T. C.

BİNGÖL ÜNİVERSİTESİ

SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ

İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI

THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF INTEGRATION PROCESS OF WESTERN MUSLIMS IN *THE BLACK ALBUM* BY HANIF KUREISHI, *THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST* BY MOHSIN HAMID AND *BRICK LANE* BY MONICA ALI

Hazırlayan

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(HANİF KUREİSHİ'NİN *KARA PLAK*, MOHSİN HAMİD'İN *GÖNÜLSÜZ KÖKTENCİ* VE MONİCA ALİ'NİN *BRİCK LANE* ROMANLARINDA BATILI MÜSLÜMANLARIN ENTEGRASYON SÜRECİ ÜZERİNE KARŞILAŞTIRMALI BİR ÇALIŞMA)

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NOTIFICATION OF SCIENTIFIC ETHICS

I declare that this master's thesis named as "The Comparative Study of Integration Process of Western Muslims in *The Black Album* by Hanif Kureishi, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid and *Brick Lane* by Monica Ali" has been complied with scientific ethics and academic rules. In this study, which I have prepared in accordance with the rules of writing the thesis, I refer directly or indirectly to each citation I made, and the works I have benefited from consist of those shown in the bibliography.

18/06/2019

Zehra EKİNEKER GÜDER

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

PREFACE

First of all, greatest thanks to God, the Almighty. It is actually with the help of him that I have been able to finish this study. I have always felt his hand on me.

Secondly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Ahmet KAYINTU, who has always provided benevolent support and has been a source of inspiration to me throughout my study. First of all, he gave me the chance to study on this particular subject and his supportive attitude has greatly pushed me to come to an end in my study. Without his sincere cooperation and advice, it would have been a great challenge for me to finish this study. I am really thankful to him.

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ABSTRACT

Bingol Üniversity Institute of Social Sciences Abstract of Master's Thesis

Title of the Thesis: The Comparative Study of Integration Process of Western Muslims in *The Black Album* by Hanif Kureishi, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid and Brick Lane by Monica Ali.

Author: Zehra EKİNEKER GÜDER

Supervisor: Dr. Ahmet KAYINTU

Department: English Language and Literature

Sub-field: English Language and Literature

Date: 18.06.2019

Immigration and globalization processes throughout the world have brought about the existence of a considerable number of Asian people in Britain and the USA with a variety of ethnicity, language, lifestyle, and religion and these countries have become far more diverse and multicultural. The reality of such diverse cultures and religions within Britain and the USA brings out the notion of integration. Therefore, this study particularly aims at answering the question "Is Muslim integration to English and American cultures really achievable?" For this purpose, this study is dedicated to the analysis of three post-colonial novels: *The Black Album, Brick Lane,* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by three different writers of South Asian origin: Hanif Kureishi, Monica Ali, and Mohsin Hamid respectively. The study analyzes the novels in terms of the problems Muslims experience in their integration process to the host cultures of England and the USA. Each of the novels are predominantly populated by South Asian characters and they will be handled as discrete items of focus because each of them portrays a different immigrant subjectivity and possesses an inherent quality in the way the issues are covered. The study consists of five sections. In the introduction section, theoretical ground of the study in terms of postcolonialism, immigration, and integration will be presented drawing on the theories of Ania Loomba, John McLeod, Stuart Hall, and Bill Ashcroft et all… The introduction part is followed by the main body, which consists of three subparts. In this part, analysis of three novels will be carried out discretely in terms of the integration problems Muslim characters go through in a Western context. Lastly comes the conclusion part, in which a summation will be presented in terms of the differences and similarities of the integration problems handled in each book and an assessment with regard to the future of Muslim integration will be provided.

Key Words: Immigration, postcolonialism, South Asian, Muslim integration.

ÖZET

Bingöl Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Yüksek Lisans Tez Özeti

Tezin Başlığı: Hanif Kureishi'nin *Kara Plak*, Mohsin Hamid'in *Gönülsüz Köktenci* ve Monica Ali'nin *Brick Lane* Romanlarında Batılı Müslümanların Entegrasyon Süreci Üzerine Karşılaştırmalı Bir Çalışma.
Tezin Yazarı: Zehra EKİNEKER GÜDER
Danışman: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ahmet KAYINTU
Anabilim Dalı: İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı
Bilim Dalı: İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı
Kabul Tarihi:18.06.2019
Sayfa Sayısı:71
Dünyadaki göç ve küreselleşme süreçleri, İngiltere ve ABD'de çeşitli etnik köken, dil, yaşam tarzı ve dini inanca sahip kayda değer sayıda Asyalının varlığını ortaya çıkardı ve bu ülkeler çok daha çeşitli ve çok kültürlü hale geldi. İngiltere ve ABD'deki bu tür farklı kültür ve dinlerin gerçekliği entegrasyon kavramını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma özellikle "İngiliz ve Amerikan kültürlerine Müslüman entegrasyonu gerçekten başarılabilir mi?" sorusunu cevaplamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaçla, bu çalışma üç farklı Güney Asya kökenli yazar tarafından yazılan üç sömürge sonrası romanın incelenmesine adanmıştır: Hanif Kureishi'nin Kara Plak, Monica Ali'nin Brick Lane ve Mohsin Hamid'in Gönülsüz Köktenci eserleri. Romanların her biri ağırlıklı olarak Güney Asyalı karakterlerden oluşmaktadır. Her bir roman farklı bir göçmen öznelliğini betimlediği ve konuların ele alınma biçiminde özgün bir kaliteye sahip olduğu için ayrı ayrı ele alınacaktır. Çalışma beş bölümden oluşmaktadır. Giriş bölümünde, çalışmanın sömürgecilik sonrası, göç ve entegrasyon açısından teorik temeli Ania Loomba, John McLeod, Stuart Hall, Bill Ashcroft ve diğerleri gibi ünlü teorisyenlerin teorilerinden faydalanılarak sunulacaktır. Giriş bölümünü üç alt bölümden oluşan ana bölüm takip etmektedir. Bu bölümde, üç romanın analizi Müslüman karakterlerin Batı bağlamında yaşadıkları entegrasyon sorunları açısından ayrı ayrı yürütülecektir. Son olarak, her bir kitapta ele alınan entegrasyon sorunlarının farklılıkları ve benzerlikleri açısından bir özetin sunulacağı ve Müslüman entegrasyonun geleceğine ilişkin bir değerlendirmenin sunulacağı sonuç bölümü gelir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Göçmenlik, sömürgecilik sonrası, Güney Asyalı, Müslüman entegrasyonu.

ABBREVIATIONS

Ibid: It means “in the same source” and is used to refer to a previously quoted work for the purpose of saving space.

9/11: It is used to refer to the collapse of Twin Towers in New York as a result of the attacks on September 11 2001.

1. INTRODUCTION

Once Christopher Columbus said: "you *can* find 'Asia' by sailing west, if you know where to look!" which, to me, is both literally and figuratively true. Columbus's statement that a person could reach Asia by sailing west from Europe was actually no more than a geographical assertion. What makes it figuratively true; however, is the fact that in today's rapidly globalizing, multicultural world, the number of Asians living in Europe and the USA has reached to such an extent that Third World reality has become an indispensable part of the western life, from education to politics. So, the Third World is not the world apart anymore.

According to the 2011 UK Census, there were 1,451,862 Indian, 1,174,983 Pakistani and 451,529 Bangladeshi residents in the UK, which yields a population of 3,078,374 South Asian in total. This is actually 4.9 per cent when compared with the whole population.[1] As for the USA, according to 2016 population estimation of the United States, there were nearly 21 million Asian Americans.[2] By the way, in Britain, the word "Asian" is particularly used for those who have a South Asian origin (Pakistanis, Indians, Bangladeshis and Sri Lankans). This way, it excludes people of East Asian descend and mixed ethnicity. The situation is a bit different in the United States, where it becomes an all-inclusive term to cover all those with East/South Asian origin, namely Chinese, Filipino, Indian, and Vietnamese Americans.

Naturally, the fact that Britain and the USA presently host such a diverse population of Asians have a historical background. South Asian immigration to Britain started in small numbers in the 17th century. Indians came to Britain, for educational or financial purposes, during the British Raj, with mostly temporary settlement. What marked the beginning of the most significant and permanent wave of Asian immigration to and settlement in the United Kingdom was the fragmentation of the British Empire and the independence of Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh, particularly during the 1950s and 1960s following World War II.

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[1] Office for National Statistics, *2011 Census: Ethnic group, local authorities in the United Kingdom*, Access date: 25. 05. 2019.
[2] American Fact Finder, *Results, Factfinder.census.gov.* Access date: 25.05.2019.

According to Castles and Miller the notion of migration has gained increasing political importance over the past decades of the twentieth century and that is the reason why they prefer to name this period as The Age of Migration.[3] This postcolonial age of migration has resulted in drastic changes in the cultural structure of Britain. The truth is also acknowledged by Çelikel. Especially the immigration of the old British colonies to England after gaining their independence with the end of centuries of colonial practices gave new form to the cultural life of Britain in the postcolonial period.[4] Moreover, post-colonial immigration process has been away from being unproblematic bringing about cultural and identity crises for both the immigrant and the host culture.

Post-colonial period and immigration have inevitably resulted in what we call post-colonial literature, which has become an important sub-division under the wider categories of contemporary British and American fiction. Post colonialism is one of the foremost critical settings for modern British fiction and it is a term which includes an extend of discourses and issues that is connected to the development of national personality, race, migration, and multiculturalism. [5]

In the simplest sense, post-colonial literature is the literature written after colonialism and it represents both a historical period and an ideological stance and discourse. It is made primarily by individuals who come from nations that were formerly colonized. Postcolonial literature often addresses the issues and implications of a country's decolonization and the issues that arise as a consequence of formerly colonized countries' political and cultural autonomy. Therefore, the works of Chinua Achebe, Sam Selvon, Salman Rushdie, Hanif Kureishi, and Monica Ali are assessed under the light of postcolonial literature because they come from formerly colonized countries, write their novels in English, and address the problems of people who have colonial background. Postcolonial literature was called "Commonwealth literature," until the 1980s and postcolonial criticism became a significant domain in literary studies in the early 1990s.

[3] Stephen Castles, and Mark J Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2014, p.5.
[4] Mehmet Ali Çelikel, *Sömürgecilik Sonrası İngiliz Romanında Kültür ve Kimlik*, Bilge Kültür Sanat, İstanbul 2011, p.47.
[5] Nick Bentley, *Contemporary British Fiction*, Edinburg UP, Edinburgh 2008, p. 65.

Lois Tyson makes a summation of the main characteristics of post-colonial criticism. In this sense, postcolonial criticism as a domain within literary studies is both a subject and a theoretical context. Postcolonial criticism as a subject examines literature generated by societies that evolved from the initial stages of colonial contact to the present in reaction to colonial rule. It is true that the colonizers wrote some of this literature; however, much more was written by previously subjugated peoples, and still continues to be written. When we take postcolonial criticism as a subject matter, any assessment of a postcolonial literary practice could be called postcolonial critique irrespective of the theoretical context used. Of course, for English majors, postcolonial criticism is centered on the literature of societies that evolved in reaction to British colonial subjugation since departments of English mainly study literatures published in English. [6]

The terms post-colonial literature and theory present some inherent complexities in the way they are defined. It is the eclectic nature of these terms that make the situation challenging. Moreover, the difficulty of defining the historical and geographical boundaries of the period is another factor which makes it hard to come up with a consistent definition and understanding of the notions. John McLeod argues that we need to question whether we can talk about a consistent post-colonial concept because of the breadth and diversity of space.[7] For example, if we simply take post colonialism as a period term that comes chronologically after colonialism, we fail to see that postcolonialism or postcolonial literature has pervading effects beyond time periods and geographical regions. For this reason, although post-colonial literature is a literature written after imperialism and colonialism, it is not limited to a specific historical period and geography. That postcolonial literature cannot be confined to a particular history and geography is also acknowledged by Ania Loomba, who argues that since the age of colonialism is already finished and progenies of once colonized people are scattered a wide range of geographies, the entire world is postcolonial. She further concludes that a nation might reveal both postcolonial and neo-colonial features. The postcoloniality of a country refers to being formally independent while neo-colonialism denotes the fact that the country is

[6] Lois Tyson, *Critical Theory Today*, Routledge, New York 2006, p.418.
[7] John Mcleod, *Beginning Postcolonialism*, Manchester University Press, Manchester 2000, p.3.

still dependent on a superior model economically or culturally.[8] This situation is also reflected by Ashcroft et all in the following quotation:

> "In a broader sense, postcolonial literature is more of an ideological stance and an anti-colonial discourse rather than a period literature. We use the term 'post-colonial', however, to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day. This is because there is a continuity of preoccupations throughout the historical process initiated by European imperial aggression."[9]

The term post-colonialism, when used in the ideological sense of anti-colonialism, is no longer just a term that characterizes the historical period after colonialism, but it also represents a political stance, because even in works written during the colonial period, it is possible to see texts that display anti-colonialism. For example, although E. M Forster was a writer who wrote in colonialist period and isn't known to be an anti-imperialist writer, in *A Passage to India*, there are anti-imperialist and anti-colonial characters who question the British rule in India. Therefore, the fact that a text was written in the postcolonial period does not necessarily mean that the text is anti-colonial. Similarly, the fact that a text was written in the process of colonialism does not prove that it is a colonialist text.

The usage and content of the term postcolonial theory is further expanded by Lois Tyson who argues that colonialist and anticolonialist belief systems can be revealed in any scholarly content; that is why, it is not obligatory for a work to be included in postcolonial realm so that we can utilize postcolonial feedback to analyze it. [10] An extreme example to this is the fact that he uses postcolonial criticism to analyze the Great Gatsby.

At this point, it will be useful to handle some distinctive characteristics of the post-colonial literature. Hybridization, anti-imperialism, cultural conflicts, identity problems, alienation, most of which seem to be inevitable outcomes of immigration process, have been the decisive features of postcolonial literature. Post-colonial literature is particularly distinguished by its emphasis on immigration. "Migration

[8] Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, Routledge, London 1998 p.7.
[9] Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures*, Routledge, London and New York 2002, p. 2.
[10] Lois Tyson, *Critical Theory Today*, Routledge, New York 2006, p.418.

and the resulting ethnic and racial diversity are amongst the most emotive subjects in contemporary societies."[11]

In post-colonial literatures, immigrants are individuals who are trying to survive in their new homeland. In the multicultural and multi-lingual societies of post-colonial period, the immigrant, whose sole purpose is to survive, is dragged into deep cultural contradictions and conflicts. While the immigrant's sense of displacement creates identity crisis, the values that hybridize in the multicultural environment also lead to breaks in the immigrant's self.

Secondly, another important characteristic of post-colonial literature is its engagement in identity construction. Migration and identity construction seem to be closely related to each other. Post-colonial literatures are quite concerned with the terms place and displacement which is the point the post-colonial identity crisis starts to appear. What is missing in identity crisis is an authentic and coherent link between self and place and a continuous feeling of displacement. According to Ashcroft and et all identity crisis and sense of displacement come into being as a result several reasons. Migration, the practice of enslavement, or voluntary transportation for indentured work result in dislocation, which in turn, deteriorates an effective sense of self. Another reason why identity crisis and sense of displacement occur is cultural denigration, which denotes the act of a so-called superior racial or cultural power to impose oppression on the personality of native people either consciously or unconsciously.[12]

Within the context of post-colonial literature, the term identity construction suggests that identity is not embraced as a monolithic and primordial entity, single and static/rooted in the past and present. Rather, it is an ever-changing and multiple existence as Stuart Hall puts it. He draws attention to the fact that contrary to what we think, identity is not something crystal clear and it is far from being unproblematic. We shouldn't take identity as an accomplished fact; rather it is an

[11] Stephen Castles, and Mark J Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2014, p.1.
[12] Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures*, Routledge, London and New York 2002, p.9.

entity which is always in production.[13] In this sense, identity can be constructed even reconstructed, which is a never ending process.

Apart from the constructivist approach to identity, there is also this argumentation that human beings are not endowed with a single identity. It must be known that within every individual and every society there exist multiple identities. These pluralistic identities can include a variety of categories like gender, origin, religion, occupation, place, nationality. In our ordinary lives, we end up having allegiance to a multitude of groups and we take it for granted that we belong to all of them. Therefore, the same person can simultaneously be a citizen of England, but of Asian origin, a Muslim, a liberal, a woman with feministic affiliations, a doctor, a frequent theater goer, a pop music and sports lover. "Each of these collectivities, to all of which this person simultaneously belongs, gives her a particular identity."[14] In this regard, these days, so many people seem to have a problem with these pluralistic identities that "we are in the midst of a global epidemic of identity crisis."[15]

Within the context of post-colonial literature cultural and political identity is constructed through a process of othering. The immigrant, while trying to adapt to his new circumstances in the host country cannot avoid being labeled as other. In this sense, orientalist and colonialist stereotypes seem to be maintaining their remnants in western societies even after colonialist period has technically ended. This process of othering may tragically result in social exclusion and alienation on the side of the immigrant.

This study is dedicated to the analysis of three post-colonial novels; *The Black Album*, *Brick Lane*, and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by three different writers; Hanif Kureishi, Monica Ali, and Mohsin Hamid respectively. The study analyzes the novels in terms of the problems Muslims experience in their integration process to the host cultures of England and the USA. Each of the novels has been predominantly populated by South Asian characters and they will be handled as

[13] Stuart Hall, *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*, Eds. Williams Patrick and Laura Chrisman. *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory*, Harvester Wheatsheaf, London 1994 p. 222
[14] Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* [Electronic Book], Penguin Books, UK 2007.
[15] Ziauddin Sardar, "A Garden of Identities: Multiple Selves and Other Futures", *Journal of Futures Studies*, Vol. 10, No.2, November 2005, p.14.

discrete items of focus because each of them portrays a different immigrant subjectivity and possesses an inherent quality in the way the issues are covered.

Due to immigration and globalization processes, Europe and the USA seem to have lost their relative homogeneity of ethnic composition, language, lifestyle, and religious faith and have become far more diverse and multicultural. Things have long started to change and continuous to do so. This is particularly valid for Britain and the USA. For example, in contemporary times, within the prevalent context of British nationality, the scope of ethnicity and religion has been significantly expanded and the subgroups are increasingly varied. The situation is even more complicated in the USA because subgroups are more mixed there and citizens, apart from their US citizenship, appear to have multiple identities based on race, ethnicity, and religion.[16]

The reality of such diverse cultures and religions within Britain and the USA brings out the notion of integration. Therefore, this study aims at answering the question "Is Muslim integration to English and American cultures fully achievable?" Of course Muslim integration to western countries has so far been away from being unproblematic. Over the past 20 years, much debate has occurred concerning such questions as "Are Muslims integrating?" "Can Muslims integrate?" The issue of integration is handled from a rather biased perspective because of the reality of Islam. Muslim are treated as foreigners and they are seen as apart from other immigrant groups. Muslim integration is damaged by a contemporary obsession with Islam. This contemporary obsession with Islam actually seems to have deeply rooted origins in the past and the relationship between Islam and the West has always been one of a conflict since times immemorial:

> "For more than 1,400 years, since the advent of Islam in Arabia and then into the Islamic empire and civilization of the formerly Christian eastern and southern shores of the Mediterranean, Islam and Christendom have lived side by side—always as neighbors, often as rivals, sometimes as enemies."[17]

There is a diverse body of literature about immigrants' adaptation and they reflect different understandings about the notion of integration. However, the notion of integration basically refers to a mutual understanding and balance between the immigrants and natives. Justin Gest, in Western Muslim Integration, argues that at

[16] Edward Lewis, *The Multiple Identities of the Middle East*, Schocken Books, New York 1998, p.3.
[17] Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West*, Oxford University Press, New York 1993, p. vii.

its center, integration implies a kind of harmony of adjustment between immigrants and locals. There exist two opposing views regarding the very nature of integration. Several researchers and commentators accept integration necessitates the assimilation of newcomers to the needs of native culture, while others are convicted that both new-comers and locals are committed to alter their inclinations to arrive at a commonly worthy set of relations.[18]

Britain is one of the Western countries which have witnessed multicultural problems for the last decades. The increase in the number of immigrants from former colonies made the government to adopt multiculturalist policies. As a multicultural country, Britain has gone through a number of cultural and religious disagreements and conflicts because of the existence of these minority groups with different cultural, religious, and ethnic backgrounds. These disagreements have been mainly concerned with a critique of multiculturalism and the existence of Muslims in Britain that "several liberal politicians and leader-writers wondered if Britain had not made a 'mistake' in letting in 'too many' Muslims."[19]

Salman Rushdie handles the integration process in Britain along with its problematic sides. Firstly, the term *integration* was put forward in an attempt to reduce racial conflicts, which, however, turned out to be nothing more than assimilation since non-whites were expected to act like a white person to fully integrate to the host society. Secondly, came the concept of *racial harmony*, which sounded softer and more desirable. However, it, too, had its flaws. Because, rather than a mutual interaction, it was non-whites who were supposed to maintain the harmony as if they were the only trouble makers. Last but not least, multiculturalism has been put forward; however, it doesn't seem to provide a complete remedy to the mutual conflicts between the natives and immigrants.[20] "Multiculturalism means little more than teaching the kids a few' bongo rhythms, how to tie a sari and so forth."[21]

[18] Justin Gest, "Western Muslim Integration", *Review of Middle East Studies,* Vol. 46, No. 2, Winter 2012, p. 192.
[19] Bhikhu C. Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism*. Macmillan Press, UK 2000, p.301
[20] Salman Rushdie, *The New Empire within Britain*, in *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991*, Granta Books, London 1991, p.137
[21] Rushdie, Ibid., p.137.

2. BLACK ALBUM

Black Album was written by Hanif Kureishi, the Anglo-Asian playwright and author. The novel, set in London of 1989, mainly covers the story of England-born and Pakistani origin Shahid Hasan as the protagonist. Shahid Hasan, a keen lover of literature, moves to London from Kent to study college after the death of his father, who had never appreciated his son's great interest in literature. In London, Shahid gets to know new people and makes new friends, most important ones being fellow Muslim students and a college lecturer named Deedee Osgood, who later becomes his lover. London, along with college life, is quite kind of an experiential arena for Shahid since he has the opportunity to witness and obligation to choose between two opposing sets of life contexts. At one side, there exist his so-called fundamentalist and conservative Muslim friends and at the other side, there is this supposedly postmodern, intellectual, and liberal lecturer. They act like the two extreme ends of a spectrum for Shahid. That is why Shahid Hasan is caught between different identities and ideologies. Initially, Shahid needs the company of these eccentric Asian students. However, at the end of this fundamentalist-liberal confrontation, he opts for the company of Deedee Osgood, the lecturer. This companionship, however, which merely starts as mutual reflections on modern philosophy and literature turns into a relationship accompanied by pop culture, drug, and sex. The relationship has its breaking points during the turmoil of fatwa announced against Salman Rushdie for writing Satanic Verses.

"Kureishi is willing to help to fill what he has called 'a hole in the centre of English writing', a gap about the lives and experiences of black people."[22] The novel, quite manifestly, illustrates the problems Muslim characters, especially second generation Pakistanis, go through in Britain. The problems are quite interrelated and can be categorized as racism, fundamentalism, and quest for identity.

[22] Nahem Yousaf, "Hanif Kureishi and 'the Brown Man's Burden'" *Critical Survey,* Vol. 8, No. 1, 1996, p 14.

2.1.Racism

To start with and elaborate on racism, it is crucial to know the conditions of the time. The novel is set in 1989, when a post-1945 Asian immigration wave had already paved the way for a considerable number of Asians to establish their presence in Britain. In this context, it is important to know that of all non-white peoples in Britain, Asians constitute the majority. In 1985, the number of Asian people in Britain was over a million; nearly half of it was in London. On the other hand, disproportionately enough, Asians are one of the least advantaged groups in terms of employment, housing, and education. Racist exclusion has led to "Asian and Caribbean people being over-represented among the unemployed, those in low-paid and unskilled jobs and those living in low-quality, public and private housing, often in declining urban centers."[23] Moreover, Asian people have suffered a considerable number of violent attacks on their persons and property since 1960s and nothing has been done by authorities to prevent them.

Tariq Modood, in his essay "Political Blackness and British Asians" strongly rejects the usage of the term "black" to denote Asians and further argues that color or class are not main reasons of racism against Asians in British society. If it were so, the findings of white attitude surveys that were carried out for over a decade would be unjustifiable because the surveys mainly conclude that Asians suffer from racial prejudice in a much more increased way than black people. [24] In this sense, the discrimination against Asian people is not merely a color issue. As Tariq Modood has argued, there are certain reasons why hostility of majority is particularly directed to non-whites, especially Asians in Britain. First of all, non-whites make up a substantial community capable of reproducing itself and they have an established value system seen as potential threat or alternative to the existing norm.[25]

Moreover, in the 1980s, the increasing number of immigrants and the rise of unemployment throughout the United Kingdom as a result of the economic crisis led to the rise of nationalism along with traditional values. In Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses,* the satirical portrayal of Margaret Thatcher as Mrs. Torture appears

[23] Robert Miles, "Class Relations and Racism in Britain in the 1980's", *Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationales,* Vol.3, No.1-2, 1987, p. 232.
[24] Tariq Modood, "Political Blackness and British Asians", *Sociology,* Vol. 28, No. 4, November 1994, p.865.
[25]Modood, Ibid., p.865.

to be a reaction of the post-colonial immigrant culture to the traditional British values imposed by Thatcher regime and the pressure on immigrants as a result of nationalism.[26]

On the other hand, Kureishi, even he himself has been exposed to what he calls *casual* racism, believes that "Britain's never been a fascist country and has never had a real fascist party."[27] What alternatively has happened in Britain is the racism of exclusion and superiority. Kureishi argues that Britons, still having those empire attitudes after the war, thought they were the master race and they looked down on Indians and saw them inferior, uneducated, and born servants. "Four hundred years of conquest and looting, four centuries of being told that you are superior to the Fuzzy-Wuzzies and the wogs, leave their stain. This stain has seeped into every part of the culture, the language and daily life; and nothing much has been done to wash it out." [28]

In the *Black Album*, racist discourse is quite overwhelming. Pakistani characters are inevitably doomed to be the "Other" in the society and they are excluded from British way of life in some way or another. In London, they cannot avoid being labeled as 'Paki', 'blackies', and 'coloured' etc. Moreover, there are certain places in London to which immigrants cannot dare to enter because of fear of racial attacks. Shahid Hasan puts at the very beginning of the novel:

> "Everywhere I went I was the only dark-skinned. How did this make people see me? I began to be scared of going into certain places. I didn't know what they were thinking. I was convinced they were full of sneering and disgust and hatred. And if they were pleasant, I imagined they were hypocrites. I became paranoid. I couldn't go out. I knew I was confused and … fucked up. But I didn't know what to do." [29]

It is not only Shahid who suffers from racial prejudices. Another character, Tahira, expresses how she has been exposed to racism:

> "But we women go to a lot of trouble to conceal our allures. Surely you've heard how hard it is to wear the hijab? We are constantly mocked and reviled, as if we were the dirty ones.

[26] Mehmet Ali Çelikel, *Sömürgecilik Sonrası İngiliz Romanında Kültür ve Kimlik*, Bilge Kültür Sanat, İstanbul 2011, p. 64-65.
[27] British Library, *Discovering Literature: 20th century*, *Interview with Hanif Kureishi,* Access date: 28.05.2019, https://www.bl.uk/20th-century-literature/videos/interview-with-hanif-kureishi
[28] Salman Rushdie, *The New Empire within Britain*, in *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991*, Granta Books, London 1991, p.130.
[29] Hanif Kureishi, *The Black Album*, Faber Faber, London 1995, p.10

> Yesterday, a man on the street said, this is England, not Dubai, and tried to rip my scarf off."[30]

Racism has close ties with exclusion. Racist practices of the host country make the Asian characters to feel alienated and detached from the wider community but at the same time, it leads them to unite in groups of fellow friends to achieve a sense of belonging and fight against racism and injustice. "To Tariq Modood, the language and imagery of public identity is integrally linked with inequality, discrimination and exclusion on the one hand, and with group pride, mobilisation and liberation on the other hand."[31]

There are certainly some very striking differences between first and second generation Pakistanis in Britain in the way they integrate into the host culture. This is a reality Kureishi gives glimpses of in *The Black Album* and elaborates on in *My Son the Fanatic*. First of all, for the first generation Pakistanis, Britain was a dreamland. Shahid's father had always thought that one day they would be accepted as genuine Europeans and ignored his roots. Similarly, Kureishi's father had always enjoyed the life in Britain and did not feel excluded.

> "[…] my father was much more liberal and he liked the Pink Floyd. And he liked England and he wanted to be English. And he liked English people. And he was very curious about England. And he liked all the neighbours. He really liked being here. And was determined to fit in and join in. And he didn't feel that being an Indian somehow excluded him from knowing about England."[32]

On the other hand, the situation of second generation Pakistanis, though they have been born and brought up in Britain and have no life experiences to relate to Pakistan, is different than this. Shahid, for example, is not as optimistic as his father in terms of the prospect of a harmonious and unproblematic integration. In this sense, he quite assertively says that: "We're third-class citizens, even lower than the white working class. Racist violence is getting worse! Papa thought it would stop, that we'd be accepted here as English. We haven't been! We're not equal! It's gonna be like America. However far we go, we'll always be underneath!"[33] Similarly,

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[30] Hanif Kureishi, *The Black Album*, Faber Faber, London 1995, p.105.
[31] Tariq Modood, "Political Blackness and British Asians", *Sociology*, Vol. 28, No. 4, November 1994, p.864.
[32] Colin MacCabe, "Hanif Kureishi and London", *Architectural Association School of Architecture*, AA Files, No. 49, Spring 2003, p.49.
[33] Hanif Kureishi, *The Black Album*, Faber Faber, London 1995, p. 209.

Kureishi, as a second generation Pakistani, portrays the reality of Pakistanis in England and admits his own inferiority complex in *The World and the Bomb*. He acknowledges that within the mid-1960's, Pakistanis were getting a rising attention in Britain; they were being mocked on TV and abused by statesmen. They had the most noticeably awful occupations; they felt quite uneasy in Britain. Some of them had even troubles related to the language. They were loathed and felt displaced. From this general account about the situation of Pakistanis in Britain, he moves on to his personal experience by admitting that he had attempted to deny his Pakistani self from the very beginning. He had been embarrassed because of his native self and had wanted to be like everybody else. [34]

2.2.Fundamentalism

It wouldn't be wrong to say that it is no coincidence Shahid's presence in London happens to meet the case of fatwa issued against Salman Rushdie. Hanif Kureishi declares the fatwa and his concern about the rise of Islamic radicalism as one of the motives for writing the book.[35] In fact, *The Black Album* must partially be read as a reaction to the fatwa against his pal. Kureishi intends to construct a multi-layered novel in which he handles the case of Rushdie and fatwa, along with several other things, and implies his own position. For Kureishi, the fatwa was the beginning of a worldwide revolutionary movement. Therefore, according to Kenneth C. Kaleta, Kureishi by writing *The Black Album* took a stand against censorship, violent threats, and terrorism and aimed at creating awareness about the controversy.[36]

In the novel, second generation Pakistanis, including Shahid, gather around Riaz, who repeatedly mentors them on Islamic revelation and community and become unified to protect Asian families from racial attacks. Moreover, the members of Riaz's group are instantly ready to get mobilized against any action they take for granted as a threat or challenge to Muslim community or authority of Islam. Similarly, Nahem Yousaf claims that Kureishi's intention is to come up with complicated and conflicting hybridized people with their cultural identities that are inseparably connected to class politics. Asian people and their communities are not

[34] Hanif Kureishi, *The Word and the Bomb,* Faber and Faber, London 2005, p. 15.
[35] British Library, *Discovering Literature: 20th century, Interview with Hanif Kureishi,* Access date: 28.05.2019, https://www.bl.uk/20th-century-literature/videos/interview-with-hanif-kureishi.
[36] Kenneth C. Kaleta, *Hanif Kureishi: Post-colonial Storyteller,* University of Texas Press, Austin 1988, p.121.

rendered collectively or static. It is only when ethnically recognizable groups like them are threatened and assaulted that they begin to recognize the significance of creating mass identity which can provide a political and survivalist objective. This is actually an idea which he elaborates on in *The Black Album*.[37]

In one of his weekly advice sessions, Riaz goes through what he calls "other filthy matter" referring to the *Satanic Verses* and puts the question "After all, for what higher purpose can such literature possibly exist?"[38] That is exactly the philosophical/literary discussion Kureishi wants to open up. He wants to present the issue under the dichotomy of free expression and faith/censorship. By the way, neither Salman Rushdie nor the book is ever mentioned by name as if to promote the rules of censorship. Riaz makes every attempt to create a grounded fundamental and religious discourse to challenge the notion of free expression. This way, he intends to divert Shahid's engagement in liberalism and impose the notion of fundamentalism on him. Firstly, Riaz criticizes western way of self-absorption and seeking pleasure as totally individualistic and discusses the notions of faith and free expression. In one of his weekly mentorships, he commits himself to convince his fellow friends to take an action against the book by presenting the dichotomy between religion and liberalism. To him, self-indulgence shouldn't be prioritized over the nourishing comforts of religion. Belief in religion and concern for others are more significant than the products of human imagination. A person shouldn't be given an unlimited freedom in society It is important to take the beliefs and concerns of millions of people into consideration seriously.[39] That is a great paradigm shift from the general framework of liberalism and liberal society. Here, he refers to the concerns of a great number of Muslims about the provocative content of The Satanic Verses.

This extensive indoctrination process proves fruitful in all group members accept for Shahid, who questions Riaz by asking: "Would you kill a man for writing a book?"[40] Riaz, in turn, answers by saying "Stone dead. That's the least I would do to him. Are you suggesting this is something wrong?"[41] The idea of killing someone

[37] Nahem Yousaf, "Hanif Kureishi and 'the Brown Man's Burden'" *Critical Survey,* Vol. 8, No. 1, 1996, p 17.
[38] Hanif Kureishi, *The Black Album*, Faber Faber, London 1995, p. 183.
[39] Kureishi, Ibid., p.184.
[40] Kureishi, Ibid., p. 172.
[41] Hanif Kureishi, *The Black Album*, Faber Faber, London 1995, p. 172.

because of writing a book, no matter how offensive it is to the faith of a particular community, makes Shahid sick and he finds the act quite violent. On the other hand, Riaz and his group stick to the decision of burning the controversial book. Shahid is in a dilemma because as a supporter of imagination and free will, he doesn't support the book burning. In this sense, he runs the risk of fetishizing literature. No matter how much he tries to escape the book burning scene, he cannot help bringing a boom and some strings for the purpose. He does not have the courage to protest. He does nothing more than to say someone beside him that he doesn't appreciate the act and doesn't understand why his community is doing this. After this event, Shahid decides to take a different path from his friends. By doing so, Shahid, in a sense betrays his friends and he chooses liberal ideology. But, according to Kureishi, ideology comes at a cost. The fundamentalist friends attack Deedee's house, in which Deedee and Shahid are together. Another fundamentalist act they take against the book is to attack a bookstore in which the book is sold.

As for the case of Satanic Verses, Homi Bhabba comments that what is problematic about the understanding of fundamentalism is that "fundamentalism is mistakenly seen by modernists as a thing of distant past, described as archaic, almost medieval. However, the people who make demands over Satanic Verses are not from the distant past, they happen to live now and here.[42]

There must be a reason why fundamentalism is so prevalent among young Pakistanis rather than their fathers. Riaz, who acts like the leader of fundamentalist Muslim students, expresses his antipathy towards western society by "The whites are very insular, surely they won't admit people like us into their world?' (....) This will never be my home (....)'I will never entirely understand it."[43] This statement of Riaz proves Kureishi's argument that fundamentalists find mixing terrifying:

> "…that's why fundamentalism is interesting, because to me it's an attempt to create a purity. It's to say we're not really living in England at all. We're going to keep everything that's English, everything that's capitalist, everything that's white, everything that's corrupt, it's going to be outside. And everything that's good and pure and Islamic, it's going to be in

[42] Jonathan Rutherford, *The Third Space Interview with Homi Bhabba*, in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1990, p.215.
[43] Hanif Kureishi, *The Black Album*, Faber Faber, London 1995, p. 175.

here, with these people. You can see that mixing was terrifying, just as racists find mixing terrifying. But of course it's inevitable."[44]

The release of *The Satanic Verses*, which is notoriously famous for its offensive discourse against the life of Islamic prophet, creates provocative effects on Riaz and members of his group because they believe that the Prophet and his family have been insulted and the authenticity of the *Qur'an* has been challenged. As Kureishi argues words have sort of explosive effect on people. Muslims all around the world took somehow a reactionary position against the case of *The Satanic Verses* but of course not in the form of a single, unified aggression as also argued by Moodood "Interestingly enough, as a result of The Satanic Verses affair, some Muslim activists are simplifying the range and variety of Muslim values and practices into a simple oppositional, political Islamism, so that the very term 'Muslim' becomes identified with their own political causes."[45] It became an international issue as a result of the fatwa declared by Ayatollah Khomeini. According to Ali Mazrui, Ayatollah Khomeini's death sentence on Salman Rushdie was completely outside of Western standards of legitimate behavior. Moreover, what was new about it was not the idea of remote control murder; it was the openness in which it was declared.[46]

Naturally, there has been much debate around the controversial nature of the book, *The Satanic Verses.* Some writers like Edward Said, who, in his ground-breaking work *Orientalism* greatly challenged western conception and stereotypes of the East and Islam, adopted a rather secular and liberal disposition regarding Rushdie's case. He regarded it as a natural outcome of human imagination and prioritized Rushdie's freedom of expression as a writer "I am an absolute believer in absolute freedom of expression"[47] On the other hand, Ali Mazrui argues that "This

[44] Colin MacCabe, "Hanif Kureishi and London", *Architectural Association School of Architecture,* AA Files, No. 49, Spring 2003, p. 47.
[45] Tariq Modood, "Political Blackness and British Asians", *Sociology,* Vol. 28, No. 4, November 1994, p. 868.
[46] Ali A. Mazrui, "Satanic Verses or a Satanic Novel? Moral Dilemmas of the Rushdie Affair", *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political,* Vol. 15, No. 1 Winter 1990, p.108.
[47] Quoted in Hasan Majed, *Islam and Muslim Identities in Four Contemporary British Novels*, University of Sunderland, Doctoral Thesis, 2012, p.45.

novel elevates the pleasure of art above the pain of society. Rushdie subordinates the real anguish of Muslim believers to the titillation of his Western readers."[48]

Similarly, the writers like Salman Rushdie appear to possess a sort of double consciousness or a form of hybrid identity, which challenges the readers to set their position at times. Salman Rushdie's hybrid identity enables him to speak both as a westerner and as an immigrant from time to time. [49] This situation results in both satisfaction and disappointments on the side of readers because each group expects a certain position. For example, when he is writing about racism in England, he adopts an immigrant perspective by saying "British racism, of course, is not our problem. It's yours. We simply suffer from the effects of your problem"[50] On the other hand, there are times when he sets his position as a westernized person. This is especially true for the case of The Satanic Verses, which "seems to reinforce Orientalist stereotypes of Islam rather than challenging them."[51] The same reality is also expressed by Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism*. Said argues that even before the publication of *The Satanic Verses in 1988*, Rushdie was a challenging figure for the English because of his essays and novels. On the other hand, for many Indians and Pakistanis he was a source of proud because they thought of him both as a renowned writer and a defender for the rights of immigrants. Moreover, he was seen as a strict critic of imperialism and racism. However, his overwhelming status has dramatically declined after the publication of *The Satanic Verses* and subsequent fatwa. He, who was once seen as the representative of Indian Islam, was loathed by his previous admirers for provoking Islamic fundamentalism. [52] Therefore, it is arguable that it is wrong to expect a certain positioning from writers who have come to represent a certain ideology or thought.

[48] Ali A. Mazrui, "Satanic Verses or a Satanic Novel? Moral Dilemmas of the Rushdie Affair", *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political,* Vol. 15, No. 1 Winter 1990, p. 118.
[49] Hasan Majed, *Islam and Muslim Identities in Four Contemporary British Novels*, University of Sunderland, Doctoral Thesis, 2012, p.15.
[50] Salman Rushdie, *The New Empire within Britain,* in *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991*, Granta Books, London 1991, p.138.
[51] Stephen Morton, *Salman Rushdie: Fiction of Postcolonial Modernity*, Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire 2008, p. 64
[52] Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, Vintage Books, New York 1994, p.309.

2.3.The Quest for Identity

Under racial prejudices and pressures, members of subgroups end up having imposed identities. That is to say, if you are a Paki for racists, then your identity is fixed by their words or attitudes. Immigrants naturally turn inward and internalize the otherness— rejected by their new society, they embrace the stereotypes imposed upon them. Moreover, the worst part of it is the fact that you internalize it to the extent that your identity is torn apart by it. That is what limits your identity and makes you the victim of other people's words or ideas. At times and contexts, people feel obsessed with who they are or the way other people see them. The point, here, lies in whether we can choose or prioritize among these simultaneously existing identities. In terms of a constructivist approach of identity, the answer comes as yes. People can choose, prioritize and even change their identity. That is the case with our protagonist Shahid.

For the most part of the story, Shahid feels somewhat lost and uncertain unlike his other friends. His uncertainty comes, partially, from his parental upbringing. He and his brother were taught little about religion and their roots, which was "a decent upbringing" according to his sister-in-law. Papa, a real admirer of The Empire, did not want to belong to a Third World theocracy and expected to be seen and treated as English one day. He fully embraced British way of life and culture at the cost of denigrating his indigenous religion and culture. Chili, his brother, whose only concern has been for girls, cars, and money, has always strived for power and economic status. In this sense, it can be freely argued that Shahid comes from a family which seems to have fully assimilated into British host culture. However, Shahid appears to have different dispositional qualities from his father and brother. He loves literature. He wants something different for himself. His quest for identity firstly leads him to some extremes; he considers joining the National Front and becoming a racist. "I wouldn't touch brown flesh except with a branding iron. I hated all foreign bastards."[53] Secondly, after his father's death, he wants to make a new start by going to the city. Because he believes that in the city, he would be able develop a sense of belonging and he wouldn't feel excluded. With such thoughts in mind, he tries to settle down in his Kilburn bedsit, occupied with Africans,

[53] Hanif Kureishi, *The Black Album*, Faber Faber, London 1995, p.25.

Pakistanis, Irish, and some English students and he is attracted to an older Pakistani student, Riaz, and his mentorship. He and other students in Riaz's group are repeatedly mentored by Riaz about Islamic revelation and community. However, he is never fully committed. Anyway, Shahid tries to connect to his roots and construct his identity.

> "Now, though, Shahid was afraid his ignorance would place him in no man's land. These days everyone was insisting on their identity, coming out as a man, woman, gay, black, Jew – brandishing whichever features they could claim, as if without a tag they wouldn't be human. Shahid, too, wanted to belong to his people. But first he had to know them, their past and what they hoped for."[54]

Shahid meets Deedee Osgood, cultural studies lecturer, at college and he is instantly attracted to her. The novel takes its name from Prince's 1994 album of the same name. Once in the novel, Deedee describes Prince as "He's half black and half white, half man, half woman, half size, feminine but macho, too"[55] in an attempt to emphasize his hybrid identity. This is kind of an analogy to the status of Shahid with the exception that Shahid's hybridity is a cultural, social hybridity rather than a biological one.

He is offered different sets of values by his Asian friends and his white lover: morality, faith, and concern for others on one hand and pleasure; self-absorption, free expression, and individualism on the other respectively. Initially, Shahid has kind of flexible disposition adjusting himself to two opposing life contexts: Riaz's Muslim Brothers and Deedee's liberal/postmodern life. However, things start to get complex after a while. Choosing one means that he can build his identity in a particular way. Therefore, Shahid always reflects on his dual relationship with Deedee and his Asian friends and he is torn about which way to choose.

Shahid's indecisive mind puts him in trouble at times. He doesn't want to be separated from Deedee Osgood but at the same time he wants the relationship to come to an end so that he is not deeply plunged into it. But the problem arises from the fact that he can't make up his mind about what he should do. His indecisive mind makes him suffer. "He ached for Deedee, as if he had already parted from her. He

[54] Hanif Kureishi, *The Black Album*, Faber Faber, London 1995, p.92.
[55] Kureishi, Ibid., p.

was convinced that she would forget him in a couple of days, and that it was better to end the relationship before they became too entangled."[56]

Moreover, Shahid remembers the religious speech that he has listened from Riaz inside the mosque about the nature of love. According to Riaz, love is only possible within an established morality that is defined by God and practised in the society. This argumentation seems to be contradictory to the way love is practiced between Shahid and Deedee and the way it is perceived by Deedee, who considers herself as a liberal and a sensible lady and according to her, a woman should wisely take her distance from love and prefer the combination of sex, friendship and art to replace it.

The problem with Shahid is that although he had initially needed the companionship of these Asian friends and had been excited by their commitment to their mission, after a while it becomes no more than a forceful activity for him. He finds the outside world more exciting and bizarre. Although he is impressed by the modern lifestyle in London, he struggles to achieve a sense of belonging through Islam and Pakistan. In a sense, Shahid is both attracted to religion and liberalism. However, in both cases, the purpose is the same: to construct a strong sense of self. However, after a while, Shahid feels disappointed with religion because of the rejection of liberal and postmodern lifestyle by his fundamentalist friends. Shahid ends up questioning the very nature of freedom in Islam. In the end, he realizes that he has to find his real, natural self by making choices.

This fundamentalist rejection of postmodernity which is practiced through pop culture, dance, and literature parallels with a rejection of Western imperialism. The conflict between fundamentalism and western progress is quite evident in the book. Unlike Shahid who doesn't know if he is believing anything at all, the other group members seem to be satisfied with the way of life Islam permits. Chad even criticizes Shahid for his passivity: "But I do know that, unlike you, I [am] not a coward ... Because you are always talking, never taking action! And you know why? Because you had an easy life! That shit you tol' me the first day, you invent it to

[56] Kureishi, p. 137

make yourself interesting! Oh, yeah, I know how much you are a liar. Actions will be taken! " [57]

In this sense, what is marked as a turning point in Shahid's decision making process is the fundamentalist acts of his friends towards the reality of *The Satanic Verses*. "Shahid must determine whether he sides with the traditions of his forefathers or whether he should progress from the English cultural assimilation of his father."[58] As a way out, Shahid decides to take his position on the side of Deedee and resolves to be an artist rather than an activist in a quite similar way with Kureishi who, after the traumatic and oppressive experiences of racism in his teens, decides to become a writer, which he sees as the only solution to find his way out and not to disappear.[59] "But in the end Shahid Hassan's love of literature and of the life of the imagination lead him away from Riaz's constricted and constricting vision, and there is never any doubt that Hanif Kureishi -- an enthusiast of the imagination and of literature -- is with him."[60]

On the other hand, the new journey Shahid sets off with Deedee has its own limitations. The train carrying them to Shahid's hometown bears a sort of symbolic resemblance to the transitionality of the relationship between the two. This reality is also acknowledged by them who mutually declare that this new adventure will proceed "until it stops being fun."[61] As Kureishi explains, "courageous acceptance of love's provisionality underlies Shahid's and Deedee's affair."[62]

It is not only Shahid who goes through identity crisis. "All the characters of the novel, fascist Riaz, aggressive Chad, liberal Osgood and conflicted Shahid seem to be captured varying degrees in a puzzle of thoughts and ideologies. Everyone is trying to locate the purpose to have his identity."[63] One of them is Chad, a member

[57] Hanif Kureishi, *The Black Album*, Faber Faber, London 1995, p.219
[58] Kenneth C. Kaleta, *Hanif Kureishi: Post-colonial Storyteller,* University of Texas Press, Austin 1988, pp. 137-138.
[59] British Library, *Discovering Literature: 20th century, Interview with Hanif Kureishi,* Access date: 28.05.2019, https://www.bl.uk/20th-century-literature/videos/interview-with-hanif-kureishi.
[60] K. Anthony Appiah, "Identity Crisis-the Black Album by Hanif Kureishi", New York Times, 17 September 1995, https://www.nytimes.com/1995/09/17/books/identity-crisis.html
[61] Hanif Kureishi, *The Black Album*, Faber Faber, London 1995, p. 276.
[62] Kenneth C. Kaleta, *Hanif Kureishi: Post-colonial Storyteller,* University of Texas Press, Austin 1988, p.124.
[63] Sobia Kiran, "Identity Crisis as Reflected in Selected Works: The Reluctant Fundamentalist by Mohsin Hamid and the Black Album by Hanif Kureishi", *International Journal of Linguistics and Communication*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2013, p. 38

of fundamentalist Asian students. His search for identity comes to surface in a more tragic form. He was adopted by an English couple when he was a child. However, he has been exposed to racism of both his adoptive parents and the society.

It is possible to interpret Chad's process of identity search in two phases. As Trevor Buss, in the first phase he acquires a new identity; his ethnic origin is redefined and he gets an English name. In the second phase of his search for identity, he is led to a radical definition of his own identity in the multicultural environment of London.

According to Çelikel, Chad has a double-translated identity. He goes through the first identity translation with the adoption of the name Trevor, and the second by a young boy looking for his own roots.[64] He never knows his real identity. Although he has been trained as an English teenager with his dress, accent, and habits, and has been able to obtain opportunities that a second-generation immigrant can't obtain, his color, which has enabled him to be easily recognized, suffices to be labeled by the British as a post-colonial immigrant. Chad recognizes the impossibility of getting rid of this western labeling and enters into a search for his Muslim origins and tries to find his identity in a radical Islamist group. When he is a teenager, he sees he hasn't got a sense of identification with his Pakistani roots; he can't even speak the language. Therefore, he goes to take Urdu lessons. Moreover, he prioritizes his Muslim identity over the national/ethnical by saying "no more Paki" but "me a Muslim."[65]

Chad's search for identity is tragically told from the perspective of Deedee as follows:

> "Trevor Buss's soul got lost in translation, as it were. Someone said he even tried the Labour Party, to find a place. But it was too racist and his anger was too much. Too much for him, you know. It was fermenting and he couldn't keep it under… He said to me once, 'I am homeless.' I said 'You've got nowhere to live?' 'No,' he replied. 'I have no country.' I told him 'You're not missing much.' 'But I don't know what it is to feel like a normal citizen.'"[66]

[64] Mehmet Ali Çelikel, *Sömürgecilik Sonrası İngiliz Romanında Kültür ve Kimlik*, Bilge Kültür Sanat, İstanbul 2011, p. 139
[65] Hanif Kureishi, *The Black Album*, Faber Faber, London 1995, p.128
[66] Kureishi, Ibid., p. 107-108

3. BRICK LANE

Brick Lane by Monica Ali is mainly set in London between 1967 and 2002. The novel centers on the life of Nazneen, who is a young Bangladeshi woman. She comes to London to marry Chanu Ahmed, a man 20 years older than her. This is actually a loveless arranged marriage. The novel opens up with Nazneen's birth story in East Pakistan. Nazneen is born two months earlier and everyone thinks that she would die soon. Instead of taking her to hospital, family members decide to *leave Nazneen to her fate*, which is a theme widely held throughout the novel. Nazneen's mother adopts a rather fatalistic approach and says: "Of course, Fate will decide everything in the end, whatever route you follow."[67] Her father, on the other hand, tries to console himself and his wife that the child is a girl. Surprisingly enough, Nazneen survives to be a healthy and thoughtful child and adopts her mother's fatalistic approach that everything should be left to God. Nazneen's younger sister Hasina is, unlike Nazneen, beautiful and rebellious, and at sixteen she escapes with a local boy in pursuit of a love marriage. Soon after this, a marriage is arranged for Nazneen by her father. She is supposed to marry a man called Chanu, who lives as a civil servant in London.

[67] Monica Ali, Scribner, New York 2003, p.

Chanu and Nazneen marry and move to Tower Hamlets, a neighborhood predominantly occupied by Bangladeshi immigrants in London. Nazneen is homesick and isolated and she spends much of her day cooking, tidying up her apartment, watching her neighbors and is sometimes visited by her Bangladeshi neighbors. Nazneen also maintains contact with her sister Hasina through letters. In her letters, Hasina tells her that her husband beats her and that is why she has escaped to Dhaka to work in a factory. On the other hand, Nazneen's husband, though old and fat, is kind and doesn't beat her. Still, Nazneen does not love her husband and she is not happy in her marriage. It is not until the birth of her son that Nazneen is able to find some meaning in her marriage and devotes herself to caring him and being a good mother. Simultaneously, Chanu, who works as a low civil servant, has intentions of saving money and returning to Dhaka with his family because he doesn't want his family especially his son to assimilate into British culture. Unfortunately, their son gets sick and dies at the age of one. After this, Nazneen now has two young daughters—Shahana, and Bibi, who are completely different from each other in disposition.

One night, he presents Nazneen with a sewing machine in order to save more money for his long-standing intentions of going home. When Chanu gets a job as a cab driver, a different man named Karim brings sewing to Nazneen. Nazneen is instantly attracted to Karim, who is young, handsome, passionate, and self-confident; she falls deeply in love with him. She starts attending Karim's meetings with an Islamic youth group. They soon start an affair. Nazneen tells Karim of Chanu's plans to move the family back home to Bangladesh, and Karim tells her not to go and advises her to divorce.

Eventually, Chanu purchases four plane tickets to Bangladesh, which makes it quite evident that they are finally going home. However, Nazneen seems to have some serious concerns. First of all, she has already been feeling guilty over her affair with Karim. Moreover, she is indecisive about going back home partly because her oldest daughter is quite resistant to it to the extent that she escapes home not to go to Bangladesh. All of a sudden, Nazneen decides to take charge of her life. She ends her affair with Karim completely and decides to stay in London with her daughters. Chanu, though grieved, tells her he cannot stay in England anymore and ends up

going home alone. Time passes and Nazneen and her friend Razia start to set their own sewing business. Nazneen and Chanu are in regular contact; Chanu writes to her from Dhaka about the weather, his workout routine, and eating habits and is expecting to see Nazneen and the girls in Dhaka during the next holiday. The novel closes with Razia, Shana, and Bibi taking Nazneen to an ice skating rink as a surprise, which is something Nazneen has been dreaming of for nearly twenty years.

The main character Nazneen, as a Third World immigrant, goes through some transformations in her struggle to integrate to a new life and the host culture in London. This process, however, brings about some inherent problems to tackle with. They can be listed as displacement/isolation, religious and cultural sexism, and alienation.

3.1.Displacement and Isolation

Displacement, which is a recurring and prevailing theme of immigrant stories, is also true for Nazneen. Leaving her hometown at the age of 18, Nazneen is plunged into a deepest level of homesickness and a longing for her sister, her dead mother, and village. This nostalgia for her past becomes apparent both in her recurrent dreams about her family and hometown and her childhood stories she continuously tells her daughters. She feels cut off from her dear family in a world quite unfamiliar to her and she lives like a displaced person. Nazneen's very first days in London is quite a sort of melancholy; the real life appears to come only at night when she sleeps and dreams about her family. Nazneen's new life Tower Hamlets housing estate in London is, at first, quite intimidating and depressing; it represents isolation and displacement. "In all her eighteen years, she could scarcely remember a moment that she had spent alone. Until she married. And came to London to sit day after day in this large box with the furniture to dust, and the muffled sound of private lives sealed away above, below and around her."[68] This quotation clearly illustrates how

[68] Monica Ali, Scribner, New York 2003, p. 12.

displaced and lonely she feels. "Brick Lane (…) take up some of the grand clichés of migration literature such as the characters' sense of in-betweenness and unbelonging, their desire to fit in and the way they make up for the absence of the Motherland by reinventing a fantasized homeland, flawless and pristine."[69]

In the initial stages of her marriage, Nazneen continuously watch a neighbor whom she simply calls "the tattoo woman," who seems to be spending all her time sitting in front of the window and drinking her beer. Nazneen, quite desperately, needs real, authentic companionship. That is why when she, for the first time, spoke to a stranger in her little English, the fact of being understood and acknowledged pleases and excites her. "What she missed most was people. Not any people in particular (apart, of course, from Hasina) but just people."[70] Therefore, Nazneen, whose interaction with the tattoo woman doesn't go beyond waving at her and the woman waving back, ends up creating an illusionary friendship with the woman and dreams about drinking tea with her and talking about their days. The tattoo woman has a symbolic significance in rendering Nazneen's loneliness and displacement because she is deeply alone all the time and disconnected from her surroundings and gets institutionalized as a result. The tattoo woman signifies the depth of Nazneen's disconnection from her home and culture.

Another illusion Nazneen creates to overcome her loneliness and displacement occurs through TV. One day, Nazneen, flicking through the channels, bumps into an ice-skating show, first time in her life, and she is quite impressed by it. From then on, the show provides an illusionary world to her. When she sat to watch it, "she was no longer a collection of the hopes, random thoughts, petty anxieties and selfish wants that made her, but was whole and pure. The old Nazneen was sublimated and the new Nazneen was filled with white light, glory. But when it ended and she switched off the television, the old Nazneen returned."[71]

The show provides a glimpse of temporary freedom from her own disadvantaged situation; she is further lead to question whether the ice-skating

[69] Françoise Kral, "Shaky Ground and New Territorialities in Brick Lane by Monica Ali and the Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri", *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, Vol. 43, No.1, 2007, p. 65.
[70] Monica Ali, Scribner, New York 2003, p. 12.
[71] Monica Ali, Scribner, New York 2003, p. 27.

woman washes and wipes the dishes like her when she goes home. The idea is expressed by Bentley as follows:

> "This is another scene in which Ali uses defamiliarization to great effect, in this case the common television images of ice-skating. The romantic image of the woman freed from the constraints of dress, subordination to the male and seemingly gravity itself, present an alternative world to Nazneen who is weighed down with domestic duties, and the figure of the ice skater becomes a symbol of freedom in the novel."[72]

Nazneen's relationship with her husband does no more than increasing her displacement and isolation. Initially, she doesn't possess a strong self as a wife. The marriage suffers from some problems. Firstly, the initial relationship between the husband and wife is surpassed by to Chanu's indifference and boredom. He handles their marriage in a rather utilitarian sense describing Nazneen as a good worker and as an unspoilt girl from the village. What is more, a blind uncle is better than no uncle. He had waited for a long time to get a wife. Nazneen overhearing this phone call starts to question the very nature of their relationship:

> "A blind uncle is better than no uncle. (….) Any wife is better than no wife. (….) What had she imagined? That he was in love with her? That he was grateful because she, young and graceful, had accepted him? That in sacrificing herself to him, she was owed something? Yes. Yes. She realized in a stinging rush she had imagined all these things. Such a foolish girl. Such high notions. What self-regard."[73]

Nazneen ends up with frequent sessions of questioning her marriage. Why did her father make her marry to this man? What would it be like to fall in love? Was she beginning to love Chanu, or just getting used to him?

3.2. Religious and Cultural Sexism

The story of Nazneen is one from submission to agency. At the end of her struggle to gain agency, she is able to challenge the established norms of her community. Nazneen's Bangladeshi community is traditionally based on the idea that men are inherently superior to women and women will never dare to change the established hierarchy. Patriarchal discourse is quite overwhelming throughout the novel; Nazneen is repeatedly exposed to her mother's stoicistic indoctrinations that it is only the right of men to ask questions. If God wanted them to ask questions, he

[72] Nick Bentley, *Contemporary British Fiction*, Edinburg UP, Edinburgh 2008, p.89
[73] Monica Ali, Scribner, New York 2003, p. 11

would have made them men.[74] Her mother's stoicism leads Nazneen to acknowledge that women are not the *wishing type* in the world. However, she is also disillusioned at the fact that men do whatever they could do in this world.

The first representative of prejudice and discrimination against women is Hamid, Nazneen father. For example, when Nazneen's mother declares their first child as a girl to him, he tries to console himself and her wife by saying: "I know. Never mind,' said Hamid. 'What can you do?"[75] He would have preferred a son. Moreover, he acts quite indifferently to the fact that Nazneen is born two months premature and needs some push to survive. He comes home only once or twice, sleeping outside at nights. Later, Hamid is quite angered at the fact that her second daughter, Hasina, escapes with a local boy. He spends sixteen days with an axe in his hand determined to kill Hasina if she returns. When she doesn't, he acts as if he never had Hasina as his daughter. As a third, Hamid gets the mission of arranging Nazneen's marriage, he shows her the photo of the man she is supposed to marry the following month. Nazneen is surprisingly delighted: "Abba, it is good that you have chosen my husband. I hope I can be a good wife, like Amma."[76] Her father doesn't even say goodbye to Nazneen on the day she is supposed to leave for London. He prefers to go the fields instead. "Was it because he cared too much or because he cared too little?"[77] Nazneen asks to herself unable to find an answer to calm her down.

As Chanu's wife, Nazneen is again undervalued. Firstly, as mentioned before, Chanu, simply sees Nazneen as a worker who makes his life comfortable. She cooks, she cleans, and tidies up. Moreover, Chanu finds her body suitable enough to carry babies. "Not tall. Not short. Around five foot two. Hips are a bit narrow but wide enough, I think, to carry children."[78] This statement undertones the patriarchal assumption that women are simply baby-making machines. Secondly, he never asks her opinion on anything. Thirdly, Nazneen's desire to mingle with the host culture is blocked by Chanu in one way or another. For example when she says that she would like to learn English like her friend, Razia, Chanu opposes by arguing there is no

[74] Ali, Ibid., p . 60
[75] Ali, Ibid., p. 3.
[76] Monica Ali, Scribner, New York 2003, p.5
[77] Ali, Ibid., p.12
[78] Ali, Ibid., p.11

need for her to do so. Moreover, it will prevent her from settling down in her new home and looking after her baby: "You're going to be a mother. Will that not keep you busy enough? And you can't take a baby to college. Babies have to be fed; they have to have their bottoms cleaned. It's not as simple as that. Just to go to college, like that."[79] Fourthly, Nazneen doesn't often go out by herself. This, according to Chanu, will result in community gossip and is unnecessary since he already brings what she needs. In the initial stages of her marriage, it is only with Chanu that Nazneen is able to go out, always following him one step back. All of these are quite ironic given the fact that Chanu always describes himself as an educated, westernized man proud of his degree in literature. Nazneen must feel lucky for being married to such an educated man. "However, as it appears out of Brick Lane context, one's ability to cite Shakespeare does not automatically imply such individual's intellectual affiliation with the Western values."[80] Moreover, "This attitude towards the immigrant women that is to keep them at home being isolated from the outer world, is very common to form oppressed woman identities."[81]

Moreover, there seems to be a kind of double standard in operation with regard to the relationship between Nazneen and Chanu. After Chanu brings a sewing machine so that Nazneen contributes to family budget, he begins to guard her earnings. For two whole months, Nazneen is not even informed how much she has earned. It is the duty of her husband to arrange monetary issues. It is quite contradictory that while he tells Nazneen that it is wrong for women to behave secretively towards their husband, he keeps it as a secret that he borrowed a significant sum from a usurer.

When Nazneen starts to question her marriage, she comforts herself with the fact that Chanu is a good husband, which simply means that he is kind and does not beat her. Similarly, once in the novel, Hasina writes about her relationship with her husband: "Everything good between us now. I do not let my tongue make trouble for it as my husband say. Just because man is kind to wife it do not mean she can say

[79] Ali, Ibid., p. 57
[80] Sönmez Güler, *Identity Issues In Samuel Selvon's The Lonely Londoners and Monica Ali's Brick Lane*, Fatih University Institute of Social Sciences, Master Thesis, 2010, p.26.
[81] Seda Arıkan and Gül Koçsoy, "Double Alienatıon in Monica Ali's Novel Brick Lane", *Humanities Science*, Vol. 5. No.4. 2010, p. 497.

what she like. If women understanding this no one will beat."[82] So, it is quite evident that the typical perception of a Bangladeshi community in what makes a good husband is in low standards.

The prevailing sexism within the Bangladeshi community doesn't seem to yield same results for all characters in the novel. For example, Hasina, who seems to possess an inherent rebellious disposition against her community's cultural and social codes, apparently cannot keep her tongue against her husband and gets beaten by him, as a result of which she leaves home. Likewise, Nazneen's eldest daughter Shahana has a similar rebellious character like her aunt, which is quite different from that of her mother's. According to Françoise Kral, Brick Lane is significant in portraying "the lives of two generations of immigrants of the Indian diaspora and compare the experience of immigrant parents to that of their children who are born and raised in the United Kingdom."[83] He further argues that "the fact that while immigrant parents were born and bred in the "Mother Country", their children grew up away from it is one of the reasons why parents and their children define their identity and relate to the home country in a different way."[84] Chanu doesn't want her daughters to assimilate into the host culture; that is why, he urgently wants to carry out his long-standing intentions of going back home. However, the riot seems to have long started on the side of Shahana. She has already started to challenge the sexist and cultural norms imposed on her by her father and community. She appears to adopt a rather reactionary approach to everything that is traditional. For example, Shahana hates listening to Bengali classical music. He is quite bad at writing in Bengali. She prefers to wear jeans instead of kameez. It is not even a matter of concern for her to choose between baked beans and traditional dal. She can't even stand the mention of Bangladesh. She hasn't got a single idea about the national poet of Bangladesh unlike her sister who seems to have memorized all his poems. Simply, she doesn't care about all these and she doesn't want to go back home.

Moreover, upon her father's continuous urgings to return to Bangladesh as a whole family, she, quite self-confidently, renders her opposition by saying "I didn't

[82] Monica Ali, Scribner, New York, p. 13.
[83] Françoise Kral, "Shaky Ground and New Territorialities in Brick Lane by Monica Ali and The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri", *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, Vol. 43, No.1, 2007, p. 65.
[84] Françoise Kral, "Shaky Ground and New Territorialities in Brick Lane by Monica Ali and The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri", *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, Vol. 43, No.1, 2007, p. 65.

ask to be born here."[85] She insistently talks in English at home to his father's frustration. Moreover, she demands to have piercing and tattoo on her body and describes herself as a Londoner rather than a Bangladeshi.

The decision making process for going back home is not carried out on democratic terms actually. Chanu appears to be the only one who wants to go home. Nazneen has some serious concerns for her children, especially for Shahana. However, she cannot dare to share her concerns with her husband, who acts like the head of household in this overwhelmingly patriarchal community and imposes his decision by saying: "We are going there. I have decided. And when I decide something, it is done."[86]

In the novel, it is not only Nazneen who experiences sexist prejudice. She seems to be surrounded by fellow women who are disadvantaged either by their husbands or by the limitations of the society. In the novel, "Ali focuses on the way women are disadvantaged in terms of limited career opportunities, greater domestic responsibilities and less freedom to pursue leisure activities"[87] The pressure on women is both sexist and challenges the way they try to integrate into the larger society. Ironically enough, in this small Bangladeshi community, it is not only men but also women themselves who maintain sexist attitudes by denigrating the women who take a stand against community norms. In this traditional Bangladeshi community, a woman's respectability is based on the concepts of purity and purdah. The system of purdah is practiced in some Muslim societies by women who prefer to live separately from men or cover their faces in order to prevent men from seeing them. The ones who challenge these norms become targets of Tower Hamlets gossip by the fellow women. Razia is one of them.

Razia, instead of being involved in the rumors of her community, wants to work outside to provide better circumstances for her children, who are at school and demand things; however, her husband never lets her do this. She is afraid that even if she finds a job at a factory, her husband will come and slaughter her like a lamb. It is only after her husband dies that she is able to work at a factory. Moreover, she gives

[85] Ali, Ibid., p. 144.
[86] Ali, Ibid., p. 147.
[87] Yasmin Hussain, *Writing Diaspora: South Asian Women, Culture and Ethnicity*, Ashgate Publishing, Hampshire 2005, p. 91.

up dressing sari and starts to appear in a modern outfit with jeans, tracksuits, Union Jack t-shirts. As a result of all these, she draws disapproval from her community and can't avoid being the target of women gossip.

Another example to this is Jorina. When she starts to work at a garment factory to support her family, the gossip spreads. Nazneen witnesses what Mrs. Islam tells about Jorina. According to Mrs. Islam, Jorina has started to work and because of this, everyone in the community start to think that her husband cannot feed her and he has started to go with other women. This way, Jorina has shamed both herself and her family. The spread of this rumor is a significant representative of the sexist, discriminatory, and hypocritical attitudes of the society against women. Ironically enough, it is not Jorina's husband who needs to feel shame for his act of going out with other women, but Jorina who has to work to feed her family.

3.3.Alienation

Alienation has two dimensions in the novel: alienation as an immigrant and alienation as an immigrant woman. While the former predominantly applies to Chanu, the latter implies the situation of Nazneen. It needs clarifying that it is Chanu who inevitably goes through immigrant alienation as he is more mingled with the practices of host culture as a civil servant contrary to Nazneen, who spends most of her time at home and does not experience racist prejudice or discrimination.

To start with Chanu, the feeling of alienation and being an outsider is overwhelmingly felt by him. First of all, he defines the life of an immigrant as a tragedy. What makes the situation of the immigrant especially tragic is not to get the same treatment as natives when he/she expects to be so-called integrated. This is also true for Chanu who makes every attempt to get a promotion in his job but never achieves it. To him, the only reason why he is not promoted is racism. Nazneen reveals her husband's thoughts to a friend as such: "My husband says they are racist, particularly Mr. Dalloway. He thinks he will get the promotion, but it will take him longer than any white man. He says that if he painted his skin pink and white then there would be no problem."[88] Chanu is convicted that the only reason why he

[88] Monica Ali, Scribner, New York, p.53.

doesn't get a promotion is racism and according to him, racism seems to have been built into the system, which further yields discrimination and injustice.

Chanu may be justified on the grounds that the British tend to see third world immigrants as still colonials rather than genuine Europeans. However, the way Chanu handles British racism is somewhat problematic and ambivalent. Chanu himself has racist tendencies towards his own people. He continuously denigrates those Bangladeshis who come from villages and are uneducated. To him, the British must be able to discriminate between those peasants and educated immigrants like him. "And you see, to a white person, we are all the same: dirty little monkeys all in the same monkey clan."[89] He describes his own people as uneducated and illiterate peasants who are close-minded and without ambition. He further argues that by saying so he is not looking down on these people. He simply doesn't have high expectations of these people who haven't even held a book in hand. Chanu seems to bear another contradiction in his attitudes towards the host culture, which is manifested in the following quotation:

> "The irony of Chanu's character is that, although he bitterly resists assimilating into British culture, hanging on to his cultural and historical roots and sense of national identity, he himself is an exaggerated parody of the archetypal product of post- colonialism, a scholar from the Commonwealth who pursues his university studies in the U.K., acquainting himself with, and steeping himself in, British culture and literature, spouting random quotes from Shakespeare to compliment the occasion."[90]

In this sense, Chanu seems to have been experiencing a sort of in-betweenness. Although he is quite resistant to assimilate into the British culture and brings up her daughters accordingly, he gets frustrated when his desire for recognition and respect is not achieved. Contrary to his expectations, Chanu, as a man of degrees, certificates, and interminable readings, never gets the chance to become a high rank civil servant. A white colleague, though intellectually inferior, is promoted instead. This causes him to feel more and more alienated from his surroundings both British and Bangladeshi. Disillusioned and alienated enough, he

[89] Ali, Ibid., p.15.
[90] Kathy Ann, *Caught between Worlds The Clash of Cultures and of Generations in The Work of Monica Ali, Jhumpa Lahiri and Zadie Smith*, Ed. Gerhard Stilz, *Territorial Terrors: Contested Spaces in Colonial and Post-colonial Writing*, Königshausen&Neumann, Würzburg 2007, p.229

quits his job and drifts from one work to another until he settles himself as a cab driver and eventually returns to Bangladesh.

Another important point with Chanu is that part of his alienation comes from free will. It is only after thirty years of his presence in London that he decides to see the sights with his family. He says: "I've spent more than half my life here, but I hardly left these few streets … All this time I have been struggling and struggling, and I barely had time to lift my head and look around." [91] This reality again brings out the notion of alienation and disintegration on the side of Chanu.

As for Nazneen, the sense of alienation she apparently goes through during her integration process is even more complicated and multi-dimensional. According to Arıkan and Koçsoy, it as a sort of double alienation. This means alienation as an immigrant and alienation as a woman, which is expressed by Arıkan and Koçsoy as: "The difficulty of belonging to the society and experiencing alienation as an *immigrant* is the one facet of the locket; the other determiner of Nazneen's alienation is her gender, being a *woman*. This fact makes the situation more painful for Nazneen as a Bangladeshi immigrant woman."[92] In this sense, Nazneen's alienation is intensified due to the fact that she is a woman. The truth is expressed by Spivak: "If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow. . . "[93] To me, it is possible to come up with a third facet regarding Nazneen's alienation. This is domestic alienation. Three of these are quite interrelated; that's why it, will be better to handle them all in an integrated way.

In Nazneen's case, alienation doesn't come as a result of the "othering" practices of the host culture but rather as a result of the limitations imposed on her by her husband and community. In this sense, the way Nazneen experiences alienation as an immigrant is scarcely instanced. On these rare occasions when Nazneen goes out, she finds the city streets unfriendly, unfamiliar, and overwhelmed by traffic. She sees people, white people, dressed differently than her, with coats, suits, women in miniskirts or tight trousers. By simply comparing herself to those people, she starts to

[91] Monica Ali, Scribner, New York, p.238.
[92] Seda Arıkan and Gül Koçsoy, "Double Alienation in Monica Ali's Novel Brick Lane", *Humanities Science*, Vol. 5. No.4., 2010, p. 497.
[93] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak?* Eds. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, Marxism *and the Interpretation of Culture*, Macmillan, London 1988, p.28.

be aware of herself. She feels like she is without a destination with the absence of a coat, suit, and a white face. This way she cannot identify herself to any of them. She feels lost and out of place but at the same time she becomes much more conscious of her own reality. "The technique of making the everyday appear unfamiliar is one that Ali often uses in Brick Lane in order to convey Nazneen's sense of alienation within her new environment"[94]

In Brick Lane, Ali handles the notion of immigration from a gendered perspective, which reveals Nazneen's alienation as a woman. This is also argued by Bentley. "In one sense, Ali is attempting to represent the experiences, through her main character Nazneen, of a group of Bangladeshi women that have rarely before been represented in British fiction."[95] Nazneen's alienation as a woman is quite linked to her husband's sexist attitudes. As mentioned before, she is not allowed to go out much or learn English, that's why it takes her 15 years to learn English. It is quite tragic that she struggles to learn English for such a long time in a country where English is spoken as a native language and where she has this great chance of authentic communication. It is only with the help of some limited vocabulary she achieves through television or her short exchanges in the doctor, few non-Bengali stores, or at the girls' school that she is able to survive in a foreign context until her daughters take the lead to teach her English fully. Naturally, they demand to be understood by their mother.

Nazneen seems to have been confined to her small Bengali community in a sort of detachment and disintegration from the wider community. "In fact, although Nazneen does not face a direct discrimination, her disintegrated situation shows that she is still an alien in the society. The only society she can integrate consists of Bengali women."[96] She seems to have little or no contact with the natives. That's mainly because of the constraints her husband and community imposes on her. Once in the novel a fellow neighbor expresses her reservation for the idea of mixing. According to the neighbour, Mrs. Islam, the act of mixing with people of different ethnic and religious origins such as Turkish, Jewish, and even English is quite

[94] Nick Bentley, *Contemporary British Fiction*, Edinburg UP, Edinburgh 2008, p.87.
[95] Bentley, Ibid., p. 84.
[96] Seda Arıkan and Gül Koçsoy, "Double Alienation in Monica Ali's Novel Brick Lane", *Humanities Science*, Vol. 5. No.4., 2010, p. 495.

intimidating because if you mix with all these people, no matter how good they are, you end up with assimilation by giving up your culture to accept theirs. As a result, Nazneen's life evokes "a sense of roothlessness, isolation, loneliness and detachment from the wider community"[97]

Another aspect of Nazneen's alienation is domestic alienation which highlights the very nature of her relationship with her husband. Especially, at the initial stages of their marriage, the connection between Nazneen and Chanu is almost nonexistent. Chanu seems to be overwhelmingly preoccupied with his promotion, degrees, the interminable reading and the house he wants to build in Dhaka for her family. Chanu always talks about all these and seems to take no notice of what her wife has to say. "She waited for him to speak again and grew uncomfortable when he did not. She had become used to his chatter filling up the *space* between them."[98] During his long, interminable speeches about art, philosophy, literature, civilization, all of which seem quite unfamiliar to Nazneen, she retreats to be a passive listener. She doesn't not know what he is talking about. "He talked and she listened. Often she had the feeling he was not talking to her, or rather that she was only part of a larger audience for whom the speech was meant. He smiled at her but his eyes were always searching, as if she were a face in the crowd singled out for only a moment"[99]

The following quotation deserves a mention in portraying the opposing attitudes adopted by Nazneen and Chanu and the alienation between them:

> "Where Nazneen turned in, he turned out; where she strove to accept, he was determined to struggle; where she attempted to dull her mind and numb her thoughts, he argued aloud; while she wanted to look neither to the past nor to the future, he lived exclusively in both. They took different paths but they had journeyed (…) together."[100]

Her irritation with her husband increases within the first three years of their marriage. However, it is only after Nazneen gives birth to his son Raqib that she ignores her own dissatisfaction and anxieties and the relationship between her and Chanu begins to heal. She begins to think that her husband is not a bad man. She could love him. Love would follow understanding.

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[97] Yasmin Hussain, *Writing Diaspora: South Asian Women, Culture and Ethnicity*, Ashgate Publishing, Hampshire 2005, p.95.
[98] Monica Ali, Scribner, New York, p.104.
[99] Monica Ali, Scribner, New York, p.28.
[100] Ali, Ibid., 94-95.

3.4. Fatalism

The lives of female characters in the novel seem to be haunted by the notion of fatalism. The notion has a dominant and pervading influence in Nazneen's life as well. Nazneen is strongly committed to her belief in fate, which she seems to have inherited from her mother as a result of her life-long indoctrinations. As a Muslim woman, it is understandable for Nazneen to believe in fate. However, the way she and her mother handle the notion of fate is problematic in the sense that her mother has a rather stoicistic and submissive attitude towards the issue. She struggles not to question why things happen and practices this in the way she brings up her children. Therefore, it was because of her mother's wise decision not to take baby Nazneen to the hospital and simply leave her to her fate that "Nazneen lived to become the wide-faced, watchful girl that she was. Fighting against one's Fate can weaken the blood. Sometimes, or perhaps most times, it can be fatal."[101] Not once in her life has Nazneen questioned the logic of the story of How She Was Left To Her Fate. In fact, she was even grateful for her mother's wise decision. Such kind of determinism completely eradicates the power of free will and choice as also expressed by Bentley: "This deterministic view of the world stresses that Nazneen's future is already mapped out, restricting her power to change her situation, and it is this belief in fate that forces her to accept the arranged marriage with Chanu resulting in her being bundled off from her loving home in Bangladesh to the alien environment of the East End of London."[102]

On the other hand, there are times when Nazneen goes into a deep introspection about the very nature of fate. For example, there are times when she is worried at the fact that Hasina has challenged her fate by escaping from house, which, in their traditional cultural context, is an act that brings no goodness. However, there are also times, when she thinks that if you really take a closer look at it, how can you make sure that Hasina wasn't just following her destiny? If the general paradigm is that fate is already predetermined and cannot be altered, no matter how you fight against it, then maybe, Hasina was already destined to run away with Malek. Maybe, she fought against it but she couldn't change her destiny.

[101] Ali, Ibid., p.4
[102] Nick Bentley, *Contemporary British Fiction*, Edinburg UP, Edinburgh 2008, pp. 88-89.

Her mother's indoctrinations of fatalism have been so influential on Nazneen that she frequently dreams about the way her mother commits herself not to question things in life. One dream is particularly significant in this sense. Once in her dream, her mother appears and blames her for her so-called disobedience to fate by taking his son to the hospital. Nazneen was actually expected to do the same as her mother: to live her son to his fate. Her mother strictly criticizes Nazneen for thinking that she had the power to keep her son alive and she had the right to make preferences. She argues that Nazneen stood between her son and his fate by choosing to take him to the hospital and this way she destroyed his son's chances of surviving. Within the context of her mother's rather fatalistic mentality, it is Nazneen who killed his son.

Nazneen is so pressured by the notions of fatalism that she cannot oppose to her husband about not going to Dhaka though she has some serious concerns for it. It is only towards the end of the novel that her fatalistic assumptions start to take a completely different lead when she learns that her mother, contrary to what is known, committed suicide. This is actually a revolutionary attempt on the side of her mother and a turning point in Nazneen's life. After this, she decides to take the charge of her life by saying: "I will decide what to do. I will say what happens to me. I will be the one."[103]

The limitations of a sexist, discriminatory society are actually disguised in the form of fatalism. In a community where male dominance and superiority is overwhelmingly felt by women, there seems to be no other choice than to wait and see because that's all they could do. That kind of submissiveness undertones a sort of self-deception on the side of women, who blindfoldedly prefer to accept injustice and discrimination under the disguise of fate rather than to make a move to challenge the situation.

A feminist reading of Brick Lane brings about a different immigrant subjectivity in terms of both fate and sexism. Clothing is used as a recurring motif in the novel. Throughout the novel, Ali's reference to popular culture of fashion is quite evident. Nazneen has always been attracted to modern wearing women, their self-confidence and assertiveness. One example of this is particularly significant in this context. Once outside, Nazneen bumps into a young woman with an impressively

[103] Monica Ali, Scribner, New York, p. 339.

and relatively modern outfit as compared to her traditional sari. The woman is wearing high-heeled boots, a denim jacket, and jeans. Nazneen is so overwhelmed by her clothing that she associates it with a strong sense of self-confidence on the side of the woman. That's why she finds the way the woman walks quite fascinating. Moreover, she takes the footsteps of woman as declarations of her assertiveness, power, and self-confidence as a woman. It is, in a sense, the manifestation of her womanhood. A walk like this cannot possibly tell lies.

At times, it occurs to her that what makes her life is clothes rather than fate. She simply thinks that if she changed her clothes her entire life would change as well. That is to say, if she gained a modern outfit with a skirt, a jacket, and a pair of high heels, then she would be able to walk around freely talking to her phone and eat her fast food lunch. Moreover, this would make her wander the streets fearlessly and proudly. To her, it is means to be free from the boundaries of her traditional way of dressing and gain her independence. According to a friend, Razia, who started to wear tracksuits and Union Jack t-shirts after her husband's death, saris give them little bird steps. That's why she gives up wearing them.

Her new life in London can be divided into three phases in which she initially learns about loneliness, then about privacy, and finally a new kind of community. A new kind of community implies a new phase in her life where she is empowered towards a new, liberated life in London. "The novel as a whole follows her gradual empowerment as she begins to come to terms with the alien environment in which she is placed at the beginning of the novel."[104] Moreover, there are three kinds of men in Nazneen's life. Firstly, she submits herself to her father, then her husband, lastly to Karim. However, there are such instances when Nazneen start to follow a rebellious path in her relationship with her husband. Firstly, when Chanu rejects her request to bring Hasina to London, she becomes disappointed. She ends up with a reactionary attempt by not washing his socks, ironing his trousers, and tiding his clothes. However, her rebellions pass undetected by her husband. Secondly and most importantly, Nazneen, contrary to her husband's wish, makes up her mind not to go to Dhaka and stay in London with her daughters eventually achieving economic independence by working as a tailor.

[104] Nick Bentley, *Contemporary British Fiction*, Edinburg UP, Edinburgh 2008, p.88.

In this feministic context, her relationship with Karim also deserves a mention. When Nazneen meets Karim, the intermediary man who brings her the sewing work, she is instantly attracted to him, who is young, handsome, passionate, and self-confident; she falls deeply in love with him. Karim doesn't only offer her love but also education. She starts attending Karim's meetings with an Islamic youth group. Karim leaves Bengali newsletters to her contrary to Chanu who had never given her anything to read. He tells her about Bosnia, Chechnya, Palestine and the brothers in Egypt. She starts to read about Intifada and Hamas. Initially, she is so optimistic about the relationship that she compares her relationship with Karim to watching a colored TV as opposed to that of hers with Chanu, which is on display as black and white. At this point, Nazneen's relationship with Karim and her engagement with the things he brings can be seen as a way for Nazneen to locate a sense of belonging for herself. This way, she is trying to find and manifest her real identity. However, it is further questionable whether having an affair with Karim is really liberation from her husband and from the feeling of her displacement. The answer is no. Though her relationship gives her a temporal sense of well-being and is something revolutionary within the constraints of the community, it gives her no more than pangs of conscious. Even if she divorces her husband, she can dare to have a permanent and mutual prospect with Karim due to her daughters. On the other hand, no matter how satisfied Nazneen is with their togetherness, she can't help going through pangs of conscious for this secret affair. This is one of the reasons why she ends the relationship.

According to Nazneen Karim and Chanu are like the two extreme ends of a spectrum. However, Karim, too, turns out to be no different Chanu. When Nazneen wants to learn why Karim loves her, he simply answers that it is because she is an unspoilt girl from village. It reminds her of the way Chanu described her in the early days of their marriage. What both men mean by "unspoilt" girl from village is apparently that Nazneen is readily submissive to their decisions. Nazneen realizes this weakness in Karim and she becomes the decision maker to end the relationship. Karim's conventionality dooms him to lose Nazneen. By undervaluing women, both men lose their chances of romantic love. Eventually, she decides to take the charge of her life as liberate woman free from the constraints of male dominance.

4. THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST

The Reluctant Fundamentalist by Mohsin Hamid is set in a Lahore marketplace on a single, unspecified day and it covers the story of Muslim protagonist, Changez Khan, before and after September 11, 2001 in Pakistan and the USA. The novel is told in the form a dramatic monologue and from the perspective of, Changez Khan, a Pakistani university lecturer, who narrates the events to an unnamed and silent American interlocutor. The novel begins as Changez Khan approaches a stranger in a street of Lahore and wants to be of assistance. The stranger seems to possess sort of an exotic charm for Changez; his typical American appearance is admittedly what attracts Changez to the stranger. Changez escorts the stranger to a nearby cafe, which marks the beginning for Changez to tell his coming-of-age story in Pakistan and United States. Changez, who comes from a respected but financially declining Pakistani family, gets admitted to Princeton to study finance in pursuit of his American dream and class aspirations. At Princeton, he makes excellent grades but secretly works part time to sustain his scholarship. After graduation, he is employed by a prestigious financial service company, Underwood Samson, in New York. Before he starts his career at Underwood Samson, Changez goes on a trip to Greece with friends from Princeton. It is here that he meets

beautiful Erica, who is also a Princeton graduate. Changez instantly gets enamored with her. In New York, Changez begins his career at Underwood Samson. He is quite successful and makes his job brilliantly enough to win the admiration of his colleagues and supervisors. Meanwhile, he continues to spend time with Erica by accompanying her to parties and dinners. Changez realizes that Erica appears to be plunged into a deep loneliness even in crowds of people and later learns that this is mainly because she is still grieving over her boyfriend and childhood friend, Chris, who died the previous year.

In one of his work trips to Manila in the Philippines, Changez watches on TV the collapse of the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001, and surprisingly enough, he gets pleasure at the sight of it, which to him signifies arrogant America's being brought to its knees. Then, on his return flight to New York, he is detained at the airport for further inspection. Things start to be provocative for Changez after 9/11. He begins to notice and hear rumors of increasing racism and discrimination against Muslims in the USA. New York is not a place of perpetual comfort and peace for him as a foreigner any more. Meanwhile, USA launches an aggressive foreign policy of War on Terror by supporting India against Pakistan, which makes nothing more than increasing his anger. Simultaneously, the shock of 9/11 creates a traumatizing effect for Erica, who is led into a deeper and deeper nostalgia for Chris, takes shelter in a rehab center, and reportedly commits suicide in Hudson River. Erica's death affects Changez deeply and adds to his already-existing self-discussions about his presence in the USA. What is marked as a breaking point for Changez, however, takes place in his work trip to Chile. There, he is compared to a modern day janissary by Juan Batista, the president of the publishing company which Changez is assigned to evaluate. Such a comparison, the accuracy of which is reluctantly accepted by Changez, ultimately makes him to question his identity along with his presence and service in the USA. In the end, Changez resolves to quit his job in Underwood Samson and leaves the USA. Upon returning Pakistan, he takes up a job as a university lecturer and is inevitably led to become a political fundamentalist, a leading figure of anti-American protests in Pakistan.

The idea that the novel is a Muslim's critique of American values is rejected by the author himself, who finds this presumption as rather oversimplifying. Hamid

alternatively puts forward that: "The novel is a love song to America as much as it is a critique."[105] The novel is neither a Muslim misery story in the sense that discrimination and alienation are not overtly handled. The novel, though it involves a few such instances, is distinguished by being an autobiographical manifestation of the protagonist's with his class aspirations and inner struggle. Changez's attempt to integrate into the host culture of the USA is naturally far from being unproblematic. The challenges he faces in this process can be listed as search for identity, fundamentalism, indoctrination and American imperialism, nationalism, and racism.

4.1. Search for Identity

As a fresh graduate out of Princeton and a brilliant financial analyst for Underwood Samson, Changez starts to live in New York. Being in New York is actually different from being in any other parts of the states for New York is endowed with a more-inclusive multiculturalism for foreigners. "New York before the fall of the Twin Towers could be said to be the habitat of a pre-9/11 form of cosmopolitan modernity - a capital of authentic transnationalism, where difference reigns and where citizenship is borderless."[106] In an attempt to celebrate the very cosmopolitan nature of the city, Changez says: "In a subway car, my skin would typically fall in the middle of the color spectrum. On street corners, tourists would ask me for directions. I was in four and a half years, never American; I was immediately a *New Yorker*."[107] He quite effortlessly feels himself a young New Yorker; the city seems to be a real melting pot for foreigners. The cosmopolitan and open-minded nature of New York even makes it easy for Changez to wear his kurta over a pair of jeans to dinner with Erica's parents; something which enables him to play his role as an exotic foreigner. Surprisingly enough, Changez's foreignness is an advantage to him. Once in the novel, he admits: "I was aware of an advantage conferred upon me by my foreignness, and I tried to utilize it as much as I could."[108]

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[105] Deborah Solomon, "The Stranger Interview with Mohsin Hamid", New York Times, 15 April 2007, https://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/15/magazine/15wwlnQ4.t.html.

[106] Sharmila Mukherjee, "The Reluctant Fundamentalist: A Novel by Mohsin Hamid", *Modern Language Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 1, SUMMER 2011, p. 120.
[107] Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Penguin Books, London 2007, p. 37.
[108] Hamid, Ibid., p. 47.

Before the attacks of 9/11, Changez seems to be operating in a superordinating culture, which gives him a sense of superordinate identity, makes him to adopt a superordinate identity. The term, according to Oxford Learner Dictionary simply refers to a word with a general meaning which includes other words with particular meanings; for example, 'vegetable' is the superordinate of 'tomato', 'cucumber', etc. We can further elaborate on the meaning of the term by suggesting that being American is superordinate to being African-American or Asian American. So the title *American* becomes an all-inclusive term for minorities, simultaneously including the sense of belonging and distinctiveness. For example, in New York, Changez mostly feels quite adapted to neither alienated nor isolated from his American circumstances because his Pakistani descent is almost invisible to most people by his suit, expense account, Princeton degree, and Underwood Samson business card. Therefore, Changez tries, as much as he could, to take advantage of the privileges his education and career bestows on him. However, these are not the only reasons why his Third World background does not irritate native Americans. First of all, Changez seems to possess an inherent quality in his disposition; he seems to have a perfect breeding. He is able to carry himself well; he is kind and generous towards everyone. Secondly, Changez's eloquence in English speech and delicacy in manner impress everyone around him during his presence in the USA, and even his interlocutor in Pakistan. It is admittedly true that Changez is more self-assertive than the stranger because of the inherent quality of the novel as a dramatic monologue. Furthermore, Changez's secular upbringing leads him to be less assertive in his religious affiliations, which makes the process of cultural accommodation easier for him.

> "The entire book, while slowly unveiling the hero's Islamic revulsion with things Western, is a litany of how practised, nuanced, polished and at ease are the hero's Western manners and affectations, English grammatical constructions, subtleties and conceits. He has no discernible Pakistani or Islamic equivalent habits."[109]

Another aspect of this superordinate identity reveals itself outside the States. Abroad, during his business trips to other countries, he introduces himself as a New Yorker not a Pakistani. In Manila, he attempts to act and speak like an American

[109] Stephan Chan, "The Bitterness of the Islamic Hero in Three Recent Western Works of Fiction Reviewed Work(s): The Kite Runner by K Hosseini; The Reluctant Fundamentalist by M Hamid; Sarajevo Marlboro by M Jergovic", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No. 5 2010, p.829.

because the natives appear to have a sort of admiration for his American colleagues, whom they inevitably acknowledge as the officer class of global business. Naturally, Changez, too, demands his share of that respect. He feels self-satisfied and draws heavily on the advantages of this particular national etiquette. Chan argues

> "America is the primary, persistent, ubiquitous reference point. Western audiences loved these ostensibly and superficially Islamic heroes because they were in fact Westernised, Americanised, more 'us' than 'them', more Metropolitan than Other. They were the Other that we would wish the Other to be. Even Hamid's Other, dangerous enough, perhaps, to warrant assassination, is someone capable of negotiation, of discourse, of politesse and protocol."[110]

The superordinate identity Changez seems to possess does not necessarily mean that he has no ties to his Pakistani origins. On the contrary, as suggested by Erica, Changez feels solid about his native identity; he gives off a strong sense of home, which he often does miss. Once in the novel, he declares "Princeton made everything possible for me. But it did not, *could* not make me forget such things as how much I enjoy the tea in this, the city of my birth…"[111] In this sense, cultural accommodation and integration process of Changez is far from being unproblematic of course. Actually, Changez feels himself quite adapted to his American circumstances except for two specific circumstances. Firstly, he sometimes feels alienated from his surroundings. That is because he assumes to have what he calls a Third World sensibility, which his college friends and colleagues seem to lack. Since Changez appears to have been raised with a traditional sense of respect and sympathy to his seniors, American pragmatism or "focus on the fundamentals" principle of Underwood Samson hinder his humanistic approach to people. Once in the novel he seriously criticizes self-righteousness of his companions while dealing with those serving people twice their age. He strongly criticizes his American companions behaving as if they were the ruling class of the world. "I found myself wondering by what quirk of human history my companions - many of whom I would have regarded as upstarts in my country – were in a position to conduct themselves in the world as though they were its ruling class."[112] However, Changez, too, is ultimately overwhelmed by his class aspirations and economical concerns and ends up being

[110] Chan, Ibid., p.830.
[111] Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Penguin Books, London 2007, pp.16-17.
[112] Hamid, Ibid., pp. 23-24.

assertive in his interactions with non-native people. He learns to speak to his senior executives in a rather dominative way. He prefers to say that he is from New York when he is asked where he is from. He often feels shame for what he does but he prioritizes the benefits and advantages his company offers, for which he is greatly proud.

Secondly, during his stay in the USA, Changez is torn between the comparisons he continuously makes between Pakistan and the USA. These comparisons can actually be read as reflections of his intellectual self-discussions about the qualities that distinguish East and West. Once in the novel, Changez admits how such comparisons troubled him and even made him resentful. The following, being the most assertive and striking off all, is just one of the many comparisons he makes between East and West:

> "Four thousand years ago, we, the people of the Indus River basin, had cities that were laid out on grids and boasted underground sewers, while the ancestors of those who would invade and colonize America were illiterate barbarians. Now our cities were largely unplanned, unsanitary affairs, and America had universities with individual endowments greater than our national budget for education. To be reminded of this vast disparity was, for me, to be ashamed."[113]

As mentioned before, 9/11 attacks and successive event are quite significant in Changez's decision making process. Changez behaviors start to turn into a protest form at times. For example, once he refuses to shave for over two months despite his knowledge of its challenges. To him, it is a form of protest on his side, a manifestation of his identity or the reality back at home. By doing so, he rejects to be mixed with this army of his clean-shaven colleagues, for he feels deeply angry at the foreign policy of "Sometimes I would find myself walking the streets, flaunting my beard as a provocation, craving conflict with anyone foolhardy enough to antagonize me."[114]

What especially marks the beginning of a breaking point in Changez's life reveals itself in a sort of epiphany. In one of his work trips to Chili, he is compared to a modern day janissary by Juan Batista, the president of the publishing company which Changez is assigned to evaluate. As it is known, the Janissaries originally

[113] Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Penguin Books, London 2007, p.38
[114] Hamid, Ibid., p. 190

consisted of Christian youths of Balkan provinces. They were submitted to the Ottoman service after converting Islam. Such kind of an analogy leads him to a deeply rooted introspection about his presence and service in the USA. He spends the whole night thinking about how he has transformed into a modern day janissary. To him, it means to be a servant of imperialistic practices of America, which is quite absurd and contradictory especially at a time when the USA doesn't hesitate to exert its military power over Afghanistan, a friendly neighbour, and threats his own country with an approaching war. Moreover, he feels torn between his colleagues, whom he regards as the officers of the empire, and those like Juan-Bautista. Because it is the latter whose lives are overturned by American pragmatism and capitalism and who deserve compassion.

As a result, the prospect of furthering his service in the states seems quite unlikely and Changez is abruptly transformed from an Underwood Samson market analyst into a fundamentalist in Lahore. He missions to advocate a disengagement of Pakistan from the USA. Being popular among his students, he encourages them to participate in demonstrations to demand greater independence for Pakistan in its domestic and international affairs, demonstrations that would later come to be labeled as anti-American. Therefore, "Changez's story is of mobility and displacement, of survival and of worldly success, and of a quest to find a "true" sense of belonging in the world."[115]

4.2.Fundamentalism

In *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, the notion of fundamentalism is handled in a way that reveals itself in the form of aggression against American political and military power over the Third World. The leading character of the novel is actually torn between two opposing sets of mentality. As he declares to his interlocutor at the very beginning of the novel, he is *a lover of America*. However, he has also been inevitably led to position himself against the USA. He is actually half in love with America; half against it. It is as if two broken halves of his personality is pitted against each other. Stephan Chan questions the wild success of Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* in the sense that "Hamid's hero is against America while

[115] Sobia Khan, "Alienated Muslim Identity in the Post-9/11 America: A Transnational Study of The Reluctant Fundamentalist", South *Asian Review*, Vol. 36, No. 3, 2015. p.141.

having American habits."[116] However he fails to see that it is only after 9/11 that things start to be really provocative for Changez. Changez's resolution as a fundamentalist of some sort is actually foreshadowed very early in the novel. Upon being asked about his career prospects by one of his friends, he says, to the great shock of his companions around him, that he hopes one day to be the dictator of an Islamic republic with nuclear capability, which is actually no more than a joke but effectively serves to foreshadow his prospect as a fundamentalist.

The novel takes on a resistant form after the second half, which makes it possible for the reader to interpret it as a protest novel against America's aggressive foreign policy, Third World exploitation, and mistreatment of the "Other" under the policy of War on Terror. As a result of all these, Changez evolves, though unwillingly, to be a fundamentalist. However, what kind of extremism Changez has fallen into is not clearly specified in the novel; this inherent ambiguity makes the novel quite open to reader's interpretation, which is also acknowledged by Mohsin Hamid himself: "if you believe one is a terrorist, or one is a CIA agent, or one harms the other, that is something determined by you."[117] Moreover, the novel's open ending and its manipulation of monologue technique render some challenges to come up with a certain and clear interpretation. The title of the novel, which, quite manifestly, presents the notion of fundamentalism as the subject matter of the novel, deserves a mention in this context. What is certain by the title is that Changez ends up being a fundamentalist unwillingly; "his has been a gradual, largely epistemic, even unhurried opposition to American power (military-financial complex),…"[118] While questioning the foundations of the new life he wants to create in the USA, he does not want to believe in the fact that there is an apparent connection between the shaking world around him and the collapse of his respective American dream. Because the collapse of his American dream is naturally something undesirable to him. What is ambivalent both in the title and throughout the novel is, however, the kind of fundamentalism Changez is led to. The suggestiveness of the title on behalf

[116] Stephan Chan, "The Bitterness of the Islamic Hero in Three Recent Western Works of Fiction Reviewed Work(s): The Kite Runner by K Hosseini; The Reluctant Fundamentalist by M Hamid; Sarajevo Marlboro by M Jergovic", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No. 5 2010, p.830

[117] Ali Salami, "Focusing on Fundamentalism: The Triumph of Ambivalence in Mohsin Hamid's The Reluctant Fundamentalist", *International Journal of Baudrillard Studies*, Vol. 13, No.2, 2016, p.3

[118] Sharmila Mukherjee, "The Reluctant Fundamentalist: A Novel by Mohsin Hamid", *Modern Language Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 1, SUMMER 2011, p. 123.

of a violent extremist of religious sort is misleading; the title may be no more than an intriguing attempt to catch the reader's attention. Therefore, two different perspectives with regard to the very nature of his fundamentalism can be handled here. On one hand, Changez can be seen as a brilliant market analyst who gets disappointed to witness the bitter truths about America and descends into Islamist extremism and terrorism. In this context, Anna Hartnell declares that "Changez does, of course, fit the stereotypical profile of an Islamist terrorist: a highly educated migrant from the Muslim world disaffected by a sense of rejection on the part of the West."[119] In a similar way, David Martin Jones and M. L. R. Smith assert that Changez "returns to Pakistan to facilitate the end, if not the means, of Al Qaeda."[120]

The second perspective with regard to the type of fundamentalism adopted by Changez rejects the notion of Islamist terrorism. Changez's transformation in the second half of the novel doesn't appear to have religious undertones. First of all, Changez, having a secular upbringing background, does not portray any religious passion and enthusiasm throughout the novel. "The hero is Islamic, but there is nothing Islamic about him except some brief rhetoric related to the 9/11 attacks on the New York where he used to live."[121] Moreover, he never declares to have any sympathy for Muslim fundamentalists, whom he tends to describe as religious literalists rather than fundamentalists. Once in the novel, Changez talks about the first of their protests against the US ambassador. "There were thousands of us, of all possible affiliations—communists, capitalists, feminists, religious literalists—"[122] Here, obviously Changez does not clarify to which group he is attached. However, what can certainly be proposed about him is that he is not affiliated with religious violence and extremism. Once in the novel, Changez assures his listener by saying that he believes in nonviolence and finds the spilling of blood objectionable. It can only be used for the purpose of self-defense, the boundaries of which are not broadly defined by him. He simply describes himself as a university lecturer, nothing more or

[119] Anna Hartnell, "Moving through America: Race, Place and Resistance in Mohsin Hamid's The Reluctant Fundamentalist", *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, Vol. 46, Nos. 3–4, July/September 2010, p. 345

[120] David Martin Jones and M. L. R. Smith, "Terror and the Liberal Conscience: Political Fiction and Jihad—The Novel Response to 9/11" *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 33, No. 10, p.940.

[121] Stephan Chan, "The Bitterness of the Islamic Hero in Three Recent Western Works of Fiction Reviewed Work(s): The Kite Runner by K Hosseini; The Reluctant Fundamentalist by M Hamid; Sarajevo Marlboro by M Jergovic", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No. 5, 2010, p.830

[122] Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Penguin Books, London 2007, p.204.

less. What is alternatively proposed by Changez is a kind of intellectual Jihad against political, military, and economical hegemony of the USA over the other countries in the world.

> "What is for sure is that "Yet, the kind of Jihad that Changez proposes is intellectual Jihad, which involves destructuring the dominant epistemologies that promote the fulfillment of Western military, economic, and cultural interest over everything else in the world. He seeks to undo epistemologies and displace them from their presumed positions of centrality."[123]

What acts like a testimony to the above quotation is the fact that Changez's office hours are mostly busied with the politically minded youths who come for his mentorship. Moreover, he admits that it is generally bright and idealistic students endowed with civility and ambition whom he tends to attract and prefers to name as comrades or *well-wishers*; well-wishers to make a positive change in the world against US hegemony.

4.3. American Imperialism/Nationalism/Racism

It is an undeniable fact that the USA seems to exert its imperialism on the Third World in two ways: manifest and latent. This can also be categorized as hard and soft forms of imperialism. In his ground-breaking book *Orientalism*, Edward Said discriminates between two types of orientalism: latent and manifest. While the former is "an almost unconscious (and certainly an untouchable) positivity," the latter refers to "the various stated views about Oriental society, languages, literatures, history, sociology, and so forth."[124] Here, the connection between orientalism and imperialism is to be made clear. According to Said, despite its all weaknesses and failures, Orientalism still manages to flourish in the new forms today. "The fact is that Orientalism has been successfully accommodated to the new imperialism, where its ruling paradigms do not contest, and even confirm, the continuing imperial design to dominate Asia."[125] Here, what is meant by *new imperialism* is in fact related to the latent form of Orientalism; it refers to the realization of imperial project in a new, closeted way. "Such a distinction enables Said to emphasize that modern

[123] Sharmila Mukherjee, "The Reluctant Fundamentalist: A Novel by Mohsin Hamid", *Modern Language Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 1, Summer 2011, p.123.
[124] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, Penguin Books, London 2003, p.206.
[125] Said. Ibid, p. 322

Orientalism, being manifest in the supremacy of American imperialism, is rooted in the latent Orientalism."[126] Latent imperialism has intellectual, political, and cultural codes. It is for example in the latent sense of imperialism that the Arab world today is described as an intellectual, political, and cultural satellite of the United States by Said. The soft/latent form of American Imperialism in the novel simply refer to the act of indoctrination in which the USA attracts brilliant, foreign students from all over the world and tries to assimilate them into the capitalist and pragmatic system through cultural codes, which is a subject that will be discretely handled in the following part.

As for hard/manifest imperialism, this is a more apparent form of imperialism which is carried out through political and military power and is based on the idea of American expansionism. Following World War II, Europe's imperial power was shifted to the USA; it was able to find itself in a position that was previously occupied by Britain and France. In this sense, America acts like it has inherited European imperial project by embracing Europe's highest ideals. The implication of this in the novel occurs through USA interventions in the South East. Changez is quite distracted, disturbed, and angered by what has been happening far at home since 9/11. He becomes troubled by US foreign policy in South Asia. The USA interventions result in political and military tension between India and Pakistan, and during this process, the USA takes the side of India. Afghanistan, a country with which he tends to feel strong kinship, is being bombed by US powers, and during all this turmoil there is this extensive and one-sided US media coverage. Changez is quite straightforward in his articulation of the real purpose of all these conflicts. To him, they all have a common point. He sees them no more than an expansionist policy and a means for the advancement of American interests under the disguise of "War on Terror."

As for nationalism, during times of great destructions, patriotic and nationalistic discourse tend to intensify. As a result of 9/11 attacks, many US citizens ended up reconsidering certain values and attitudes. In this case, it is not only the members of World Trade Center that were assaulted but a whole nation; the sense of identification with the country and its national values was made stronger.

[126] Hande Tekdemir , "Critical Approaches to Edward Said's Orientalism", *Uludağ University Faculty of Arts and Sciences Journal of Social Sciences,* Vol. 18, No. 32, 2017, p.147.

"U.S. citizens sought refuge in their most solid and readily available cultural values, fundamentally patriotism and religion."[127] Consequently, in the proceeding weeks after September 11, there were a dramatic increase in racial and patriotic attacks, which were not only directed on Arabs but also other Muslims of different ethnicity, who were perceived as a possible threat by hostile Americans. This is a reality Hamid gives glimpses of in The Reluctant Fundamentalist. However the trauma of 9/11 is not only valid for native Americans; it is also true for Changez, who goes through a temporal shock as a result of the patriotic and nationalistic discourse and practice adopted by the USA and its citizens as a response to 9/11 especially in a city as cosmopolite as New York. So the postmodern, cosmopolite capital is no longer a place of perpetual peace and comfort for him. He articulates his discomfort to his American interlocutor by saying that in the wake of 9/11, American flag seemed to have invaded everywhere in New York. Every kind of flag, from small to large even in the form of stickers appeared out of buildings. According to Changez, the extensive use of flags in New York had actually an underlying meaning. It declared, in one way or another, the unity of the country in a very patriotic and nationalistic discourse. Moreover, it seemed to have menacing undertones against those who personally carried out the act and those who inevitably shared the same religious and cultural realm with them.

Until 9/11 attacks, American nationalism had always been constantly future-oriented, which further implies that it focused on achieving prospective goals rather than the appreciation of a shared past. This is a feature which distinguishes American nationalism from European form of nationalism, which has tended to prioritize a focus on the past ideals. "While the colonial project presented Europe as the world's future, a stance undoubtedly inherited by America – as the supposed embodiment of Europe's highest ideals – European colonialism was nonetheless justified on the basis of nationalisms with an eye to the past."[128] In this context, the term nostalgia deserves a mention because the connection between the term nostalgia and American nationalism appears symbolically in the novel. Nostalgia seems to have taken up a

[127] Alvaro Rodriguez Carballeira, "Psychosocial Analysis of the Collective Processes in the United States After September 11", *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 22, 2005, p. 6.
[128] Anna Hartnell, "Moving through America: Race, Place and Resistance in Mohsin Hamid's The Reluctant Fundamentalist", *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, Vol. 46, Nos. 3–4, July/September 2010, p. 342

substantial part of the novel simultaneously affecting Changez, Erica, and the USA. To start with Changez, he continuously longs for his home and family even in the superordinating culture of New York. He also longs for his family's previous days of wealth and nobility. In this sense, he admits: "I did not grow up in poverty. But I did grow up with a poor boy's sense of longing, in my case not for what my family had never had, but for what we had had and lost." As for Erica, she constantly yearns for her lost lover, Chris, and struggles "against a current that pulled her within herself."[129] As for the USA, after 9/11, American nationalism seems to have been haunted by a distant nostalgia for an idealized European past. Erica, symbolizes a romantic sphere within American nationalism. First off all, the name Erica is a partial form of the word America, which may help form a symbolic significance between the two. According to Anna Hartnell, Erica's dead lover carries an "Old World appeal" and his name Chris comes to represent both Europe's Christian roots and Christopher Columbus' discovery of the Americas. "Thus, Erica seemingly represents a romantic strain in American nationalism that looks back to a European past, a past that only partially captures the nation's roots and the make-up of contemporary America."[130] The country's nationalism is personified with Erica as pure and innocent. The love story between Changez and Erica mirrors the relationship between Changez and The USA. Because Changez gets distanced from the country as Erica gets distanced from her.

Racism is another aspect of the issue. Given the fact that racist discourse is not overtly handled in the book, Changez witnesses few examples of racist practice and prejudice. However, he is informed of the fact that there is a general racist tendency against all Muslims in the country. For example, when he returns to the USA from Manila shortly after the attacks, he is separated from his colleagues at the airport by an immigration agent. "What is the purpose of your trip to the United States?" she asked me. "I live here," I replied. "That is not what I asked you, sir," she said. "What is the purpose of your trip to the United States?"[131] The conversation between the two continues much in this fashion until he is sent for a secondary

[129] Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Penguin Books, London 2007, p. 86
[130] Anna Hartnell, "Moving through America: Race, Place and Resistance in Mohsin Hamid's The Reluctant Fundamentalist", *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, Vol. 46, Nos. 3–4, July/September 2010, p. 343
[131] Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Penguin Books, London 2007, p.86

inspection and ends up going home alone that evening. Changez, quite honestly, tells his listener how he reacted to the fall of twin towers in retrospect. He tells he had stared at the World Trade Center in New York as they collapsed one by one and he admits smiling at the sight of it. His preliminary reaction to the event was to be extraordinarily contented, no matter how despicable it might sound to a native Americans. Because to him, the collapse of twin towers had an overall symbolic significance: "someone had so visibly brought America to her knees" [132] Surprisingly enough, this smile occurs before he is detained at the airport and treated as a traitor by the immigration officers and during the time he claims to feel most American. "The novel's implication seems to be that the chauvinistic and racially charged atmosphere it describes after 9/11 is merely an intensification of something that was already there before."[133] Therefore, successive examples of racist prejudice convert New York-in his mind- to a place hostile to others and Changez starts to live in war zone, the boundaries of which are strictly drawn between us and them.

For many Americans, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 served to unite them. As the attacks came from outside the country and as it was believed that America as a whole was attacked, Americans were seen as the members of a superordinate nation group and a salient out-group was created. Since the attackers were of Arab origin, this out-group was enlarged so that it includes all citizens of Islamic descent living in the country. Thus, through recategorization, Americans became the new in-group and a different out-group was created.

> "In-group favoritism strengthened group cohesion, feelings of solidarity, and identification with the most emblematic values of the U.S. nation, while out-group discrimination induced U.S. citizens to conceive the enemy (al-Qaeda and its protectors) as the incarnation of evil, depersonalizing the group and venting their anger on it, and to give their backing to a military response, the eventual intervention in Afghanistan."[134]

4.4.Indoctrination

As mentioned above, indoctrination is somehow linked to latent form of imperialism. It starts to assert itself very early in Changez's life even before he

[132] Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Penguin Books, London 2007, pp.82-83.
[133] Anna Hartnell, "Moving through America: Race, Place and Resistance in Mohsin Hamid's The Reluctant Fundamentalist", *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, Vol. 46, Nos. 3–4, July/September 2010, p. 339.
[134] Alvaro Rodriguez Carballeira, "Psychosocial Analysis of the Collective Processes in the United States After September 11", *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 22, 2005, p.1.

comes to the USA. The country acts like a magnet for intellectually gifted students from all around the world through scholarships, visas, and the opportunity to work at prestigious companies with high salaries. As stated by Said: "the patronage system in scholarship, business, and research makes the United States a virtual hegemonic commander of affairs"[135] Every year, recruiters come to Princeton to select among this army of young, eloquent, and clever students, who, to put it in Changez's words, need to "raise skirt and show some skin". Underwood Samson is one of them of course but the hardest to achieve a position in according to Changez. Fortunately, he gets selected for the interviews among over a hundred Princeton members who send their grades and resumes to the company. Changez makes a detailed account of the day he is called for interview by Underwood Samson. "On that day, I did not think of myself as a Pakistani, but as an Underwood Samson trainee, and my firm's impressive offices made me proud."[136] There is an overt symbolism in the initials of Underwood Samson (US), which stands to represent United States with its pragmatic side. Underwood Samson adopts a guiding principle of *focus on the fundamentals*, which is dictated to it members from the very first day they start to work. This principle is based on the notions of self-centeredness, single-mindedness, and future-orientation with no concern for humanistic approach. So, Changez admits going through compassionate pangs, though not high in frequency, for those who will be made redundant as a result of the company's valuation strategy. Moreover, this principle hinders his humanistic approach towards people. As argued by Mukherjee: "his primary function as acolyte of the Empire of transnational capital was to spread ruination globally by disemploying people and ravaging their livelihood."[137]

Underwood Samson also comes to represent a pragmatic form of the melting pot approach, which tend to assimilate differences and diversity to create a harmonious whole. In this sense, Changez's colleague group exhibits great diversity in terms of race and gender; however, this becomes almost indistinguishable by the very same type of shorn of hair and the fact that all of them are dressed in battle fatigues; none of them is either short or overweight. This way his Pakistani descent

[135] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, Penguin Books, London 2003, p. 323.
[136] Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Penguin Books, London 2007, p.38
[137] Sharmila Mukherjee, "The Reluctant Fundamentalist: A Novel by Mohsin Hamid", *Modern Language Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 1, Summer 2011, p. 120

becomes almost invisible and no more disruptive. This reality once strikes him dramatically in the novel. During his stay in Manila, he bumps into a Filipino driver in traffic, who appears to have a hostile expression on his face towards Changez. So, while Changez is deeply preoccupied with the possible reasons of this apparent hostility, he suddenly turns to his American colleague, who has fair hair and light eyes, and is struck by his foreignness. "I felt in that moment much closer to the Filipino driver than to him; I felt I was play-acting when in reality I ought to be making my way home, like the people on the street outside."[138]

Once in the novel, Changez visits his home, Pakistan. There, he tends to have a different way of observing his surroundings. *The Americannes of his gaze* initially leads him to be disappointed at the shabby and lowly appearance of their old house. He needs to make some adjustments to adapt to his own native surroundings; it is only after he gets more familiar with this context that he admits "… it occurred to me that the house had not changed in my absence. *I* had changed; I was looking about me with the eyes of a foreigner, and not just any foreigner, but that particular type of entitled and unsympathetic American who so annoyed me when I encountered him in the classrooms and workplaces of your country's elite."[139] This quotation is quite demonstrative of the fact that the act of American indoctrination has proved fruitful even to the extent to alienate him from the surroundings of his birthplace.

However, after a while things start to change; Changez realizes that his company takes no notice of the personal or political events affecting one's emotional present. Changez, who previously had been able to find comfort in his company's complete focus on work, begins to go through some sort of transformation in his vision. "My blinders were coming off"[140] he says. "Changez grows increasingly disgusted at the exercise of US state power, not only via the war on terror but also via the state's economic arm as embodied in Underwood Samson"[141] Juan Batista's comparison in which he is depicted as a "modern-day janissary" adds another dimension to the issue. This way he comes to regard himself as a servant of

[138] Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Penguin Books, London 2007, p. 77.
[139] Hamid, Ibid., p. 141.
[140] Hamid, Ibid., p. 165.
[141] Anna Hartnell, "Moving through America: Race, Place and Resistance in Mohsin Hamid's The Reluctant Fundamentalist", *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, Vol. 46, Nos. 3–4, July/September 2010, p. 344.

America's economic hegemony at a time when Pakistan and Afghanistan are struggling with the turmoil created by the aggressive foreign policy of US. As a result of this, he becomes distant with the philosophy and practice of Underwood Samson and decides to quit his job. Jim, his recruiter, handles the issue in a rather patriotic realm. "I know you have stuff on your mind. But if you walk out on this now you undermine our firm. You hurt your team. In wartime soldiers don't really fight for their flags, Changez. They fight for their friends, their buddies. Their team. Well, right now your team is asking you to stay. Afterwards, if you need a break, it's yours."[142] This way, Jim tries to impose American patriotism on Changez. However, Changez is unstoppable and he has already made up his mind at the cost of losing his prestigious job, American visa and even Erica. "All I knew was that my days of focusing on fundamentals were done." [143]

[142] Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Penguin Books, London 2007, p. 174.
[143] Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Penguin Books, London 2007, p. 175.

5. CONCLUSION

This study has been committed to the analysis of three postcolonial novels by three postcolonial writers of South Asian background. Each of the three books analyzed above, is significant in its particular portrayal of Muslim integration to the host cultures and communities of Britain and the USA and the problems first and second generation South Asian characters go through in this process. In this sense, each novel brings out a different immigrant subjectivity within the context of characters' particular life circumstances in Britain and the USA. The writers of the novels, Hanif Kureishi, Monica Ali, and Mohsin Hamid, have their Third World and South Asian background as their common point along with their cultural or biological hybridity. In this sense, the novels become quite a manifestation of the personal life circumstances of the writers.

The novels have both similar and different characteristics in portraying the very problems characters go through in their adaptation process. These problems are generally related to the issues of racism, identity construction, alienation, cultural conflicts, and fundamentalism.

At this point, it will be useful to just have a look at the similar and different aspects of the novels. To start with racism, the notions of discrimination and racism in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* are not handled as overtly as they are in *The Black Album*. While, in *The Black Album*, racist discrimination and oppression are central to the lives and practices of the characters, in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, racism is handled in a rather transitory fashion at least for the protagonist Changez. The same is also valid for Nazneen who almost never experiences any racial oppression

or discrimination throughout the novel. It is only her husband who is negatively affected by the othering practices of the host culture.

The very nature of fundamentalism handled in *The Black Album* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* differs from each other in the sense that while in *The Black Album*, the notion of fundamentalism is based on a religious and violence-based discourse, fundamentalism in the Reluctant Fundamentalist is one of a political sort. While Shahid is distinguished with his liberal and postmodern affiliations and indulgence in personal freedom and creativity at the end of the novel, Changez is committed to a political fundamentalist lifestyle with personal and communal endeavor to make a change. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist's* protagonist, whom the title refers to, neither supports violence nor promotes it contrary to those in *The Black Album* who manipulates violence as a means to their ends. The Islamic rhetoric or practice is far more apparent and grounded in *The Black Album* and *Brick Lane* when compared with the scarcity of an Islamic rhetoric in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist.* Neither Shahid nor Changez are devout Muslims but Nazneen, who can be described as a faithful believer on general terms.

In *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* integration was once an accomplished fact for Shahid; however, 9/11 circumstances forces him to become quite disillusioned by the idea of integration and it is no longer possible for him to maintain. Instead, he chooses Pakistan as his real home and denies integration on the grounds of absurdity at a time of American exploitation of the Third World. On the other hand, for Shahid and Nazneen, integration, though not fully achieved, seems to have a brighter prospect. Shahid tries to integrate assimilatedly by absorbing western values of liberalism and freedom. In a sense, he sides with the assimilated traditions of his father and brother. As for Nazneen, the way she achieves integration is closely related to her personal commitment to the issue. She ends up integrating into wider community as a result of her feministic struggle to be free from the constraints of male dominance and community.

The South Asian immigrant communities presented in the books have disadvantageous life circumstances. The communities suffer from racism, ignorance, poverty, illiteracy, and discrimination. They live in deprived conditions. The Bengali community in *Brick Lane* suffer from an increase in drug use, illiteracy, and limited

job opportunities while the Pakistanis in The Black Album are predominantly affected by racism and fundamentalism.

Muslim integration to Britain and the USA in particular and Western countries in general has been a much more controversial issue over the last decades. As the number of Muslims living in the West grows, the question of integration on the side of Western Muslims has become significant for the mutual prospect of Islam and the West. There has been a diverse body of literature about immigrants' adaptation and they reflect different understandings about notion of integration. "Is Muslim integration to English and American cultures fully achievable?" "Are Muslims integrating?" "Can Muslims integrate?" are the main questions concerning the issue. The way they are answered depends on from which perspective and stance you look at the issue.

According to Tariq Ramadan, who has been primarily focused on the position of Muslims in the West, argues that it is possible for Muslims to be both faithful to the Islamic principles and embrace the civic life of Western societies. To him, Muslims are already looking for ways to live in harmony in a Western context with religious dedication. He further argues that Islam, contrary to the widely held belief, is not an obstacle but an aid for Muslims to get integrated. He also acknowledges the reality of prejudices, racism, and Islamophobia within Western societies. In this sense, it mainly depends on the enormous responsibility of the Muslims to build their future in the West.[144] "In this way, the normalization of the Muslim presence will not be a trivialization: their presence, their contribution, their participation should make a difference, not because of their otherness but because of the singular richness they bring to their society." [145]

I personally believe that it will be better for us to be optimistic about the prospect of a mutual harmonious integration on both sides. Naturally, it is not only Muslims who need to make a move for change but also natives who must give up the orientalist and colonialist legacy of their forefathers which reveals itself in the form of racism, exclusion, othering, obsession with Islam etc. This process requires

[144] Tariq Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*. Oxford University Press, New York 2004.
[145] Tariq, Ibid., p.225

mutual translation of values between East and West as also argued by Mazrui: "There is a need for a translation of values between civilizations— the need to make some of the emotions of the Muslim world more intelligible to the West, even if they still remain fundamentally different from the dominant paradigms of Western thought."[146]

[146] Ali A. Mazrui, "Satanic verses or a satanic novel? Moral dilemmas of the Rushdie affair", *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, Vol. 15, No. 1, Winter 1990, p.117.

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ÖZGEÇMİŞ

KİŞİSEL BİLGİLER

Adı Soyadı	**Zehra EKİNEKER GÜDER**
Doğum Yeri	**Bingöl**
Doğum Tarihi	**25.06.1990**

LİSANS EĞİTİM BİLGİLERİ

Üniversite	**Hacettepe Üniversitesi**
Fakülte	**Eğitim Fakültesi**
Bölüm	**İngiliz Dili Eğitimi**

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Çalıştığı Kurum	**Bingöl Üniversitesi**
Görevi/Pozisyonu	**Öğretim Görevlisi**
Tecrübe Süresi	**7 yıl**

KATILDIĞI

Kurslar	
Projeler	

İLETİŞİM

Adres	**Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Mah. Kardelen Cad. Gökdelen Apt.**
E-mail	**zekineker@bingol.edu.tr**