actions, often justified as necessary for protection, further complicate the emotional landscape as individuals grapple with vulnerability and resentment.

Weapons

The references to weapons in *The Wasted Vigil* serve as a stark reminder of the violence that permeates everyday life. Weapons are not merely tools of destruction; they embody the fear and power dynamics that characterize the characters' existence. Aslam uses the imagery of weapons to illustrate the omnipresent threat of violence, shaping characters' interactions and decisions. The fear of armed conflict looms, impacting personal relationships and individual psyches. The trauma associated with witnessing or experiencing violence from weapons leaves lasting scars, influencing characters' identities and their connections to one another. Aslam portrays the pervasive atmosphere of fear and shock as a direct consequence of imperial intervention. The recurring themes of "fear/shock"(generated in a more extensive cloud) underscore the psychological trauma endured by the characters, marking their existence with a sense of dread. This emotional landscape reflects the instability introduced by foreign powers, suggesting that the trauma of empire manifests not only in physical destruction but also in the collective psyche of the people. The motif of disease and failure (generated in a more extensive cloud) serves as a metaphor for imperial forces' destructive impact on Afghan culture and identity. The references to "disease" convey a sense of contagion and decay, suggesting that imperialism's consequences extend beyond physical territory to the very essence of life in Afghanistan. This portrayal emphasizes the societal and psychological maladies inflicted upon the population, reflecting a state of disarray caused by external domination.

The focus on "mental actions and processes"(generated in a more extensive cloud) allows readers to glimpse the inner struggles of characters grappling with their identities in a post-imperial context. As they navigate their relationships and memories, the characters embody the tension between resilience and despair. This introspective lens emphasizes how the legacy of empire shapes their thoughts, decisions, and interactions, highlighting the enduring impact of historical trauma on individual consciousness. But the thing about hope is that there is a cloud for the semantic domain that works for the sake of hope and optimism. The software has generated the cloud for the word Light.

[Inattentive Infrequent Language, speech and grammar Learning](#)

[Light Living creatures: animals, birds, etc.](#)

It shows that the writer has infilled the theme of optimism in the syntax structure of the novel. This is why the software has generated the cloud for this domain. Moreover, an exciting thing to be noted is the similarity of results created by Wmatrix for both novels. Both novels were written in the context of the Afghan War.

Conclusion

In *The Wasted Vigil*, Nadeem Aslam explores the themes of empire and deterritorialization through various lenses, including distance, location, government, and the dynamics of possession. The alienation experienced by characters underscores the disruption of their connections to their land and heritage, revealing the profound impacts of imperialism on identities. Aslam critiques the dehumanizing aspects of bureaucratic governance, illustrating how the empire prioritizes control over compassion, which further alienates individuals.

The narrative invites readers to reflect on the complexities of belonging in a world shaped by dislocation and estrangement. Geographical terms deepen this exploration by highlighting the fragile relationship between land and identity, portraying the landscape as a symbol of loss and resilience. Additionally, the themes of violence, grief, and shared trauma are vividly illustrated through semantic domains such as crime and warfare, emphasizing the emotional and psychological ramifications of living in a conflict-ridden society. Ultimately, Aslam's work reveals the enduring scars of empire, inviting contemplation on the intricate interplay between past and present in shaping individual and collective experiences.

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