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Exploration of Nationalist Discourse through War in Mainak Dhar's *Line of Control*

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “Exploration of Nationalist Discourse through War in Mainak Dhar’s *Line of Control*” submitted to Central Department of English, TU, Kirtipur by Mek Raj KC has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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Mek Raj KC has completed his thesis “Exploration of Nationalist Discourse through War in Mainak Dhar’s *Line of Control*” under my supervision. He has completed his research in March 2023. I hereby recommend this thesis to be submitted for viva voce.

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Exploration of Nationalist Discourse through War in Mainak Dhar's *Line of Control*

Abstract

This research paper attempts to explore nationalist discourse through war in Line of Control by Mainak Dhar projecting the apocalyptic situation invited by Pakistan Army in collaboration with Mujahedeen through conflict, terror and war against India. It also highlights how the novel creates a nationalist discourse to represent the Indian Armed Forces, Pakistan Army and the Mujahideen; and how they are being represented through their different activities to hegemonize each other. Similarly, it also depicts how the nuclear weapon is the symbol of war and destruction. By taking theoretical insights on discourse, truth and power proposed by Foucault and Cultural Hegemony by Antonio Gramsci, this study argues how Pakistan joins hands together with the Mujahideen and tries to capture the POK by creating terror and leads towards possibility of nuclear threat and destruction in Indian continent. The research further claims evidence why Saudi Arabia provides fund to the fundamentalist group, the Mujahideen to spread Jihad against Indian continent.

Key Words: - Representation, nationalism, nuclear warfare, fundamentalism, hegemony, discourse.

This research paper examines the exploration of nationalist discourse through wars in Mainak Dhar's *Line of Control* taking theoretical insights from Foucauldian notion of discourse and Gramsci's conception of hegemony. It investigates how Dhar has represented the roles of Indian and Pakistani Army to escalate the war and ultimately bolstering their intent to hegemonize each other. Dhar illustrates that cross-border terrorism and infiltration plays a vital role to create tension, war and destruction. Similarly, serial bomb blasts, communal disharmony, riots and attacks are

the major causes of destruction which further lead the countries towards warfare. In this backdrop, this research delves into Mainak Dhar's nationalist discourse through India-Pakistan enmity, discourses both countries created to justify their cause for the involvement in the warfare and their defense strategies and their fighting capabilities to hegemonize each other.

Based on *The Line of Control*, this research also attempts to analyze how Dhar has represented Pakistan changing its strategy to capture POK, Uri (Jammu and Kashmir) of India and working together with the Mujahideen against India; and why Pakistan is being supported by its' alliances for war and terrorism. This research helps the researcher to identify the reasons of collaborating work of Pakistan with Mujahideen and finds out possible attempts to build up mutual understanding, peace and prosperity between the countries. It also helps the researcher to acknowledge the need of cease fire on growing cross border firing, tensions and hostility between the countries and go for negotiation to settle the disputes and establish peace and order.

Line of Control is a fiction which talks about possibility of war and destruction. According to the novel, the Indian Prime Minister Bibek Khosla seems to be positive and plays a role of communion, however, the Pakistani leader Illahi is characterized with negative roles and wants for war and destruction. The Emir, another character from Saudi Arabia plays an important role to spread Jihad in India and other Asian countries. He seems to provide economic and moral support to the Mujahideen, the fundamentalist group to fight against Indian Armed Forces in Indian territory. The enrolment of the Mujahideen with the Pakistan Army seems to be suspicious against Indian security, peace and prosperity. The writer enrolls characters like Iqbal who involves in suicide attack and approaches to kill the Indian Prime Minister, Bibek Khosla.

The novel begins with the attack over Indian Police by the terrorist group called the Mujahideen. At the beginning, the writer creates a discourse that the Mujahideen seem to have more powerful having automatic weapon like AK 47, while the Indian Police with 303 rifles are portrayed as submissive and weak. The leader of Mujahideen named Gulam and his followers seem to have more trained and experienced in the tactical warfare. The attacks made by the Mujahideen and soldiers to each other time and again takes thousands of lives of people and reveals the scenario of destruction of people and property. Pakistan Army collaborating with the Mujahideen is found to be aggressive to suppress the Indian soldier, however, the Indian soldiers are represented as strong in retaliation. The story ends with the killing after Illahi and the Emir thinking that there will be no possibilities of any future nuclear war. It also focuses that if the power goes in the hands of a wrong leader, the country will suffer in losing its men and materials.

There is nexus between truth, power and discourse. Reflecting on Foucauldian notion of this inter-connectivity, Stuart Hall observes, “Foucault focused on the relationship between knowledge and power, and how power operated within what he called an institutional apparatus and its technologies. . .” (47). This means a person in power and knowledge creates discourse; and the discourse becomes truth as the common people have belief on the discourse; and thus, it represents the truth. In *Line of Control*, Illahi represents the powerful political leader and Military dictatorship, whose orders have been followed by the soldiers; and he makes a tie with Emir of Saudi Arabia, who provides funds to the Mujahideen, the fundamentalist group to spread Jihad in the Indian continent. These two men, Illahi and Emir create a discourse that POK belongs to Pakistan; and there is a need to get back the territory through wars with India.

Similarly, John Branigan argues, “The power to represent, and hence to dominate, is what is at issue in these signs, or proofs of cannibalism” (149). It means that the person who is in power, he/she tries to dominate to others who are submissive. The representation of power is for dominance. In *Line of Control*, both of the countries seem to dominate to each other when they are accessible in power. They try hegemonize to each other as much as possible. Branigan further claims, “Foucault’s work focuses on epistemological breaks, the points which a theory emerges into definition, the point when a new discourse becomes dominant, or when a new social practice enters into public representation” (47). This indicates that Foucault’s power relation when works, it creates a new discourse and makes a new social practice and later it becomes public representation.

Likewise, Alec McHoul and Wendy Grace write, “Foucault claims Power is everywhere, not because it embraces everything but because it comes from below; that is there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between ruler and ruled at the root of power relations and serving as general matrix...” (39). It reflects that power emerges from the grassroots. Power comes when they struggle. In *Line of Control*, the character Illahi looks a normal soldier at the beginning of his career. However, he has to take revenge with India and later he becomes head of the State, that is to say Pakistan. When he is in power, then he happens to unite with the Mujahideen and finally makes plans to capture POK. This man comes from the grassroots background and finally reaches in to a position to make him powerful.

However, M.A.R. Habib contradicts with Foucault’s notion of power. He argues, “Foucault offers an explicit statement of his conception of power. . . He rejects the conventional notion of power that is based on a ‘juridico-dicursive’ model. This conception of power is essentially juridical, based on the statement of law and

taboo” (770). This shows that person in power does not always look dictatorship, but also, has to act judiciously. In *Line of Control*, Indian Prime Minister, Vivek Khosla and other Military leaders act judiciously; and do not take wrong decision as Illahi and Emir. They are found worried when the communal riots occur in the country; and cross border firing also heightens in the line of control, the borderland between India and Pakistan.

In Gramscian sense, hegemony can be done by spreading certain ideologies in society; in accordance with Gramsci, spread of ideology can be done through three things: language, folklore, and common sense. Once the powerful group’s beliefs are circulated in both public and private aspects of society, they began to be noticed as common sense. This process does not exist with violence but through manipulation and strategy. Hall brings the idea of Antonio Gramsci’s Cultural Hegemony in connection with Foucault’s notion of power. He argues:

Gramsci’s notion that particular social groups struggle in many different ways, including ideologically, to win the consent of other groups struggle in many different ways, including ascendancy in both thought and practice over them. This form of power Gramsci called hegemony. Hegemony is never permanent and is reducible. . . (48)

It indicates that the person in power of a society ideologically hegemonizes to the weaker section of the society; but the hegemony does not remain for a long time. In *Line of control* also, Illahi hegemonizes the Pakistan soldiers and the Mujahideen when he is in power; but his corrupt nature is recognized and he is killed at the end. Likewise, Indian Army are hegemonizing Pakistan soldiers and the Mujahideen. The war technology used by Indian Army seems to have more destructive capabilities than

the Pakistani and Mujahideen war technology. Similarly, the Mujahideen hegemonizes Indian Police.

Regarding representation, Stuart Hall claims, “In the reflective approach, meaning is thought to lie in the object, person, idea or event in the real world, and language functions like a mirror, to reflect the true meaning as it already exists in the world” (24). This represents that language determines the meaning in the society. In *Line of Control*, the Muslim Youths have been represented with Jihad and terrorism. Their representation seems to be inferior and stereotypical that only Muslim youths are viewed as responsible for terrorism. But, as per the constructionist approach, “It acknowledges that neither the things in themselves nor the individual users of language can fix the meaning in language. Things don’t mean: we construct meaning, using representational systems-concepts and signs” (25). This symbolizes that it is language system or whatever system we are using to represent our concepts. What actions and deeds are followed by the Muslim youths; they are judged as they are by others.

As being experienced Indian writer, Dhar tries to expose the bitter war-relationship between the two neighboring countries India and Pakistan after partition in 1947 in *Line of Control*. Dhar shows that Indian Army always try to dominate Pakistan Army and the Mujahideen in different wars in 1965, 1971 and 1999. In this regard, Dibyadyuti Roy argues, “It emphasizes that making hegemonic postcolonial masculinity contingent on the destructive capabilities of military technology results in unstable and threatening masculine performances; much like the unpredictable nature of war machinery highlighted” (51). He describes Indian Military service and their war weapons are hegemonizing to Pakistan soldiers and Mujahideen. The war

technology used by Indian Armed Forces seems more powerful and destructive capabilities than the Pakistani and Mujahideen war technology.

Furthermore, Roy brings the idea of hegemony by Antonio Gramsci. He means to say that one particular social group tries to hegemonize another social group to show the power. Though Indian soldiers and their war weapons are being hegemonized by Dhar in *Line of Control*, Pakistan Soldiers seem to take over the ‘power of hegemony’ collaborating with Mujahideen soldiers. Roy compares it as “hegemonic postcolonial masculinity” (56), which means male has the tendency of hegemony in the postcolonial family. He views:

In underscoring the decidedly masculine nature of future war fiction, this article explores depictions of anxious postcolonial masculinity within the little-explored terrain of Indian speculative fiction. Apocalyptic settings in these texts. . . provide a topos for enacting postcolonial masculine anxieties, which are subsequently countered through making male bodies contingent on the volatile performances of destructive military technology. (50)

It reflects that the Indian territory is on threat of destructive military technology like nuclear weapon. In *Line of Control*, Dhar takes its’ setting from Indian terrain. He terms the war technologies used by both countries are destructive. Hence, the Indian leaders look anxious due to destructive nature of war.

Roy also mentions, “Considering the self-reflexive relationship between military technology and white masculinity, these speculative narratives therefore become reifications. . . male roles, activities and interests, thereby showcasing and celebrating the patriarchy. . .” (55). Roy compares military technology with white masculinity as self-reflexive relationship. It shows that military technology reflects white-masculinity. Self-reflection and identity seem matching to each other. Roy

further discusses that *Line of Control* represents the postcolonial state where aggressive performances are carried out through militarized male body. He states:

As my analysis below of Dhar's *Line of Control*. . . illustrates, these speculative texts narrativize the national cultural imaginary of postcolonial states such as India, a country which manifests its ambitions of being a technophilic superpower through aggressive performances of the indigenous militarized male body. (55)

This fiction narrates the story of cultural imagination of the postcolonial state, where the ambitions are shown through aggressive performance as military personnel. It means that these personnel are very strict in their nature, rules and regulations.

In *Line of control*, the character, Emir represents Osama. In the name of Jihad, he associates with the Pakistani Military leader called Illahi and provides fund to the Mujahideen. Illahi seems to be dictator who overthrows the democratic Pakistani government and wants to use nuclear weapon against India. This seems an apocalyptic vision through nuclear armaments in the Indian subcontinent. Roy also presents the possibility of nuclear threat in the Indian continent. He imagines:

Dhar speculates a future where a terrorist regime allied to Al-Qaeda—led by another Osama-like figure called the “Emir” has gained power in Saudi Arabia and has decided to use its oil wealth and technological apparatus to spread the ideology of jihad. Emir through funding and manipulating a military leader in Pakistan named Illahi, who overthrows the democratic Pakistani government, plans to catalyze a series of covert and overt attacks on India, which would ultimately lead to a nuclear showdown in the subcontinent. (64)

It indicates that if the power goes in the hand of wrong person, there will be the chance of nuclear war. Illahi gives threaten to Vivek Khosla, the PM of India for the

use of nuclear weapons. However, Emir from Saudi Arabia supports to Mujahideen financially for the recruitment, training and purchasing of weapons. He wants to spread 'Jihad' in the Indian subcontinent.

Roy further states, "*Line of Control* highlights culture of trauma, which Dev Chauhan is a victim of, emerges from the complex nexus between the expectations of militarized masculinity as well as the emerging postcolonial nation-state" (66). This indicates that Dev is shown to be suffering severely from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Dev's PTSD results from an incident where he was unable to save the subaltern army-men under his command from a burning tank. This past incident is shown to give him nightmares as well to the constant questioning of his own validity as a military man. As a third-generation army-person, Dev's anxiety clearly results from the notions of militarized masculinity that he possesses, which predicate that he should be devoid of any form of weakness, especially emotions.

In another article "Radioactive Masculinity: How the Anxious Postcolonial Learnt to Love and Live in Fear of the Nuclear Bomb" Divyadyuti Roy presents the idea of radioactive masculine:

Indian speculative fiction such as Sami Ahmad Khan's *Red Jihad* (2012) and Mainak Dhar's *Line of Control* (2009). I argue that these texts—through their focus on the radioactive Indian male—inaugurate a concurrent critique of postcolonial radioactive masculinity as well as the American and Indian military-industrial complexes. Apocalyptic settings in these speculative texts provide a topos for enacting postcolonial masculine anxieties, which are subsequently countered through making male bodies contingent on the volatile performances of destructive military technology. (18)

This refers that Roy compares postcolonial masculine anxieties of Americans with the Indian military complexes. The text *Line of Control* provides an apocalyptic setting in POK, Uri Sector and other sensitive part of the border areas like Rajasthan, Kutch and coastal areas in Mumbai and Karachi which creates postcolonial masculine anxieties and represents destructive military technology through male bodies contingents.

Next, Roy claims that there is different scenario for India and Pakistan having nuclear weapons. According to the global nuclear politics, it is common for veto power countries like USA, China and Russia having nuclear power. But countries like India and Pakistan having such power creates anxiety. He mentions:

This nuclear anxiety of “a renegade Pakistani General” seizing tactical atomic weapons is in fact the key motif of speculative novels *Line of Control* (2009) and *Red Jihad* (2012) that have been analyzed in this study. Unfortunately, the eerie clairvoyance of these cultural texts’ contrasts directly with their socio-political importance in the sphere of global nuclear politics. (225)

It represents that there is an anxiety to Pakistan Army General if the nuclear weapon is being seized, though Illahi, Prime Minister wants to use it. It seems this is the internal matter for both countries and it is not related with the global nuclear politics. Even Vivek Khosla, the Indian Prime Minister worries about nuclear war.

However, in the article “50 of Men, Machines and Apocalypses: Masculine Anxieties in Indian Speculative Fiction Dibyadhuti Roy”, Sourit Bhattacharya and Arka Chattopadhyay mention:

Dhar speculates a future where a terrorist regime allied to Al-Qaeda—led by another Osama-like figure called the “Emir” has gained power in Saudi Arabia and has decided to use its oil wealth and technological apparatus to spread the ideology of jihad. Emir through funding and manipulating a military leader in

Pakistan named Illahi, who overthrows the democratic Pakistani government, plans to catalyze a series of covert and overt attacks on India, which would ultimately lead to a nuclear showdown in the subcontinent. (51)

It refers that Mujahideen is one of the terrorist groups and it is allied with another terrorist group Al-Qaeda. They will establish their monopoly in India by creating the ideology of Jihad. This makes the subcontinent showdown the nuclear power. The Pakistani government lead by Illahi seems to have attachment with Emir, a leader of Al-Qaeda terrorist group for funding and manipulating Mujahideen, which stands against Indian government.

However, Garima Sharma, in her article “Review: Line of Control” mentions that both India and Pakistan are capable of nuclear warfare. The fundamentalist group Mujahideen has already occupied Saudi Arabia and presently is working in India to spread its Jihad: “India and Pakistan stand at the brink of a nuclear showdown. An Islamic fundamentalist group has taken over Saudi Arabia and is operating backstage to spread jihad in India, across LoC” (1). This indicates that the fundamentalist group Mujahideen has already become successful to spread its Jihad in Saudi Arabia. Now they are trying to make an impact in India too. As both India and Pakistan have nuclear power, if the fundamentalist group will be able to make control over India, there will be a warlike situation between India and Pakistan which leads towards apocalypticism.

Likewise, Iskander Rehman also advocates as, “Although China no longer directly supports militancy in places such as Nagaland, Mizoram, and Assam, Chinese middlemen have been known to funnel in weaponry via countries in Southeast Asia. Meanwhile, other countries, such as Pakistan, continue to play an active role in the area. . .” (22). It symbolizes that Pakistan helps to strengthen militancy in the different

states of India and South Asia, whereas China does not support militancy directly. In *Line of Control* also, Dhar highlights Pakistan works together with Mujahideen. He writes, “Now they gave the militants unprecedented firepower against the Indians. The movement of men and small arms had been much, much easier. Put together, there now a small army at Kashmir’s footsteps, a far cry from the small bands of militants India had been used to fighting” (99). It is clear that Pakistan provides arms and ammunition to the militants to fight against the Indians. These militants have formed their organization in Kashmir and India gets engaged fighting with them.

In this regard, Stephen Philip Cohen’s *The Idea of Pakistan* talks about the future possibility of nuclear exchange between the countries. Cohen forecasts: “The one scenario in which true catastrophe is now technically possible would be a nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan” (268). It seems true in a sense that both countries have in possession of nuclear weapons; and both countries have already gone through fourth times major wars after partition in 1947. He further views, “War between India and Pakistan is an ever-present possibility, . . . The region has moved from limited, positional territorial wars fought with simple weapons to a situation where the next war could involve nuclear exchange ranging from a few to dozen nuclear warheads. In five to ten years, it could be in the hundreds” (294). This symbolizes that both countries have the capabilities of producing nuclear weapons in self-reliance and even in normal condition, both countries have the chances of such nuclear exchange in future. In *Line of Control*, Dhar also brings the issue of nuclear exchange for both countries which seems apocalyptic in its’ nature.

Next, having nuclear weapons is a security threat and it always creates tension for the country as well. Both of countries India and Pakistan possess nuclear weapon and they fear from each other from nuclear threat. In this regard, Aneek Chatterjee

remarks in the article “India-Pakistan Relations: A Framework for Peace in Future”, “Security fears from the other led to nuclear weapons programme in India and Pakistan both of which are now nuclear (weapons) capable states. As a consequence, the tension of war always prevails in the subcontinents” (2). This symbolizes that both countries are having nuclear power and each countries try to hegemonize each other by creating nuclear threat to each other. There is a need to secure the nuclear power stations. If any mishaps come, misunderstanding occurs between them and they will involve in nuclear war which is destructive. Both of the countries will have security fears from each other due to nuclear weapons.

Some of the countries feel secure while they have nuclear weapons. They prefer to keep such nuclear weapons and proliferate them. Both of the countries India and Pakistan seem to give interest in nuclear weapons and they happen to manage them. However, Nijamudhin T and Farhana Kausar mention, “Today both the countries face the threat of nuclear disaster for their national interest and security from each other. In the ultimate analysis, proliferation dangers do not emanate from the mere existence or possession of nuclear weapons...” (157). This refers that both of the countries keep nuclear weapons for their national interest and security concerns, however, it has become a threat for disaster. Nuclear proliferation becomes the threat to the countries which possess the nuclear weapons. Keeping nuclear weapons does not give them security, rather they are prone to have threatens and disastrous.

According to Sami Ahmed Khan, due to the political and cultural background, India has been immerging as powerful country in South Asia. At the same time, it has become a battleground between the two countries. He mentions, “A rapidly developing chaotically prismatic and mind-bogglingly polyphonic India currently forms an active battleground between to market forces of globalization and their

consequent localizing political-cultural responses” (479). At the time of globalization, India is developing economically and politically strong. The country seems capable of responding to the decisions made against it.

Likewise, Shamim Alam Awan remarks that though India and Pakistan are neighboring countries, they don't have any friendly relationship to each other: “Unfortunately, India and Pakistan never became good friends and are always engaged in conflicts with each other” (53). This reflects that these two countries have fought wars three times and their relationship has never been in intimation after the partition. They never became true friends each other after partition. Both of the countries have suffered from terrorist activities time and again. Both of them engaged in enmity rather than friendship. And finally, they begin a war which will be more destructive.

Shamim Alam Awan further remarks that most of the fundamentalist groups are being operated by Pakistan. He further tells that they are being supported by Pakistan Army and ISI, and they are used to create problems in bilateral relations between the two nations: “The biggest problem in bilateral relations between India and Pakistan is due to the attacks made by Islamic fundamentalist groups operating from Pakistan. These groups get support from Pakistan Army and ISI...whereas India consider them as terrorist.” (50) This indicates that Islamic fundamentalist groups as Mujahideen are being helped by Pakistan Army and ISI against India. They are being infiltrated through cross border and create terror, disharmony and tension in India. This leads more enmity between the nations in future. India will blame to Pakistan for such terrorist activities.

Similarly, Sanjay Kumar writes in the article “Indo-Pak Tension Solution for Conflict or Cooperation” that three wars were fought between these two neighbors,

but the problems have not been resolved yet, and thus the conflicts are seen time and again: “Having fought three wars over the Kashmir issue in 1947, 1965 and 1999, there is still no hope of resolving it in the near future” (8). It indicates Kashmir has become a bone of contention between these two neighbors. Though there were wars taken place between them, their tensions have not been solved. Possible resolutions were made in different times; however, Kashmir’s problem is still going on. There will be a possibility of future war between these two nations and the war will be more destructive than the previous one.

However, India is being suffered from terrorist activities not only in Jammu and Kashmir, but also the northern part of the country. China does not look to direct support to militancy in the area, but it seems to provide weapons to the militant group. In this regard, Iskander Rehman claims, “Although China no longer directly supports militancy in places such as Nagaland, Mizoram and Assam Chinese middle. Men have been known to funnel in weaponry via countries in south east Asia. Meanwhile other countries such as Pakistan continue to play an active role in the area...” This indicates that Pakistan directly involves in terrorist activities across in Indian territory, however, China helps to provide weapons to spread militancy in the northern part of India indirectly. They victimize India creating terror in different parts of the country. It makes India and its neighbors proceed towards enmity, finally they may approach for war and destruction.

Likewise, Kathakali Gosh writes in the Article “The Role of Diplomatic Practices between India and Pakistan Relations: Negotiations before the Kargil Conflict and Beyond” that both of the countries remain suspicious to each other even after negotiations: “On the 1st of January every year both India and Pakistan exchange lists of their nuclear facilities...There is always that element of suspicion which

governs them to think that the other side has not been entirely honest about their list.”

(13) This reflects that both of the countries have agreed to show their nuclear weapon status, but it keeps them doubt and suspicion to each other. If such doubts are made time and again between the countries, there will be no chance of improving the relationship. They will remain neutral either in further friendly relationship.

To improve the relationship between the neighbors, both of countries have to think a new strategy to each other. In this regard, Dr. Sanjay Kumar and et. al claim,

In doing so, Pakistan has to change track on its ‘Kashmir first’ policy and shifting gear to a process of building cooperation and confidence in other areas. Similarly, India too, has to show a big brotherly attitude and offer some liberal concessions to Pakistan without compromising any securities needs.

Such a positive attitude will reduce tension and ease the way for a cordial relationship. (107-108)

This means that Pakistan will have to view Kashmir policy and confidence building measures should be adopted. As the same way, India should also consider Pakistan as a small brother and build up common brotherhood without thinking of any security’s needs. When both of the countries maintain bilateral relationship with a positive attitude, it will help to reduce tensions in the relationship.

Nuclear weapon has become the symbol of destruction. It reveals the apocalypticism. It takes a lot of lives and materials at once. In this regard, Dibyadyuti Roy claims, “Cultural expressions of the Apocalypses underwent an epistemic shift with the Trinity tests on July 16, 1945, followed by the horrific bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that decisively reconfigured the meaning of Apocalypse” (60). This shows that the nuclear bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki of Japan during the Second World War by USA proves to be an apocalypticism. It had

destroyed lives and materials; and the scenario was horrific. It creates fear among the people. Similarly, *Line of Control* also focuses in nuclear warfare between India and Pakistan which seems to be the symbol of destruction. The representation of apocalypticism is observed when nuclear test in Trinity was observed and the USA dropped the bombs in Japan.

Dr. Sanjay Kumar and Dr. Mohammad Samir Hussain state that nuclear weapon does not give any kind of security to India and when they are being supported by external extremists like Mujahideen, it challenges the national security of the country. They claim:

While nuclear have evident weight as a currency of power for the external dimensions of national security, they cannot avert threat and overt challenges to India's territorial integrity that emanate from domestic unrest and cross-border militancy and transnational terrorism germinating from Pakistani sponsorship or direct support, especially after 9/11 terrorism. Simplistically speaking, nuclear weapon cannot offer any protection against the sub-conventional threats and challenges to India's national security pose by extremist elements within its own territory or, particularly, by those non-state actors or terrorist groups who get moral and material support from across the border. (8)

This refers that nuclear weapon is considered as a currency and believed to provide security to the country. However, it does not take away any external threats and challenges. It rather creates problem to the country. Such country like India having problem of cross-border terrorism, it can not offer any protection against the threats and challenges. The fundamentalists group who get moral and material support externally, they are found more active and threat to the country against them.

This research paper marks a point of departure from the existing researches which concern themselves apocalyptic vision in *Line of Control*. This research attempts to prove an indication of destruction when the fundamentalist group Mujahideen work with Pakistan Army and present themselves against India. It also tries to show the representation of the Indian Armed Forces, Pakistan Army and the Mujahideen in the fiction and how the writer creates a discourse to represent them. This research also focuses why Saudi Arabia expends money to the fundamentalist group like the Mujahideen.

The reason for selecting the primary text *Line of Control* for research is primarily based on the personal experience of the researcher and the growing tensions time and again between India and Pakistan. As mentioned, the setting of the book by the author, the researcher has also worked in the border areas, especially in Jammu and Kashmir along with Uri sector more than a decade during seventeen years of service period. Likewise, the researcher has served in the desert parts like Rajasthan and Kutch Bhuj; and other Field areas like Assam and Arunachal Pradesh of India during the service in the Indian Army. This book also highlights terrorism and infiltration in Jammu and Kashmir; wars between India and Pakistan; reasons of conflict and possibility of next war; latest technological weapons used by both countries and apocalyptic vision.

Power politics or discourse of power is not an epoch but an ethos or an attitude. It is because power politics is an attitude related to the micro-politics of bodies. The way of thinking and feeling, a way of acting and behaving, a way of breaking with tradition, a mode of

relating contemporary reality manipulate in daily life as the relationship.. Foucault *in The History of Sexuality: The Will to*

Knowledge argues:

Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it.. We must make allowances for the complex and unstable process whereby a discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart. (100-01)

Therefore, Foucault defines power production in light of the theoretical concept of discourse design through knowledge, economic process, and relationship of another mechanism. For him, power is produced that is changing, and changeable as social body and practice as those mechanisms linked together as well as micro-politics.

For Foucault, power creates discourse; then the discourse becomes truth and it represents identity. In this regard Stuart Hall observes:

In his later work Foucault became even more concerned with how knowledge was put to work through discursive practices in specific institutional settings to regulate the conduct of others. He focused on the relationship between knowledge and power, and how power operated within what he called an institutional apparatus and its technologies (techniques) ...The apparatus is thus always inscribed in a play of power, but it is also always linked to certain co-ordinates of knowledge. (47)

It indicates that discourse is made through certain knowledge to regulate the conduct of a group of people. There is a relationship between knowledge and power; and power works through certain knowledge in an institution. In *Line of Control*, Dhar shows how Prime Ministers of both countries create war discourse; and their orders have been followed by their respective soldiers. The Mujahedeen and the Armed Forces represent here an institutional apparatus, and how these institutional apparatuses work within the power of play to lead towards apocalyptic vision.

Similarly, the researcher employs Cultural Hegemony by Antonio Gramsci as how dominance takes place between the social alliances. In this regard, Richardson et al. mention, "This more relational understanding of dominance is closer to what Gramsci meant by 'hegemony', as complex relations of force between social alliances (144)." This reflects that dominance takes places between the two social alliances. In *Line of Control*, the Mujahedeen and the Indian Armed Forces represent the two social alliances, and they try to dominate to each other. Likewise, the Indian Armed Forces and the war weapons have hegemonized against Pakistan Armed Forces and how the Mujahedeen have hegemonized against Indian Security Forces.

Mainak Dhar's *Line of Control* is the representation of nationalist discourse through war and destruction. The conflict takes place between the two neighboring

countries India, a depiction of the Hindu country and Pakistan, a depiction of the Muslim country. However, the author urges the Muslim countries to unite against India: “One of the key challenges before the Islamic brotherhood now is to unite for the final battle against the Great Satan. But before that our leader, the Emir, needs a demonstration of his power” (11). Here, the Great Satan indicates India and it seems to challenge with the Muslim country, Pakistan. Illahi, a portrayal of Pakistan and the Emir as an Islamic world. In one hand, the Muslim countries get united against India, whereas India stands itself in another side as a great Satan. When such two powerful countries involve in the final battle, there occurs destruction of people and property. After unification, the Muslim countries want to demonstrate their power against India. This reflects a symptom of destruction of man and materials in both sides.

For the mission, Dhar enrolls the Mujahedeen what he calls them most professional soldiers: “He should remember these men are the most professional soldiers in the world, not his Afgan thugs ”(11). It symbolizes that the Mujahideen are experienced and qualified in their profession and they are hired mercenaries to support to the Pakistan Army. They are treated as equivalent as regular Armed Forces, the professional soldier. When such hired mercenaries are used against another country, there will be a chance of increment in enmity to each other that ends in war and destruction. These mercenaries seem working for Pakistan: “Gentlemen, you have served Pakistan all your lives with dedication and patriotism that has been beyond question and reproach” (11). Here, these mercenaries have represented Pakistan and they seem ready to die for the sake of the country. They are youths and have young blood in their veins. They are found energetic and active in their job. Dhar creates the discourse of nationalism and patriotism. His enrolment of such mercenaries against India heightens the tension between the countries.

As Dhar enrolls Mujahideen in *Line of Control* for a specific purpose to expand jihad in India. These people seem to infiltrate in India in a daily basis. They are found using different technique “Run and hide” (25) for incursions against India. They look well equipped and heavily armed. Infiltrations, firings and incursions increase enmity between the countries:

Incursions and firings were always a part of life, but these had taken on a whole new dimension in recent days. Firing by regular Pakistan troops had subsided, but incursions by heavily armed Afgan mercenaries had become almost a daily event. Completely different from the Kashmiri terrorists, Singh and his men had been fighting for years. These Mujahideen were battle hardened and fanatical mercenaries wanting to expand Jihad to India.... They had chosen to run and hide instead of even trying to fight. (25)

This reflects that such incursions and infiltrations through border areas into Indian territory creates tensions to India, which results to take necessary steps to retaliate against them. Here, Pakistan seems indifference towards Indian security. When there is no respect of sovereignty, there will be a chance of increment in enmity to each other, and finally ends with war and destruction.

Furthermore, Dhar as being an Indian writer, he seems more patriotic and shows inclination towards India. He argues that the Mujahedeen are different from the Kashmiri terrorists. He claims, “Completely different from the Kashmiri terrorists, Singh and his men had been fighting for years. These Mujahideen were battle hardened and fanatical mercenaries wanting to expand their Jihad to India” (25). This indicates that Kashmiri terrorist and the Mujahideen are different groups and the objective of the Mujahideen seems different. Kashmiri terrorists are fighting for their own rights, however, the Mujahideen are fighting to spread Jihad against India, which

means the writer shows patriotic feelings towards his country. Even more, Dhar further portrays the characters like Illahi negatively as he represents Pakistan: “That bastard Illahi, his madness is going to ruin the country” (36). He means to say that Illahi, head of the state, Pakistan has become mad and takes bad decision against neighboring country, India and ruins himself and others too. It proves that the writer wants to make safe for his own country, India.

Likewise, Dhar does not have faith over Pakistan. He mentions, “Come on John! You know the shit of the Saudis have been giving us. Why should I trust the Pakistanis?” (78) It reflects that the people of Pakistan are not trust worthy, they can do anything else as they like. For the welfare of Pakistan, they spread Jihad and even the Saudi Arabia also provides funds to Pakistan which seems more favoritism of the Muslims and the country. It means that Saudi Arabia supports to Pakistan, and the Indians are not able to trust over Pakistanis. Dhar further claims, “Pakistan would be branded as a danger to the faith and as a nation used only to stir up wars against the West” (287). He means to say that Pakistan is not only danger to its neighbor only, but also western countries will also be affected from wars. The writer does not have faith over Pakistan as he considers Pakistan an enemy.

Both India and Pakistan stand powerful countries in defence strategy in Asia. Dhar further claims that both of the countries manage powerful weapons to secure their sovereignty and happen to purchase weapons from other countries. Here, Pakistan is found supported by China: “...the calmness of the night was shattered as two Chinese made NARRINCO Red Arrow anti-tank missiles streaked towards the Indian Army post. These missiles were designed to defeat the strongest tank armour in the world” (26). This symbolizes India consists of powerful tanks in defence. Therefore, Pakistan happens to purchase weapons from its’ neighbour, China to

secure itself from India. However, India is also found purchasing weapons for its' Navy from Russia: "...Ramnath commanded the pride of the Indian Navy, the INS Vikramaditya, acquired from two years ago from Russia, ... The Vikramaditya, a powerful 44,000 tonne behemoth, was by the largest ship in any Navy in Asia" (29). It proves that both of the countries try to make them strong keeping such powerful weapons. If tensions occur between these countries, they will try to hegemonize to each other; which leads towards hostility and ends war and destruction.

Similarly, Dhar argues that both India and Pakistan have become strong in defence strategy. He says that both of them possess nuclear weapons and threatening comes time and again by the Prime Ministers of both countries to each other: "We will not tolerate this invasion of our sovereignty, and if your forces step in, we will retaliate. For God's sake, we both have nuclear weapons now, why would you want to bring our countries to the brink of destruction." (32) This indicates that having nuclear power makes them arrogant and they feel proud and powerful. They are ready to attack anyone or any other countries if their sovereignty is in danger. Nuclear weapon has become the main weapon to hegemonize to other countries. Dhar remarks that apocalyptic vision is observed when such nuclear weapons are in used. Nuclear weapons represent power, war and destruction. This is a fact that nuclear weapons are sign of power and even an enemy thinks many times before it's use.

Likewise, Dhar remarks that Illahi, the Prime Minister of Pakistan wants to have a support to Pakistan Army. "But Illahi, this is madness! Surely you don't want to risk a nuclear exchange, then why should we risk millions of innocent lives because of your visions of grandeur and that old mad Emir?" (35) This shows that Pakistan Prime minister looks aggressive. He has a close relationship with Emir, the leader of the fundamentalist group, Mujahideen. He is negatively portrayed in *Line of Control*.

Anger, aggression and enmity increases more tension between or among the countries and finally leads towards war and destruction killing thousands of innocent lives.

Dhar employs the Gorkha Regiments of the Indian Armed Forces in *Line of Control* and they are engaged to fight against Pakistan Army and other terrorist activities. He claims that the Gurkhas are famous for their khukri and bravery. "It had come down to hand-to-hand combat and the Gurkhas had massacred the Mujahideen with their khukris, suffering only three casualties." (31) This indicates that the Gurkhas are well-trained and capable of handling infiltration of Mujahideen and other terrorist activities. They seem fearless and well experienced as they found with minimum casualties. The Gurkhas have created a history participating during World War I and World War II. They don't afraid of attacking their enemies. They are found active and bold to face their enemy. It is hard to them stop once they become angry. Their angriness changes into fearlessness. It forces them to go ahead in war and destruction.

Dhar further mentions that attacks by mercenaries have become common in Indian territories. However, the mercenaries are hired: "The four gunmen were now almost at the door. They were hired mercenaries" (37). It means that the mercenaries have been used against Indian Armed Forces. They work for Pakistan. They are equipped by the automatic weapon like AK-47. Dhar explains that Babur, a top military officer of Pakistan Army also opposes to Illahi. It results to the murderer of Babur "The gunmen were taken unaware and one of them fell before the two others could return fire. A burst of rifle fire caught Babur in his stomach, turning him around and throwing him across the room" (38). This indicates that even the top Military officer could not be secured and is finally killed by the hired mercenaries. The

autocratic rule of Illahi creates conflicts within the country and finally they approach with other country for support. This results war and destruction.

Dhar employs Iqbal as a policeman of Indian Police service in *Line of Control*. The policeman involves in suicide attack of his own Prime Minister Bibek Khosla. "...Iqbal broke open the door and ran straight for the Prime Minister's bedroom...Iqbal fired a three-shot burst at Khosla from a range of 10 feet. A bullet caught Khosla in the upper arm and spun him around, slamming him against the wall" (43). It reveals that Iqbal is involving in suicide attack and tries to kill the Prime Minister Khosla. However, Khosla seems lucky to be able to save his life from the attack. When the Prime Minister of the country has to experience with suicide attack for himself, he feels unsecured and he will have to take further steps against such attacks. It seems true that if the Prime Minister of the country feels endanger, no citizens of the country feel safe in the nation. Finally, a sense of revenge comes in the mind of victims which leads to declaration of war.

Dhar again remarks that terrorist attacks disturb the security of a country. The people of the country don't feel secure from such incidents. In *Line of Control*, Dhar claims that India has been suffering from terrorist attacks in different places time and again which creates chaos and fear among people. They try to hegemonize the people creating terror and fear among people: "...similar terrorist attacks were reported throughout the country-in schools, temples, offices and railway stations. Over 300 people were killed, with the police claiming that only a dozen terrorists were killed" (48). This indicates that India has become a victim of terrorist attacks time and again and lost a number of innocent lives. The police are unable to take action against the attack made by Mujahideen. This is also the representation terror, fear and war. When people compel to face such problems, they raise their voice against the crime. The

country will employ army personnel to fight against terrorism. When the Army Personnel take responsibility to combat against terrorism, there will be a fierce battle between the Army and the terrorists; and other civilians will also be killed.

Dhar further claims that both India and Pakistan have been supported directly and indirectly by the international community. In *Line of Control*, Dhar remarks that America and China have become silent during the war between India and Pakistan. If war takes place, India will be supported by Russia: “The Americans are going to abstain...the good news is that the British and the French are with us...Russia is with us..., the Chinese are abstaining” (80). This shows that America and China become neutral, whereas Russia, Britain and France are found in support of India. These are the permanent members of UNO, and they represent the veto power. When a nation is supported by such countries, there will be a domination by the powerful country to the weak one. The supported nation becomes strong and does not fear from retaliation. Then, attacking and counter-attacking begin resulting an initiation of war and destruction.

Dhar further mentions that India has experiences of communal violence time and again. He says that there was assassination of the contemporary Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1984 and there was a lost life: “Have you seen what’s going on- attacks on Muslims have already begun...Khosla was alluding to the communal flare up post the assassination of Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards in 1984, when an orgy of violence, nearly 3000 Sikhs lost their lives” (50). This reflects that any kind of violence is a sign of further war and destruction. This is a fact that when there is misunderstanding takes place between the two communities of different religious group, the results end with fierce battle. In the name of Jihad, Dhar employs Mujahedeen in *Line of Control* to show the religious disharmony between the

Muslims and the Hindus: “It was happening again- the Mujahideen were not disciplined soldiers and would think nothing of attacking civilian villages, especially those with a Hindu population. In their zeal, they often ignored religious difference and attacked the nearest village” (125). This indicates that Mujahideen belongs to Muslim religion and they have not given respect to another religion. It is the representation of social disharmony. When a country suffers from communal riots, it will have to bear the loss of men and materials. Even there will be chances of internal or domestic war among the people. Then, a domestic war collapses the economy, security, peace and prosperity of the country.

Dhar further mentions that Mujahideen hide arms and ammunition separately for their self defence and attack to India. As the information given by the intelligence report, Mujahideen possess arms and ammunitions in a large quantity: “The Hawk on his second transmission had informed Rahman that the Mujahideen had their spare ammunition stocked in five of these trucks” (159). This means that the Mercenaries appear with well-planned design of war and full preparation for war against India. When such large quantity of unauthorized arms and ammunitions will be used against another country, the defender also appears in full preparation. This leads to increment in their self-confidence, and finally ends with war and destruction.

Dhar again claims that Pakistani Army and the Mujahideen work together against Indian Armed forces. It seems that the joint operation by the Pakistan Army and the Mujahideen looks fierce: “The regular Pakistani troops were at the front and the Mujahideen were bringing up the flanks and rear. These men had been at Uri since the fighting began, and had their numbers and morale depleted by the fierce fighting and air strikes” (201). This refers that both the Pakistan Army and the Mujahideen have worked together in the border of Uri sector and fight against the Indian Armed

Forces. Even they are found in a particular number: “But these forces-we estimate them to number about 1,500 men- a mixture of Mujahideen and regular troops are in a bad state” (249). As the unity becomes strength, the joint operation between the regular Army and the Mujahideen tries to hegemonize the Indian Armed Forces through battle. When both of the forces stand against Indian Forces, India also begins to retaliate them, which indicates war and destruction.

Similarly, Dhar further mentions that different kinds of technologies such as remote control, touch pad have been used to handle the weapons and warhead during the wartime. Dhar remarks that the Prime Minister, Illahi tries to control the nuclear explosion in Indian territory:

The main menu came on, and Illahi used the touch pad to navigate to the option he wanted. He began keying in an alpha numeric sequence and then paused. He knew that as soon as he completed and hit Enter key, electrical pulses would trigger a nuclear explosion in Kashmir – an explosion caused by a nuclear warhead placed among Pakistani and Mujahideen forces. He wondered how Allah would judge him for directly causing deaths of thousands of his soldiers, whose only crime, as it were, was obeying his own orders.

(286)

It symbolizes that Illahi seems in favour of nuclear exchanges. He wants to show his power by using nuclear weapons. He doesn't worry about nuclear exchanges and effects once it is used. He just wants to take revenge against India through victory. Nuclear exchanges represent war and destruction. It destroys men and materials. Illahi tries to hegemonize India through using nuclear exchanges. If faults occur in such technologies, there will be chances of explosion of such nuclear weapons. The nation will be destroyed in a single blink if a wrong button is pressed.

Dhar also claims that even India has used different powerful weapons against Pakistan and the Mujahideen. In *Line of Control*, India considers them as enemy. To make its defence strong, India purchases Vikramaditya, a Russian built multi-barreled gun which rate of fire is more than 30000 rounds per a minute: “The Vikramaditya was equipped with four multi-barreled gatling guns to deal with such close in threats. Controlled by the ship’s main radar, these guns would spew out bullets at any incoming threat at over 3000 rounds a minute” (165). This symbolizes that even India is trying to hegemonize its enemy through different new technological weapons. When such powerful weapons are used during wartime, there will be chances of casualties of people.

As unity is strength, the more number attempts to dominate to its opponent. Dhar further states in *Line of Control* that the presence of Mujahideen is higher than that of the Indian Army. More presence of Mujahideen is to dominate to Indian Army. He highlights, “...the Mujahideen outnumbered his force by almost ten-to-one” (129). This shows that the number of Mujahideen is ten times more than that of its’ opponent. More number more powerful which means Mujahideen seems to have more strength, and they will attempt to hegemonize to its’ opponent. There will be difficulty to cope up if the enemy has in number. As unity is strength, the Mujahideen is found more powerful than the Indian Army. Dhar’s discourse here is to create power in Mujahideen.

Both of the countries seem to agree in bilateral talks to strengthen for future friendly relationship. Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) have been made between the countries time and again. It shows an improvement in their further relationship. In this regard, Taha Asfandiyar remarks, “It reaffirmed that as a nuclear weapon state Pakistan was committed to working as an equal partner in international

efforts for general and complete nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation” (106). This indicates that Pakistan looks ready to accept for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of the weapons in own country and support to the international affairs in disarmament and non-proliferation. Pakistan understands the matter that nuclear weapon does not give peace and security to the country and hence, seems to be ready for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of the weapons.

Summing up, Dhar in *Line of Control* tries to show the relationship between the two neighbors and how it can be improved when both of the nations are obsessed with own nationality and sovereignty. As being the Hindu writer, he seems to be more inclination to his own country, India. Dhar also highlights the possibility of nuclear warfare between the two neighbors which could be more destructive. Alliance of Pakistan Army with the fundamentalist group, the Mujahideen shows unity and power. Spreading Jihad refers to globalization of Muslim unity and power. Dhar attempts to make balance by killing the wrong leader like Illahi at the end of the novel. Dhar tries to prevent the Mujahideen not to work with Pakistan Army collaboratively thinking of security needs. The Mujahideen represents as one of the fundamentalist groups that they want to spread Jihad in India and South Asian countries.

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