ORIGIN ERASED: AN EXPLORATION OF ANTHROPOCENTRICITY AND AMBIVALENCE IN THE DISCOURSE OF PAKISTANI LEATHER-SELLING BRANDS

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Abstract
The study aims to unveil the anthropocentricity and ambivalence present in the discourse of leather-selling brands. It is conducted with special reference to Pakistani-origin brands. Two well-reputed brands of Pakistan are chosen as samples for conduction of the study. These two brands are: Jafferjees, one of the oldest brands of Pakistan established back in 1880 in Quetta, then British India; and, Kordovan Leather is a brand with an experience of almost 130 years in the leather industry. The latter brand brought the concept of vegan leather for the first time in Pakistan in 2020. A tailored framework made from amalgam of elements from Kress and Leeuwen's multimodality theory and Stibbe's concept of erasure is applied to direct the study. The study manifested that there is a trend of catchy phrases which implicitly advocates for anthropocentric tendencies in the online realm. Additionally, these tendencies are achieved not only through linear discourse, but ambivalence is there in these discourses to account for a more captivating display of the products to enhance consumerism of the leather products.
Keywords: Ambivalence, anthropocentricity, consumerism, leather-selling brands, stibbe,

1. INTRODUCTION

Ecosystem is comprised of humans, animals, plants and their physical environment. The system is sustained and maintained through interaction of different species with one another. All these species are indispensable for a balance in the ecosystem. Human beings have long history of being the central force of the planet. From the perspective of anthropocentricism, human are considered superior and master of every other specie (animal, mineral and plants etc.) (Boslaugh, 2013). Environmental ethics and philosophy of the environment consider it the root cause of problems being faced by the world (Beck, 2013). The concept of anthropocentricity has proponents to defend it; Adler (1993) holds the view that human beings need to remain at the center. They need to be the central force or else the world will collapse. Another individual who defended the notion of human-centric world is Wesley Smith who works at Discovery Institute. His views are fundamentalist regarding *human exceptionalism* and its defense. He views this ineluctable to foreground humans and background every other species. In his book, *A Rat is a Pig is a Dog is a Boy,* he advocated for the anthropocentricity and criticized those who endeavored for animal rights (Smith, 2010). In ecosystem of the earth, every element is intertwined in such a way that they dependency is there. Every factor of the ecosystem plays a vital role and disturbing or damaging one factor may lead to disruption of the other. There is an

article on the National Geographic Website by the name "Ecosystem". The article details extinction of Bison population which used to be found in the Great American plains of North. It is delineated that incessant exploitation of this specie to extract food, hide shelter at the hands of human being has made it extinct in its natural habitat, leading to preservation of only few of them at Yellowstone National Park (Ecosystem, n.d.). Human activities are threatening the life of every other living being in the process of foregrounding themselves. There is another example given in the same of article about the exploitation of Amazon's rain forests which is leading to a disturbance in the climate of the globe and ultimately human beings will be on the receiving end.

This behavior is not recently developed, scrutinizing the pages of history; one may find this attitude of human since time immemorial. One such mode of victimization is extracting leather from animals. This process has a long history rooted in prehistoric times. Its origin can be traced back to different ancient civilizations such as that of Egypt, Rome and Greece. In the early times, people would utilize animal brains, their urine and tree barks for tanning and preservation of the hides they would fetch. The techniques used for this were extremely crude. Leather is mainly fetched from cows, buffaloes and other cattle, but pigs, sheep, goats and other animals are also the interest of this process. Leather is opted for its reliability and durability, additionally, it can be reused and there is a notion of aestheticism associated to it. Moving on, with the Industrial Revolution, certain devices were brought into market to expedite the process. However, the factor of exploitation remained constant. This resulted in countries of the modern day world depending on the leather industry to generate revenue for stability of their economy (Nalini, n.d.). Among all the countries, Pakistan is adherent of leather provision and usage. Pakistan was ranked among the top three exporters of the world when it comes to leather, exporting garments worth of $237.5 million in 2020 (Pakistan Business Council, 2020). This number augmented to a staggering amount of $746 million in 2022, making Pakistan the 4th largest exporter of leather. Moreover, Pakistan made imports of $2.52 million in the same year (Observatory of Economic Complexity, 2023). The leather industry and especially the manufacturers of leather use language and visuals to enhance consumerism of their products. These ambivalent discourses are eco-friendly at face level; however, close examination asserts that they are not what they apparently mean. Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen introduced their method of analyzing the visuals of advertisement and different semiotic modes. They not only gave idea of colors in the text, but emphasized on composure and the text the images contained in 2nd edition of their work *Reading Images:The Grammar of Visual Design* (Pratiwy and Wulan, 2018). Additionally, Arran Stibbe introduced his concept of Erasure in his work, *Animals Erased: Discourse, Ecology and Reconnection with the Natural World*. Erasure accounts for neglecting and backgrounding one crucial element to foreground another. In case of leather industry, the origin of leather is backgrounded and the luxuriousness and endurance of the products is foregrounded. Moreover, the ambivalence found in the discourses is a stratagem which is in vogue by the manufacturers and retailers (Riedlinger and Stibbe, 2014). The following study is conducted on two different websites; *Jafferjees and Kordovan Leather,* both of these brands are situated in Pakistan. These brands offer a vast range of leather products on their platforms. Additionally, Kordovan Leather even offers the concept of vegan or faux leather in their advertisement.

1. 1 Background of the Study

Leather is considered one of the luxurious items around the globe. It is considered to be worn and used by the elite class. Leather products are famous for their durability and endurance.

At face value, this seems fascinating to use quality products and associate these with prestige and social status; however, there are certain issues that are required to be addressed. Leather brands are considered symbol of prestige which makes them quite high-in-demand. These brands not only have outlets or shops around the globe, they are pretty much active on the internet. Departing from their traditional ways, utilization of the internet has become a sort of tool for them to sell their products encapsulated in a discourse which is captivating for the consumers (Seringhaus, 2005). Leather is sold by different brands using different stratagems to hide the origin of the extraction of leather (Pambianco, 2000). They constantly engage with each other to get an upper hand by grounding themselves in the market. There are claims made by these brands regarding an attention to paying heed to the sustainable development goals (SDGs); however, this declaration or claim is not a truth in its entirety. Countries that have been developing or are underdeveloped, they made meager efforts in this regard (Kapferer and Michaut-Denizeau, 2017). In recent times, a new notion has been launched by the leather manufacturers and that is of *vegan leather* or *faux leather*. It emerged as a result of backlash manifested by different groups and organizations which are linked to anti-animal-cruelty campaigns. These organizations raised a voice against incessant exploitation of animals at the hands of those who have been into this leather industry. This led to harboring a new perspective of *vegan leather*. *Vegan leather* is a type of leather products which accounts for adherence to the climate-friendly procedures by introducing a type of leather made entirely of synthetic polymers: polyurethane (PU) and polyvinyl chloride (PVC). These results into production of leather in which animals are not harmed (Christopher, Bartkowski and Haverda, 2018). A sense of ambivalence is present in this type of leather, as well; the synthetic polymers are made from plastic and they ultimately lead to dispersion of plastic which is non-bio-degradable material, leading to exacerbation of the climate, eventually. The ambivalent discourse is a type of discourse that seems beneficial at face level, but in the background, it has its detrimental implications.

In countries where there is lack of advancement with respect to technologies, this manufacturing leads to damage not only to those who are working there but to the environment as whole. Pakistan, as mentioned above, is among the top 10 leather importers of the world. It has history of some of the well-reputed brands of leather. Jafferjees is the oldest brand of Pakistan, established back in 1880 in Quetta, then British India. The brand guarantees fine quality leather to its consumers and is ready to launch itself in the international market. There are brands in Pakistan with rhetoric of *vegan leather* (Khan, 2015). This ambivalence in discourses eventually leads to anthropocentric inclination. Anthropocentricism is a notion which asserts that humans are the center of the universe and every other environmental factor is subordinate to human beings. Animals, plants and other elements are present on the earth to cater to the human needs (Hayward, 1997). Such type of notion is present in the cutting-edge era's industrial slogans and advertisements in an ambivalent way. Pakistan, the 4th major exporter of leather, is home to such discourses in the industrial sector. Leather industry of Pakistan is exploiting the animals and tanneries are under no proper check and balance. There is dire need to make people of Pakistan aware about the hazards this leather industry may cause to the not only the environment of Pakistan, but to overall climate of the globe.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What kind of linguistic choices on the websites denote anthropocentricity?
2. How does ambivalence is portrayed through metaphors and framing?

3. How visual representation of products aid in enhancement of consumerism through erasure of the origin of the products?

1.3 Research Objectives

a. To find out the linguistic choices that hint towards anthropocentric tendencies
b. To find out how ambivalence is achieved through framing and metaphorizing
c. To find out how visual representation of certain products help in building positive image of the products

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Ecosystem is a natural habitat of not only human but every species on this globe. Human beings have been exploiting other beings since time immemorial. In the cutting-edge era, Leather products are one of the significant factors in the economy of most of the countries. Among these countries, Pakistan is quintessence that draws a reasonable amount to its economy through leather. The websites selling leather use catchy phrases and embellished images to hide the origin of the leather-making process. There is a sense of anthropocentricity when it comes to description and visualization on these websites. People are either unaware or they have turned blind eye, deliberately, to the fact that leather is gained through animal slaughter. The alternatives that are presented, vegan leather or leather-like products made from leaves, are contributing to the climate change to a greater extent. The research will unveil the ambivalent discourses on the websites by looking into the linguistic choices and visual brainwashing of the consumers. Generally, and especially in Pakistani context, these leather brands need to be sanctioned by the authorities and people should be aware of the processes of leather making.

1.5 Significance of the Research

The following research will address an issue which is usually not taken into consideration: challenging the leather industry and its retailers. This research will provide useful insights to the future researchers to work on the leather industry, unveiling ambivalence found in different discourses. The researcher has put an effort to make people and the government aware of the draconian effects of exploitation of the animals at the hands of humans. Besides, people will get to know the tricky strategies employed by the retailers to sell their products and frame them as eco-friendly. Ultimately, this work will contribute towards the broader discourse that may lead the government to either ban or sanction the leather industry, and put an end to disturbance in the ecosystem by stopping relentless slaughter of animals.

1.6 Delimitations of the Study

The following study is carried out on two specific websites. Additionally, the homepages of both of the websites are centralized for analysis. To gain more understanding and further exploration, further sampling is can be incorporated for a more in-depth analysis.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Anthropocentricity is a belief that foregrounds human beings above all the species. It puts human beings at the vanguard of all other species. Those who are against such notion criticize the tendencies leading to framing of other species as means to human ends and needs. Some ethicists are in favor of this view as they count anthropocentricism as the root cause of ecological crisis. These critics are challenged by those who are favor of anthropocentricism. Asserting that this human-centric notion is misunderstood by most of the people, ethicists favoring anthropocentricity are of the view that this concept is presented out of the context and there is a dire need to demarcate legitimate from illegitimate interest at the heart of humans (Kopnina, Washington, Taylor and Piccolo, 2018). Interestingly, a debate is put forward by (McShane,

2007) suggests that Brian Norton's tried to address this issue associating anthropocentricism and nonanthropocentricism through a theory known as *convergence hypothesis.* The theory posits that the interests and policies of these two, apparently different, views will converge into a single point. There will be similarity found between these two, ultimately. McShane dismantles this concept by arguing that this is next to impossible to juxtapose two entirely different views expecting thematic harmony. Additionally, anthropocentricism is found in different paradigms. There are three types of anthropocentric approaches which are utilized by most of the scholars favoring anthropocentricity (Mylius, 2018): firstly, *perceptual anthropocentricism* is a type where humans are considered superior owing to their senses which make them more informed, wise and sagacious than other species, secondly, Mylius discusses *descriptive anthropocentricism* which accounts for the notion of "the human" putting human beings at the center, he, then, ramifies it into five variants: omission, funneling, extrapolation, anchoring and separation; all these variants lead to descriptive anthropocentric measures, thirdly, there is a type which is known as *normative anthropocentricism* which emphasizes the techniques where there is implicit or explicit assertion of human-centric world, and this type is further divided into *passive normative anthropocentricism-* adoption of ways in which humans are benefited during inquiries- and *active normative anthropocentricism* leading to blatant claims about their superiority on part of humans. Anthropocentricity is a hot debate and it has fuelled up after the 1960s and 70s. Scholars and environmentalists started discussing this after impending nodus of the climate change posing a real threat to environment of the planet.

In the ecological realm, different discourses are used to cater to the goals of those who are the producers of these discourses. Some discourses are destructive, some of them are constructive or one may call them as beneficial and a number of them are ambivalent. Ambivalent discourse is type of approach which at face value seems beneficial to the consumers or the receivers of it; however, when scrutinized closely, the discourse has its flaws and hazardous measures (Xiong and Wang, 2023). Ambivalent discourses are used mostly by the writers or in the advertisement sphere. They are used as crucial marketing strategies to build trust between the retailer and the consumer. In Econlinguistcs, this type of discourse is challenged and unveiled by Aran Stibbe and other ecolinguists (Abdullah, 2022). Moreover, Hautea, Parks and Takahashi (2018) posit that climate change is an issue which needs to be addressed from every platform human beings have access to. Platforms which may seem to bring into light the self-centered content made by the users, can also be a beneficial way of bringing the criticality of the issue of climate alteration. The Social Media platforms are great tool to propagate agendas and disseminate awareness on certain issues also. Tiktok is one of the examples of such platform where people create videos for the sake of entertainment. This platform has recently been used for bringing awareness to the climate change issue. Hautea et al. (2018) delineated that this awareness may be counted as a type of ambivalent discourse owing to the fact of nebulosity surrounding the platform. The platform use a blend of humor and seriousness encapsulated together with varied audience, making such multifaceted nature of discourse something to be confused and misleading in regards to understanding the criticalness of the climate change and its adverse effects. Adding to this issue of ambivalence, Gamson and Modigliani (1989) come up with their findings about the ambivalent discourse present mainly in the media realm. This type of discourse, generally, encompasses a blend of positive and negative sentiments on part of the consumers. In their study, Gamson and Modigliani (1989) provide a perspective of public constructed by listening to different media discourses revolving around the issue of nuclear

power. In its essence, nuclear power is a staunchly anti-humanistic element; however, its depiction through media normalizes the negative side of this and brings into spotlight a positive side. There is a difference between interpretation, production and reproduction of the discourse surrounding the issue of nuclear power.

Plannthin (2016) conducts a very comprehensive study on the exploitation of animals in the fashion and lifestyle industry. The author propounds a need of staunch measure that must be taken in order to provide haven to the animals suffering at the hands of the industries around the globe. A lacuna is found in the knowledge of those who have been consuming the products made out of exploitation of the animals. Most of the people are unaware of the fact that large industries pay no heed to any sustainable practices required to mitigate the damage that is being caused to the environment through relentless abuse of animals behind the canvas. An Indian animal right activist termed slaughterhouses as "gas chambers of animals" (Dave, 2014) where there is no mercy. Posthumanist perspective on this anthropocentric stance is that a man has undergone the process of "becoming animal". Those animals that are close to humans suffer the most. They may be domestic animals or the ones preferring to live in close proximity of humans. Human have developed a sense of abhorrence towards species other than human. Unfortunately, there are efforts to justify these cruelties (O'Sullivan, Creed and Gray, 2014). Stratagems to defend infliction on animals are made covert through ambivalent discourses. This framing and erasure is found not only in today's practices, but in ecotheology perspective as well. Pennarola (2024) conducts a research using Stibbe's lenses on the Bible. The researcher goes on to say that ecotheology has concepts that may differ from that of science of the modern era. In the sphere of fiction, animal exploitation has been de-sensitized to an extent. There are novels in which meat production and consumption are made normal. Animals' subjectivity and human dominance is achieved through language. The consumers are unaware of the fact that they are being fed, covertly, the notion of meat consumption (Dunn, 2015). Moreover, this attitude is extended to different industries around the globe. Anthropocentricism and ambivalence, when associated together, are tools to background the issue of environment disruption at the hands of human and bring into spot the notion of luxuriousness and human-centeredness. Looking at this exploitation from Foucault's perspective, it can be assessed that these slaughterhouses and farms are Panopticons- manifestation of control of animals and human workers. The attitude of this type towards animals has been institutionalized through a capitalist perspective, ultimately leading to crisis of environment and climate change (Gordon, 2022). In the world of advertisement, erasure is used to great extent. Stibbe (2023) points toward this scheme of online advertisements by basing his research on the ads of Coca-Cola cold drink. A set of techniques is used to allure the consumers to buy the product. Mostly, the side effects of the product are backgrounded via a narrative which only displays pros of the product. Multinational companies are hub of erasing the origin of their food products. Animals and/or fruits may be depicted in a partial form or they may be neglected entirely in these advertisements. The retailers inculcate and metaphorize their products in a way that foreground technological advancement, erasing the natural processes which resulted in exploitation of natural habitat or species other than human. The economic growth is an important factor to be considered; however, there needs to be awareness about the processes of the production of multinational brands' products (Ain, Ahmed, Ghilzai and Asim, 2023).

The online realm is one of the main tools used by the retailers to promote their anthropocentric and ambivalent agendas. Most of the researches have been done on fashion

sustainability in quite a general and broader sense. There is need to narrow down this research to areas which are considered a symbol of prestige within the fashion industry. It is evident that leather industry is one of the examples of prestigious domains of the vogue industry. In Pakistan, there are brands that have been selling leather products for quite sometimes. There is need to conduct researches on this domain in Pakistani context. This research paper is an endeavor to address the issue of erasure and anthropocentric tendencies of manifested by the leather-selling websites with special reference to Pakistan.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Theoretical Framework

The author tailors a framework by taking insights from Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen's theory of multimodality presented in 2006 (they kept on refining it). Kress and Leeuwen posited that communication is not made only through written language, but there are different modes which are used to convey meanings (Leeuwen, 2015). Language in its broader sense includes visuals- images, videos and audio mode. The author of this research paper takes three modes (linguistic, visual, and spatial) out of the five modes presented by the theorists. These modes are taken to analyze the images taken from the websites. Additionally, the concept of *Erasure* is employed to account for the elements that are backgrounded and erased. Erasure is when certain ecological elements are totally or partially neglected in presentation of certain type of discourse. Three types of erasure- the void, the trace and the mask- are taken into consideration for the analysis (Stibbe, 2014). The ultimate conceptualized framework is used to carry out the analysis of the websites.

3.2 Data Selection

The author selected two websites of different brands that are selling leather products. Both of the brands are of Pakistani origin. Purposive sampling is employed by the researcher. The two brands are selected on the basis of their establishment in Pakistan. *Jafferjees* is a brand that was founded in 1880 in Quetta, then British India. It is the oldest brand of Pakistani origin dealing in leather products. The second brand is *Kordovan Leather* that started selling *faux or vegan leather* in Pakistan in 2020 for the first time. Kordovan Leather is the first brand to bring in the concept of *vegan leather* in Pakistan and the first one to make the material, required for making vegan leather, within Pakistan. These are some of the factors that led to selection of these two brands.

3.3 Data Collection

The author explores the homepages of the website selected and the sections where they claimed to be working in line with the sustainable goals to diminish the effects of climate change. Description section of items on the homepage of each website is scrutinized. Images on the very first page of the selected websites are taken into account to look for erasure of the ecological elements.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Jafferjees

Jafferjees was established back in 1880 in the subcontinent. At that time, the British Colonizers ruled the region. Its foundation was laid in Quetta. The website of this brand is full of images and videos of customers that are all evoking emotions of the consumers to be. Most of the images feature elements where prestige and luxury are foregrounded while animals are erased or backgrounded. The very first image on homepage of the website is:

It features daily use items at its center. There is a keychain and a wallet fancied upon on a gift box. One may see a few other boxes scattered around on the table. It gives a sense of euphoria to those who visit the website. The line, "The Joy of Giving.", denotes towards kindling the customers to buy from the brand and gift it to their close ones. A very staunch fact is neglected totally; the origin of the leather. Additionally, the boxes around have the same colour as those of the animal skins hanged on the wall behind. Stibbe's erasure is a helpful tool to discuss this image. In the written language, technique of "the void" is used to totally disregard the origin of the product. In visualization, the hides hung behind are blurred; it shows "the trace" which means the origin of the products is presented in a very nebulous way. Overall, the image is perfect depiction of how the animal origin of these products is hindered.

On the very first page of the website, where the images are scrolling automatically, there is another image:

This image is a notice from the retailers to the consumers about their closure of an outlet in Islamabad. When examined closely, it is found that even the notice is written on a plate made out of leather. It is, in fact, an animated depiction; however, the concept of a world where leather products prevail is presented implicitly. The origin of the leather obtained by the website is entirely put in background.

Scrolling down, a sentence is written below these images, *"With a legacy dating back to 1880, Jafferjees is one of the oldest leather goods brand in the world."* It ingrains a sense of quality and historical significance of the brand. The consumers are attracted towards it, considering it a well-established brand. However, there is not a single trace of the cruelty inflicted upon animals since the inception of the brand.

In addition to this, the website accommodates more images with description written beside. These images are:

OUR SIGNATURE DESIGNS

Timeless designs that help you to make a lasting impression

THE ART OF GIFTING

Personalized Jafferjees gifts are certain to bring a smile on your loved ones' face

Image on the left shows a white color hand bag with the brand's logo on it and a wallet wrapped around a plant. This is paradoxical as the leather is made from hides of animals which are part of the ecosystem, at the same time; there is depiction of plants placed on the table beside the products. They tried to blend the natural resources with their products to give a feel of intimacy with the nature to their consumers. Further, the description says, "OUR SIGNATURE DESIGNS" again, evoking a feel of prestige and luxuriousness in the readers of the description. The image does not provide a single clue of the origin of the material from which these two products are made. Talking about the image on the right, it manifests a set of daily use items and all these items are red in color. The purse shown in the image is rested upon a black stone. Stones are found in nature. They are natural material. This may be interpreted as an amalgamating nature and exploited natural material into one frame. Moreover, the image is described as, "THE ART OF GIFTING" stimulating the interest of the consumers towards the

product. However, smiles on human faces are considered but the animals that have been slaughtered to obtain the leather are not mentioned. They are made invisible in this description.

Moving on, the website has another image where promotion of their leather-made product is encapsulated in such way that anthropocentric attitude of humans is visible.

Handcrafted leather products from artisans specializing in their craft.

STRUCTURED FOR WORK
Designs that boost your productivity and style

The following image is quintessence of how the leather products are being normalized in daily routine of human beings. The caption on the left says the hand bag is handcrafted by experts of the field. On the right, an image is shown with a black bag being carried by a person in an office setting and below it is a caption suggesting using this bag to boost your productivity and style. Looking at it from the lens of erasure, selection of such type of words backgrounds animals and their exploitative suffering in the tanneries and in the farms, leading to an anthropocentric notion of the world.

If the page is scrolled down a little, another set of images pop up:

FEATURED PRODUCTS

DOUBLE ACT
Flexible designs for the work-day and evenings

DINNER & DANCE
Charm any room that you walk into with one of our graceful evening bags

OUT TO BRUNCH
Dazzle during the day with an opulent contemporary look

In this set of images, on the most left, there is a bag being held in hands by a person. In this image it is evident that the bag is foregrounded and the plants and greenery is backgrounded. It is an example of "the void" technique of erasure. The linguistic choices used are also harboring a feel of normalcy and, simultaneously, overlooking the origin of the items in the images. The next two images are giving rise to prestige of the leather products and pay no attention to the origin. The language used carries an entire ideology of anthropocentricity where choices such as "charm any room that you walk into. . . ." and "opulent contemporary look" are tokens to masking the process of production of the leather items and putting humans on vanguard.

An example of anthropocentric nature of the leather retailers is present in the following image on the website's homepage:

A heritage and design sense which is synonymous with style and durability.

EXPLORE THE WORLD

Make a stylish statement everywhere you go

The image shows a wallet made up of leather being held by a lady. The other items in the luggage are also leather-made. Additionally, the carpet is made up of white fur. Fur is another ingredient fetched off of animals. The captions written under the picture encourages the consumers for travelling promoting leather goods. On the right, heritage of the brand is discussed. These types of linguistic choices lead to trust building and camaraderie between the manufacturer and the customer. In all this, the origin of the leather is not given a single hint to it. The human-centric values foregrounded and brought into prominence through visualization and written language. The website's homepage is full of content that points towards anthropocentricism where animals are almost erased to an extent that the consumers forget about the origin of the material being used.

Taking in account the notion of ambivalence discourse, the website is full of such instance. The following image is taken from the section, "Corporate Social Responsibility":

In the image, there are two hands holding two different versions of the reality; on the left is vista of a developed infrastructure and on the right is depiction of globe. The ambivalence in this visual discourse is that the brand at face value is trying to maintain a world where there is no fear of climate distortion; in fact, the hand holding a developed infrastructure is guarantee to a safe future. However, leather industry and brands are not always sustainable. Their harm to the ecological elements is indispensable. The process of slaughtering, tanning, and releasing waste water of full of chemicals into without a proper disposal is not shown. In the section below this image, there is a line saying, ". . . we impact the world around us positively," this sentence is an example of ambivalence found in this brand's rhetoric. At one hand, they are polluting the environment by flaying animals, and on the other hand, they are generating an eco-friendly discourse to gain the sympathies of their consumers. Another line, "corporate and personal integrity is paramount." They did not mention the animal origin of their leather products in their advertisement, yet, they are claiming the rhetoric of integrity.

Jafferjees is one of the oldest and well-reputed brands in Pakistan. They are going global as well. However, there is plethora of ads that have been on the website and these ads promote the anthropocentric tendencies through utilization of certain type of discourse using a tricky language in pursuit of engaging and captivating the consumers.

4.2 Kordovan Leather

Kordovan leather is one of the leading brands in Pakistani leather industry. It has made its footprint in the industry in the previous decade. Having its origin for almost 130 years, it is the first brand of Pakistan that brought the concept of *vegan leather or faux leather* in Pakistan with material made within Pakistan. It is an attempt to promote climate-friendly tendencies and inclinations in the cutting-edge era. To begin with, the homepage of the website shows an image:

In the image, it is clear that the linguistic choices are foregrounding the concept of anthropocentricity by associating leather good with prestige. The word "genuine" is an indicator of an attempt made by the retailers to consolidate durability and strength of their product to lure customers towards them. These catchy phrases are main tools to advance their anthropocentric agendas. If the colors are evaluated, the whole picture is in black and white. This provides an idea of prestige to the viewers. Moreover, it was common in the elite class to wear long coats as it symbolized a high status in the society. All these elements are combined in the image to point towards anthropocentric world. In all this, there is not any single indication towards the origin of the leather. It is a technique of "the void" if assessed in terms of Stibbe's erasure.

Another instance on the website can be inferred from this image:

In the image, a person using a metal tool to adjust leather hides into an appropriate and sleek design. The hands and the tool are focused while some part of the hide and some tools are

blurred. This image inculcates all of three types of erasure in an interconnected manner. It shows a hide; however, there is not any mentioning of its origin. It curtails the fact that animals have to go through much more severe procedures before being tanned.

Scrolling down, there is another image on the website which forms anthropocentric vision of this industry;

Premium Leather

We ensure top quality leather for our products by sourcing from ethical suppliers, inspecting for texture and color consistency, and conducting durability tests. Only leather that passes our strict quality control measures is used in production.

The first thing is that there is no mention in description about the animals. The whole focus of the repertoire used is on human beings. Moreover, the choice of words exacerbates the situation even more. Words like *premium*, *top quality*, and *ethical* are used to construct a positive view of the leather industry. Ambivalence in this discourse is that it does not mention what does it mean by "ethical suppliers", and using just some words is not enough as proof is required. The image metaphorizes human craftsmanship and final quality of the product through zipper and stitching of the jacket shown. It obscures the origin again. This type of framing is heavily influential in brainwashing the consumers and the customers of leather.

Three images are juxtaposed horizontally with claims of ethical production;

Ethical Sourcing

Our company is committed to sourcing our materials from ethical and sustainable sources. This means we only use leather that is obtained from animals that were raised humanely and without the use of harmful chemicals. We also ensure that our suppliers are committed to fair labor practices and environmentally responsible methods.

Environmental Responsibility

We are committed to reducing our environmental impact and promoting sustainable practices in every aspect of our business. 6% of our earnings go towards environmental NGOs so we may play a part in bettering the world. We also encourage our customers to make environmentally responsible choices by offering products that are designed to last and reducing packaging waste.

Quality Craftsmanship

We believe in the value of quality craftsmanship and take pride in producing leather goods that are designed to last. Our products are made with attention to detail and using traditional techniques to ensure that they are not only durable but also beautiful and timeless.

There a reader can find ambivalence in the discourse. There are claims of ethical sourcing and environmental responsibility in the first two images from the left. The retailers used the words *sustainable sources, humanely, fair labor practices,* etc. to captivate the consumers

attention. If we look at the images, there is no sign of animals, and image in the middle blurs the natural greenery indicating that still anthropocentric inclination is there is the discourse. One more factor is the claim made in the description of the second image, which says that six percent of the earnings are provided to different NGOs by Kordovan Leather. This mesmerizes the customers to a great extent. Further, in the third image, present on the very right side of this collection, once again, the brand's excellence is presented in a way to balance out the claims made in the two images on left. Overall, these claims are examples of ambivalent discourse copiously used in the marketing strategies. To add cherry on top, the website claims the use of *faux* *leather*:
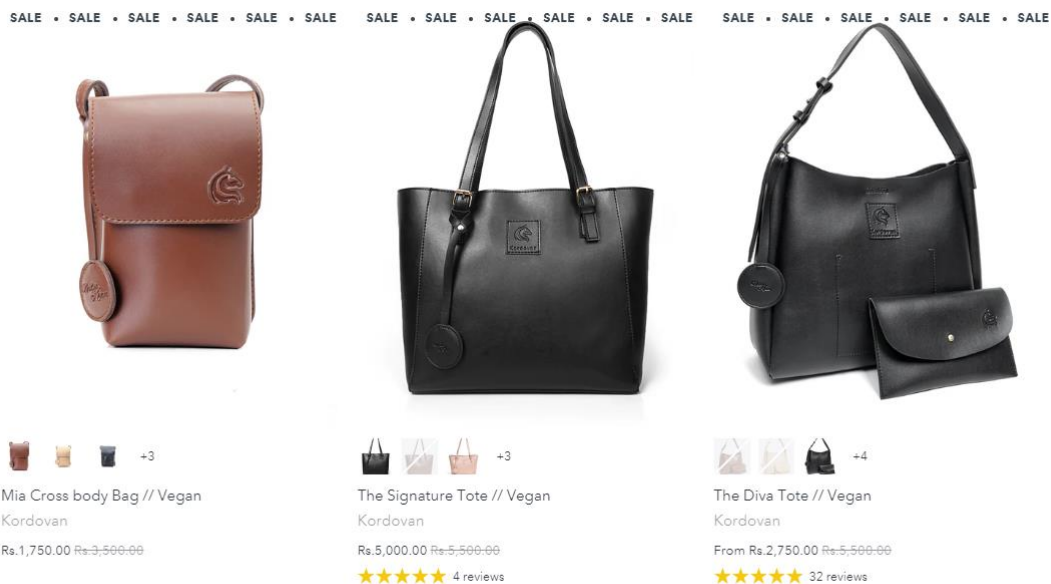
Vegan or faux leather is concept that is brought to mitigate the climate disruption and ethicize the exploitation of animals. A product made up of vegan leather is actually an amalgam of different plastic materials used to shape it like original leather. The materials used in making faux leather are different synthetic polymers. Among these, polyurethane (PV) and polyvinyl chloride (PVC) are major ones. The ambivalence in this type of discourse is that plastic is another material which is non-biodegradable, which means it will ultimately distort the ecosystem. At one hand, animals' exploitation is being dropped by bringing in a new concept of using plastic to make real-leather-like products, and on the other hand, this new notion is as harmful to the ecosystem as the previous one. This proves the ambivalence of the discourses which further denotes the anthropocentric affinities of human beings. Leather industry has long been a subject of debate with people trying to defend it from the critics who constantly criticize it for its treatment of animals as some objects. In case of Pakistan, there is no difference. Most people are unaware of the origin of leather and those who are aware pay no heed to unethical attitudes towards animals.

5. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
5.1 Findings and Conclusion

The researcher carried out a thorough analysis of the two brands selected for conduction of the study. The two websites selected for the analysis promoted anthropocentric tendencies

through certain visualization and linguistic choices. The products were presented in such a way that their origin was partially or entirely neglected or hid. Moreover, the framing and metaphorization of the products led to usage of ambivalent discourse in order to cater to their marketing goals and objectives. The ethical considerations were kept in mind and mentioned on both of the websites; however, this did not justify the exploitation being carried out. The poor waste management in the tanneries to plethora of tanneries being uncertified is a major factor in disruption of the ecosystem, especially the atmosphere. The concept of vegan or faux leather is another discourse which is ambivalent in nature. A product made up of plastic may not include any harm to animals but in broader and holistic sense, it is a factor in aggravation of the climate change by disseminating plastic.

To sum it up, every discourse in the realm of marketing is misleading in one way or another. Leather industry leverages this type of discourse to capture their consumers. In Pakistani context, the two brands chosen for the analysis are quite well-established in their domain. There is a greater need of propagation of awareness about this leather production and the processes involved. Additionally, the government may take certain measure to spread awareness about this industry. Academic sphere may also incorporate measures to educate the people and the young generation about this.

5.2 Future Recommendations

This research will pave a way for the future researcher to divert there attention to the leather industry of Pakistan. Further research on sanctioning and banning of different illegal or uncertified brands can be taken into consideration. Furthermore, discourse analyses can be done to account for marketing strategies that are used on online websites of the brands. Unveiling ambivalent discourses of other sectors of economic well-being is an area that can be explored by the future researchers to spread awareness in the people and sanction the consumerism culture.

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