



Multiculturalism, Diaspora and the Conundrum of Origin: A Postcolonial Reading of the Politics of Culture in Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire*

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Abstract

In this article, I argue that *Home Fire* narrates an encounter between Western multiculturalism and diaspora subject position through the perspective of Isma, a second-generation British national of Pakistani origin. She constantly grapples with the narrative and practice of Western multiculturalism by aligning herself first with native British culture and then with American culture as a means of asserting her identity and survival. Drawing upon Beautell's (2000) conception of the essentialization of diversity and Sneja Gunew's notions of ethnic absolutism and differentialist racism (2004), I argue that Isma's diasporic life depicts Western multiculturalism as a philosophy and practice that highlight differences and mark the identities of diasporic subjects as "other." Isma's struggle to transcend this monological view of national identity and culture portrays her as trapped within an oppressive and despotic order. Building on Vertovec and Wessendorf's (2010) concept of the "death of multiculturalism," which explains how identities and differences are monopolized, the analysis of the novel reveals the politics of marginalization within the Muslim diaspora. It extends the argument regarding Western fundamentalism and the politics of exclusion through nation-state policies, structural constraints, and social ghettoization. Therefore, I argue about the hostilities Isma faces based on cultural differences and how she resists them by employing methods to reproduce and reshape her identity while navigating the conflicting issues of race, origin, nationality, history, and culture. I further contend that Isma, as part of the Muslim diaspora, ultimately overcomes this political and social rejection by returning to her homeland.

Key Words: Multiculturalism, Diaspora, ethnic absolutism, differentialist racism, essentialization of diversity

Introduction

In this article, I argue that *Home Fire* narrates an encounter between Western multiculturalism and diaspora subject position through the perspective of Isma, a second-generation British national of Pakistani origin. She constantly grapples with the narrative and practice of Western multiculturalism by aligning herself first with native British culture and then with American culture as a means of asserting her identity and survival. Drawing upon Beautell's (2000) conception of the essentialization of diversity and Sneja Gunew's notions of ethnic absolutism and differentialist racism (2004), I argue that Isma's diasporic life depicts Western multiculturalism as a philosophy and practice that highlight differences and mark the identities of diasporic subjects as "other." Isma's struggle to transcend this monological view of national identity and culture portrays her as trapped within an oppressive and despotic order. Building on Vertovec and Wessendorf's (2010) concept of the "death of multiculturalism," which explains how identities and differences are monopolized, the analysis of the novel reveals the politics of marginalization within the Muslim diaspora. It extends the argument regarding



Western fundamentalism and the politics of exclusion through nation-state policies, structural constraints, and social ghettoization. Therefore, I argue about the hostilities Isma faces based on cultural differences and how she resists them by employing methods to reproduce and reshape her identity while navigating the conflicting issues of race, origin, nationality, history, and culture. I further contend that Isma, as part of the Muslim diaspora, ultimately overcomes this political and social rejection by returning to her homeland.

Literature Review

Rehana Ahmed observes the death of multiculturalism in extensive policing and control. She proposes that among the major concerns of "Home Fire" is surveillance. Specifically, the novel shows qualms about the effects of MI5's surveillance of the Pasha siblings—Isma, Aneeka, and Parvaiz. This surveillance stems from their father's extremism, resulting in his detainment at Bagram before his death in transit to Guantánamo Bay. Later, it relates to Parvaiz's recruitment to the "media wing" of Islamic State in Syria (Ahmed, 2020, 5). Beyond this, the novel depicts the monitoring of Muslim Conservative MP Karamat Lone in London, as well as Isma's actions being brought into question prior to her flight to the US. The siblings also keep track of each other's Skype activities. The media's scrutiny of Aneeka intensifies following Parvaiz's death (Ahmed, 2020, 6). Karamat's privileged son, Eamonn, extensively studies his father's actions. Aneeka, Eamonn's lover, seeks to influence his influential father in an attempt to bring her beloved and respected twin, Parvaiz, back home. The latter, partially employing the veil trope, explores the interplay of surveillance and deception, shedding new light on the politics of writing and reading about Muslims.

The novel's emphasis on performance and surveillance draws attention to how the visual can shape or solidify people's perceptions of *others*, thereby reinforcing communication barriers between cultural groups or preventing communication altogether. British Muslims are particularly vulnerable to racism due to the visibility of their differences in the public sphere. This can be manifested through veiling or prayer in schools or courts of law, or within a community dominated by services catering to religious culture. British Muslims "find themselves in a double bind of performativity" (Ahmed, 2020, 15), as they are expected to perform both their "Britishness" and their "Muslimness" in the public sphere.

Despite his class advantage, Karamat Lone faces more pressure due to his public position. He is expected to portray the "good Muslim" or represent "Britishness" to the public. When exposed for entering a mosque connected to a "hate preacher," he publicly enters a church with his wife to demonstrate his "Britishness," winning the support of his white constituents while alienating Muslims. On his way to Auntie Naseem's, Eamonn mimics his father's spatial and cultural navigation by crossing a road to avoid passing a mosque, then crossing back "so as not to be seen as trying to avoid a mosque" (Ahmed, 2020, 5).

"Of course, as Karamat would argue, it is not inherent cultural differences that create divisions, but rather the watchful eye that categorizes the religious 'other,' assigning them to a specific, inferior group or boundary location. The ability to recognize others "operates as a visual economy: it involves ways of seeing the difference between familiar and strange others as they are (re)presented to the subject," as Sara Ahmed puts it in her article. Recognition as a mode of subject constitution entails distinguishing between others based on how they "appear"" (Ahmed, 2020, 14).



Shamsie's book withholds the reader's "ownership" of the characters. This could be interpreted as anxiety or unease about the morality of writing and reading across racial and ethnic divides, or about how a writer can avoid speaking for or taking ownership of a community from which they are privileged to be isolated despite affiliation. By providing access to a cast of British Muslims while simultaneously disallowing the reader from appropriately ingesting their "Muslimness" through an exaggerated, melodramatic style, the book navigates perilous terrain. In this way, the book encourages readers to reflect on their own practices of reading across differences and to recognize the importance of acknowledging and respecting the distinctions they encounter. The reader is, in a sense, dislocated—or denied their typical way of reading a portrayal of British Muslims—and this detachment is a first step toward opening oneself up to variation and, consequently, effectively communicating across it. The goal is to cultivate a differentiated solidarity through reading.

On the other hand, Arin Keeble and James Annesley offer an analysis of two contemporary novels that present globalism and multiculturalism in Western capitalist democracies in the early twenty-first century from a more pessimistic perspective. The novels in question are Zia Hader Rahman's "In the Light of What We Know" (2014) and Shamsie's "Home Fire" (2017). According to Keeble and Annesley Rahman's "In the Light of What We Know" follows a structure typical of globalization novels, exhibiting the intricate and ambitious qualities akin to works like Don DeLillo's "Underworld" (1997), Jonathan Franzen's "The Corrections" (2001), and more recently, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's "Americanah" (2013). The author effectively conveys the notion that globalization constitutes a longstanding endeavor of national institutions and "elites," evident through the narrator's experiences within the predatory global financial sector. Themes of extraterritoriality and global conflict underscore this perspective. The novel's protagonist, Zafar, navigates a narrative trajectory reminiscent of Marlowe's storytelling, sharing life anecdotes with an unnamed friend who functions both as an amanuensis and interlocutor. This friend frames the narrative, engaging in dialogue that furthers the storytelling. Despite their disparate backgrounds, Zafar and the narrator, both Oxford acquaintances, share commonalities. Zafar, born in poverty in Bangladesh and raised in Brixton, exhibits remarkable analytical prowess, propelling him from humble beginnings to Harvard, Wall Street, and London's Inns of Court. In contrast, the narrator hails from a privileged Pakistani family, possessing elite international connections. This dichotomy is accentuated by their religious affinities and the intricate ties between Pakistan and Bangladesh. The story gains momentum as Zafar enters the narrator's Kensington townhouse, embarking on narratives spanning Oxford, New York, Dubai, Kabul, and Bangladesh. A stark class distinction becomes evident in their narratives, offering significant commentary on the injustices and fallacies of the prevailing capitalist global order. This article supports the stance of this thesis as in the novel Shamsie's subject is Isma. Similar to that *In the Light of What We Know*, so this metafictional impulse causes the book to be implicated in its own pessimism. Not just in addition to dramatizing the unevenness and cracks in British multiculturalism, which in both cases result in violence, it also emphasizes how futile it is to expect literary or academic "representations" to move readers or promote discussion.

Theoretical Framework

Beautell (2000) proposes that European imperialism and current "Euro-American neocolonialism" have sparked discourses on multiculturalism, marginalization, ethnicity, and



identity in postcolonial settler colonies especially in Canada. Drawing on Mishra and Hodge's conception of cross-cultural identities that are rooted in Fanon's dualistic perspective, Beautell maintains that hybrid nature of culture transforms multiculturalism into an analytical framework rather than a uniform national representation (Beautell, 2000, 26). Recognizing the intricate Canadian landscape, for being shaped by various colonization patterns involving interactions among indigenous communities, settlers, imperial centers, and diverse ethnic groups (Beautell, 2000, 30), asserts that it is a product of postcolonial policies. Multiculturalism as a framework emphasizes the binary tension between natives and immigrants/refugees/strangers, often exerting pressure on foreigners to assimilate, especially in diaspora scenarios. Said rationalizes the connection between differences, conflicts, and historical context as a core cause to shape diaspora communities' political stances and the poetics of identity (Said, 1993, 15). Beautell debunks the Western perspective on multiculturalism, depicting it as authoritarian, tied to geography and race, rooted in tradition and historical identity, thus prejudicial and blinkered.

Gunew (1997) acknowledges the *difference* as the foundation of the troubled relationship between postcolonialism and multiculturalism. Gunew's view encompasses not only historical interactions between former imperial centers and ex-colonies but also the movements of migrants, refugees, diasporas, and their interactions with nation-states within the context of colonialism. Said highlights how culture becomes closely linked with the nation or state over time, often leading to differentiation between "us" and "them" and varying degrees of racial chauvinism and jingoism. Postcolonial multiculturalism examines interactions between dominant and minority cultures within national, nationalist, global, and cosmopolitan contexts, shedding light on the dynamics of home and displacement. Said's work (1994) underscores how the lasting legacy of imperialism shapes contemporary cultural attitudes. He emphasizes that the crucial aspect is not just the historical past itself but its profound impact on present perspectives. Historical experiences of imperialism have revived divisions between colonizers and colonized, especially in the North-South relationship, leading to defensiveness, rhetorical conflicts, and underlying hostilities that could escalate into destructive conflicts. Said advocates for a reevaluation of the imperial experience, urging us to transcend conventional categorizations and transform our understanding of the past, present, and future (Said, 1994, 17). In the postcolonial context, multiculturalism serves subversively, themes of fouled history, origin and politics. The West's fixation on imperialism and scholarship prompts a reevaluation of its politics. Slemon (1991) highlights Western preoccupation with literary theory leading to a "crisis of representation" and "cognitive hegemony," limiting recognition beyond its perspective. Multiculturalism, influenced by Derridean maneuvering, becomes dehistoricizes and depoliticized, universalizing Western thought while neglecting colonial language issues (Slemon, 1991, 54). This view embodies both idealism and authoritarianism of keeping differences and different afloat through rhetoric and praxis in diaspora by rescinding immigrant's histories, pasts, by submerging into a homogeneous national identity of the dominant culture, hence, fostering an unknowable perception of the other. Homi K. Bhabha (2003) frames multiculturalism as rooted in prejudicial knowledge thereby aggravate differences and conflicts. Western multiculturalism, Bhabha argues, tends to be self-centered, inadvertently fueling separatist politics (Bhabha, 2003, 55).

Multiculturalism, as per Gunew (1997), deals with state-driven nation-building and diversity regulation. It arises from a collapse of history and home politics, aligning with



postcolonial ideas in the Western context. Multiculturalism, noted by Gunew (1997), departs from imagined monoculturalism linked to the 'West' or 'Europe,' aligning with postcolonial concepts. It deals with the politics of difference, complicated by distinctions between Third World and advanced capitalist countries, European communities, and 'settler societies.' Multiculturalism's roots lie in 'ethnicity,' 'race,' and 'indigeneity,' shaped by migration, colonization, and subjugation. Despite appearing monolithic, multiculturalism is grounded in the postcolonial theoretical framework of dichotomous propositions and patterns. AlJaz Ahmad (1987) observes that such a theoretical position dismisses material histories as 'progressivist modes-of-production narrative,' views historical agency as a 'myth of origin,' regards nations and states as inherently coercive, sees classes as mere discursive constructs, and considers political parties as fundamentally tainted by collectivist illusions of a stable subject position.

In "Haunted Nations: The Colonial Dimensions of Multiculturalism," Gunew (2004) distinguishes postcolonialism from multiculturalism in the context of migratory diasporas in the West. While postcolonialism enjoys academic recognition, multiculturalism is often viewed skeptically as a state apparatus for managing diverse demographies. Gunew aligns with Hall's analysis that colonialism covertly structures multiculturalism but highlights differences. Postcolonialism discusses globalization, whereas multiculturalism focuses on racialized interactions within nation-states (Gunew, 2004, 37). Gunew (2004) suggests that if multiculturalism's definition implies state manipulation, it becomes a strategic imposition influenced by historical and socio-political ideologies. She underscores that both multiculturalism and postcolonialism view history as a pivotal crossroads for nationalism and a subversive force. Gunew (2004, 58-66) explores the "diasporic subject" whose identity hinges on race, ethnicity, and imperial history. She examines this identity as a paradox, involving appropriation, assimilation, or being perceived as "foreign bodies" depending on the demographic context. Gunew (2004) asserts that multiculturalism absorbs immigrant differences into a universal representation of the dominant culture, a process she terms "differentialist racism," highlighting its instrumental nature (Gunew, 2004, 80). In this regard, Vertovec and Wessendorf (2010) argue that multiculturalism has become a diffuse and imprecise term, referring to a broad discursive field encompassing various policies and practices that regulate the public recognition of immigrant and ethnic minorities (Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010, 2). Gunew (2004) notes immigrants often feel pressured to assimilate into the native culture for moral acceptance. This brings into line Western multiculturalism, where conformity and compliance of the immigrant/diasporic subject with the host nation's culture legitimizes immigrants' moral and ethical position (Gunew, 2004, 69, 97). Vertovec and Wessendorf (2010) question the balance between demanding conformity from minorities and allowing flexible identity strategies in the context of civic rights. They describe multiculturalism in the West as a tool for controlling thought and speech, sometimes leading to a "tyranny of political correctness" among multicultural ethnicities, in tandem with separatism and intolerance (Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010, 7, 9). Hence, accentuates Gunew's argument that Western multiculturalism reinforces "ethnic absolutism" thereby essentially creating a parochial view (Gunew, 2004, 115).

Discussion

Home Fire

Isma



The treatment of Isma at Heathrow Airport serves as a poignant illustration of how the enduring effects of colonization continue to impact individuals from marginalized and Third World countries, echoing Stuart Hall's assertion that colonization not only exerts control over the present but also distorts and disfigures the cultural and personal histories of oppressed peoples. Isma Pasha finds herself detained at Heathrow Airport due to suspicions aroused by her luggage. The security officer scrutinizes her clothing, singling out her expensive jacket as a potential concern. Isma's emotions are vividly expressed in the novel: "She had expected the interrogation, but not the hours of waiting that would precede it, nor that it would feel so humiliating to have the contents of her suitcase inspected" (H.F, 3). This treatment of Isma at the airport underscores the lingering impact of colonization on marginalized and Third World countries, as Hall points out: "Colonization is not satisfied with merely holding a people in its grip and emptying the native of all form and content. By a perverted logic, it turns to the past of oppressed people, distorting, disfiguring, and destroying it" (Hall, 1990, 224).

The extensive interrogation of Isma Pasha at Heathrow Airport highlights the pervasive problem of Islamophobia and the prejudices fabricated against Muslim identity on global scale. Her detainment, triggered by luggage suspicions, lasted nearly two hours. This mirrors the broader issue of bias against Muslim individuals and communities due to their perceived association with "terrorism" (H.F, 4). This underscores the widespread issue of Islamophobia, which has intensified since 9/11, fueled by incidents like the tragic truck attack in Nice that claimed 86 lives. Political figures like Donald Trump, during the 2016 elections, further exacerbated this fear by frequently invoking the term "radical Islamic terrorism," reinforcing religiously motivated fear (Brandt, 2020, 1). Isma's sense of isolation and alienation in both America and Britain is poignantly highlighted, particularly exacerbated by her distressing encounter at Heathrow Airport. "There appears to be an intriguing struggle here over who can claim 'our Natives,' where debates revolve around 'who gets it right'—in other words, who has the authority to represent the 'Native.' Another crucial aspect to emphasize is that processes of racialization are not inherently natural. Avtar Brah highlights that different groups undergo distinct forms of racialization" (Brah, 1996: 228, Gunew, 2004, 47).

The exchange of messages between Isma and her sister at Heathrow Airport illuminates the scrutiny faced by Muslim travelers. Dr. Shah's arrival on New Year's Day 2015 marks a fresh beginning. Isma's text message reads, "Arrived safely. Through security—no problems. Dr. Shah here. How are things with you?" Her sister's response speaks volumes: "Fine, now I know they've let you through" (H.F, 17). This underscores the skepticism that Muslims and minorities encounter when traveling abroad. Gunew emphasizes that multiculturalism deals with minorities in relation to a majority, yet defining and navigating these categories is highly contentious. Differences in articulation between advanced capitalist countries and the so-called Third World, as well as between 'settler societies' and the European community, add complexity to this dynamic (Gunew, 1997, 23). Tololyan asserts that diaspora should explore the traces of struggles and contradictions within ideas and practices of collective identity, homeland, and nation across cultural productions and history (Tololyan, 1991, 3). This perspective aligns with Arianna Dagnino's view on "migrant literature", which advocates for a dynamic consideration of people, places, histories, languages, and poetics in continuous relation to each other, rather than as mutually exclusive absolutes (Dagnino, 2013, 3).



Isma's mindfulness about her Muslim identity, particularly her attire and knowledge of the challenges she might encounter in an industrial area, deepens her sense of identity crisis. In America, when she meets Eamonn, his satirical comment about her veil, followed by an apology regarding her "turban," surprises Isma, as Eamonn is not Muslim. Additionally, when Auntie Naseem contacts Isma to inquire about Aneeka, who is staying with Gita and her boyfriend, it underscores the complexities of her life as an immigrant.

"She knew her mother and grandmother would say it was dangerous, a lone girl walking past industrial estates and along silent stretches with no company other than the foliage, as in the countryside. To her family, nowhere was more dangerous than the countryside" (H.F, 20).

These lines demonstrate Isma's awareness of the challenges she faces while navigating an industrial area and adapting to the American culture. Her family, although not Muslim themselves, cautioned her about living alone in such an area, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a distinct identity from their non-Muslim neighbors, which contributed to her sense of isolation. As Vertovec points out, such separation is often emphasized in societal discourse, leading to a perception of Muslims living separately from non-Muslims (Vertovec, 2010, 23). Shazia Sadaf's insights into the way women and their bodies are discussed in cultural contexts provide further context to Isma's experiences, as they reflect the cultural metaphors shaping immigrant realities (Sadaf, 2014, 492). Isma's journey through the industrial area not only showcases her adaptability and mindfulness but also sheds light on the intricate dynamics of identity and isolation faced by immigrants in a new cultural context, resonating with the societal challenges and perceptions discussed by Vertovec and Sadaf.

The world's division into the center and periphery, represented by the colonizer and the colonized, vividly illustrates the stark contrasts that exist in our diverse and fragmented global society. This division has given rise to numerous challenges and conflicts among different cultures, leading to a sense of alienation. This world of cultural diversity can be seen as a binary representation, where a dominant culture, often associated with the cosmopolitan, bourgeoisie, and first-world center, coexists with diaspora communities, living a life influenced by the colonizer's culture. The culture of the colonizers is frequently regarded as superior, which can lead to tensions and various issues when it encounters immigrant cultures. Sercan Hamza Baglama sheds light on these issues:

"In the neo-colonial center, a Muslim is accepted if they conform to the criteria of a 'proper' Muslim set by metropolitan culture because 'the traditional form of racism based on genetic hierarchies has disguised its real nature, embraced a culture-based discourse and presented anything Western as superior'" (Baglama, 2020, 1647).

Moving away from racism based on genetics, the focus has shifted to cultural norms, masking underlying biases while elevating Western ideals. This results in a form of selective inclusion or inclusionary racism. For example, a 'proper' Muslim woman might wear a hijab, but her style, brand preferences, and personality can determine her acceptance and visibility. Similarly, a 'proper' Muslim man may theoretically embrace certain sectarian ideas, but his behavior, actions, and educational background can influence his employability. While Muslim individuals have the freedom not to conform to the standards of an 'ideal' personality, failure to do so may result in marginalization, criminalization, and exclusion from the dominant society (Baglama, 2020, 1647). To avoid such consequences, many individuals conform to normative practices, upholding the ideological dominance of orientalist discourse within the framework of



postmodern capitalism. The binary of colonizer and colonized has evolved into a more subtle form of cultural-based discrimination, where selective inclusion and exclusion based on adherence to Western ideals persist, revealing the intricate dynamics of identity and acceptance in a postcolonial, multicultural world.

Colonizers often subject the colonized to hostility and oppression, while the colonized aspire to attain freedom and improve their social, political, and economic standing. This dynamic encapsulates the tensions and struggles that can arise between dominant and immigrant cultures. Referring to the clash between Muslim values and Western ways, Vertovec suggests that blame is often attributed not to structural inequality or deep-rooted discrimination but to multicultural policies seen as indulging immigrants' culture, their perceived lack of loyalty to the nation-state, and an alleged over-reliance on welfare (Vertovec, 2010, 12). This underscores the idea that various colonized groups have experienced different colonial circumstances. Eva Darius Beautell also addresses this clash and highlights the common ground found in the opposition between colony and empire, despite the vastly different experiences of settler colonies, occupied territories, and slave plantations, such as Canada, India, and the West Indies, respectively (Beautell, 2000, 20). Naz, referencing Gilbert Rist's concept of development and underdevelopment, argues that 'U.S. hegemony' relies on a policy that maintains a connection with the 'Third World' to intervene and address issues like hunger, disease, and poverty (Naz, 2021, 227). Gunew points out that multiculturalism is meant to address the politics of difference between minorities and the majority, a complex task due to variations between Third World and advanced capitalist countries, as well as differences between the European community and 'settler societies.' Consequently, the origins of minority representation and identity are rooted in 'ethnicity,' 'race,' and 'indigeneity,' all within the context of migration, colonization, and subjugation. She notes that the concept of 'community' is constantly evolving, shaped by changing national and global boundaries and the resurgence of ethnic absolutism (Gunew, 2004, 115). The ongoing struggle between dominant and immigrant cultures, as explained by Vertovec, Beautell, Naz, and Gunew, underscores the multifaceted legacy of colonization and its intricate impact on the issues of identity, representation, and inequality in our contemporary world.

In the narratives surrounding clashes between Christianity and Islam, along with the elevated status of a Muslim figure, stories challenge prevailing stereotypes. Farooq frequently met with Parvaiz, sharing stories about his father's courageous fight against injustice. Farooq portrays him as a fearless fighter who opposed oppression. Furthermore, Farooq delves into historical conflicts between Christianity and Islam, highlighting the perceived superiority of Muslims. Muhammad Ayob Jan, in his article "Dispatches from Pakistan," asserts that most narratives about Pakistan are dominated by concerns about security, religious militancy, and an uncertain future, often overshadowing the voices and struggles of marginalized and disadvantaged groups. He emphasizes the deliberate suppression of these subversive voices and struggles amid hegemonic expressions and discourses (Jan, 2015). The narratives conveyed by Farooq about his father's bravery and the historical context of conflicts between Christianity and Islam serve as a powerful reminder of the complexities within Pakistan's social fabric. Muhammad Ayub Jan's observation underscores the urgent need to amplify the voices of the marginalized and challenge dominant narratives to achieve a more inclusive understanding of the multifaceted reality in the country. Evaluation of Eamonn's situation sheds light on the divisions created by the dominant culture, a perspective Max offers when describing Eamonn as a "twenty-



something unemployed male from a Muslim background exhibits a rapidly altered pattern of behavior, cuts himself off from old friends, moves under the radar" (H.F, 82). These words reflect Max's viewpoint and expose the disparities perpetuated by the dominant culture, which often regards Muslims as outsiders and potential threats. This perspective aligns with Peter Morey's assertion in his article on 'Terrorism,' where he suggests that Muslims and Muslimized individuals are marked as the ultimate 'other' in relation to this discourse due to their perceived disregard for families and the consequences of their actions on their wives and children (Morey, 2010, 255).

The term "British" often carries negative associations for British Muslims and Pakistani British passport holders, subjecting them to suspicion and placing them in the crossfire between British nationality and concerns about terrorism. This division between the colonized and the colonizer has given rise to various issues and conflicts among diverse cultures, fostering a sense of alienation. The culture of the colonizers is frequently deemed superior, and when this dominant culture intersects with the cultures of immigrants, it can lead to tensions and various challenges. Kinza Afraz Abbasi aptly encapsulates this situation:

“Jacob’s article allows me to contextualize the issues faced by immigrants within the broader backdrop of Muslim stereotyping. Muslims have often been stereotyped as barbaric in the West. Jacob’s article highlights how Shamsie's HF addresses the issue of radicalization and the generalization of the Muslim image. This helps me understand the status of immigrants in the context of how the West constructs the identity of Muslims” (Abbasi, 2019, 25).

In the context of the clash between Muslim values and Western norms, Vertovec suggests that the question of blame—whether it lies with the system or the victims—is often framed not in terms of structural inequality or deep-seated discrimination but as a critique of multicultural policies perceived to accommodate immigrant cultures, along with accusations of a perceived lack of loyalty to the nation-state and an overreliance on welfare (Vertovec, 2010, 12). In support of this notion, Arianna Diagnino's concept of 'transnation' can be referenced:

“Transcultural literature aligns with the perspective discussed by Bill Ashcroft, Ranjini Mendis, Julie McGonegal, and Arun Mukherjee, who explore the cultural and literary multipolarity of the 'transnation,' where local and global, national and transnational, are intricately interwoven and engaged through new, albeit often unequal or disjointed, configurations and diverse temporalities” (Diagnino, 2013, 6).

The persistent challenges faced by British Muslims and Pakistani British passport holders in navigating issues related to identity, stereotyping, and cultural clashes underscore the urgent need for a more nuanced comprehension of multiculturalism. This perspective, as articulated by Kinza Afraz Abbasi, Steven Vertovec, and Arianna Diagnino, can foster a more inclusive and harmonious coexistence within diverse societies. The unresolved mystery surrounding Adil's disappearance and the emotional farewell between Isma and Eamonn serve as poignant reminders of the intricate connections between personal experiences and the broader dynamics of imperialism and cultural exchange. These elements echo Edward Said's insights into the global impact of Western cultural forms and the ongoing contest between the global north and global south, underlining the enduring dichotomy:

“Western cultural forms can be taken out of the autonomous enclosures in which they have been protected and placed instead in the dynamic global environment created by



imperialism, itself revised as an ongoing contest between north and south, metropolis and periphery, white and native" (Said, 1994, 51).

In conclusion, these multifaceted dynamics underscore the imperative of reevaluating prevailing stereotypes, promoting cultural understanding, and fostering inclusivity to bridge the divides that persist in our increasingly diverse societies.

Eamonn

Eamonn's internal conflict regarding avoiding a mosque and his father's encounters with racism, driven by suspicions of extremism, underscore the enduring impact of colonial legacies on perceptions of Muslim identities. This aligns with Arianna Diagnino's criticism of postcolonial approaches, which at times inadvertently reinforce notions of difference and otherness. As Eamonn returns to London and navigates Isma's neighborhood to deliver M&M's, memories of visiting a great-uncle's house on Eid resurface, even though their family did not observe Ramadan. The incident involving the mosque photographs resurfaces in his thoughts:

"As he walked, he found himself nearing a mosque, crossed the street to avoid it, then crossed back, all the while attempting not to be seen trying to avoid a mosque. Everyone always went on about the racism his father had to face when a section of the press tried to brand him an extremist" (H.F, 52).

This situation highlights the division created by colonialism, echoing Diagnino's critique that postcolonial approaches often rely on classical dichotomies such as colonizer vs. colonized and remain excessively tied to notions of "difference", "dissidence", and "opposition". Diagnino emphasizes the importance of transcending these dichotomies and not viewing "post-colonialism" as a master discourse while acknowledging its role in describing cultural diversity and global cultural production (Diagnino, 2013, 4). This perspective aligns with Bhabha's reference to Frantz Fanon's concept of "unhomeliness", defined as "the condition of the extra-territorial and cross-cultural initiations" (Bhabha, 1994, 9). Eamonn's internal struggle and his father's experiences with racism shed light on the enduring legacy of colonialism in shaping perceptions of Muslim identities.

The Home Secretary's speeches and recommendations to immigrants to accept, adopt and adapt British culture as a standard for their living, and leave their religion, and cultures behind puts Karamat Lone's politics of Western multiculturalism in more light. His advice to the immigrants to accept the fact that they are British if they wish to live in Britain unravels his anti-immigrant attitude and cultural isolation. Considering this, R. G. Davis, referring to Beautell, explains it well, "What multiculturalism sometimes does is to homogenize, even ghettoize, a variety of subject positions into the prescribed and accepted ethnic images and ethnic tokens of the country" (Beautell. 2000, 51). Karamat Lone's call for immigrants to embrace their British identity while acknowledging the challenges of multiculturalism underscores the complex interplay between assimilation and cultural diversity, highlighting the need for a more inclusive and nuanced approach to multiculturalism in contemporary society.

Aneeka confronts Eamonn about Karamat's speech at his apartment, asking if he knows that some of the things the country will let a Muslim person achieve are torture, rendition, and detention without trial. Eamonn protests that Karamat wants "people like you" (H.F, 74) to suffer less, but Aneeka is hurt by the phrasing. "Unlike Parvaiz, Eamonn never faces discrimination due to his Muslim identity. In fact, Eamonn does not strongly identify with a religious or Pakistani heritage" (Tekin, 2021, 1178) Furthermore, in opposition to this, Mohsin Hamid offers that in



order to avoid this brutality and violence in other states, Muslims should try to adjust within the frame of the colonial gaze from which they're looked upon. He says, "There are adjustments one must make if one comes here from America; a different way of observing is required. I recall the Americanness of my own gaze when I returned to Lahore that winter when war was in the offing" (Hamid, 2007, 56). In opposition to this, Rajeeve S. Patke argues, "instead, for an idea of the nation based on the recognition that races, religions, cultures, and languages interact as part of shared histories. He believed that attachments developed naturally over time towards places and peoples, fostered a sense of community that did not have to be racially homogenous or mono-cultural to expect mutual respect" (Patke, 2006, 224). The confrontation between Aneeka and Eamonn illuminates the complexities of identity and discrimination within the context of multicultural societies, while the perspectives of Mohsin Hamid and Rajeeve S. Patke provide contrasting viewpoints on the challenges and possibilities of coexistence in a diverse and interconnected world.

In a conversation with his father at their house, Eamonn confesses to Karamat that he is in love with Aneeka, who lives in Preston Road in Wembley and is from Pakistan. He expresses his love in Urdu, and Karamat encourages Aneeka to meet his family. "Twenty-something unemployed male from a Muslim background exhibits a rapidly altered pattern of behavior, cuts himself off from old friends, moves under the radar" (H.F, 82). Muslims are not treated as equals, as they are often viewed as terrorists and inferior, as Peter Morey in his article 'Terrorism' opines, "the ultimate 'otherness' of Muslims and Muslimized characters in relation to this discourse is guaranteed by their disregard for families and the consequences of their actions upon their wives and children" (Morey. 2010, 255). "Sometimes things happen that make people more hostile. Terrorist attacks involving European victims. Home secretaries talking about people setting themselves apart in the way they dress" (H.F, 90). Karamat tells Eamonn, "There's one thing I should warn you about. She's a bit, well, Muslim." "How 'well, Muslim,' exactly?" "She prays. Not five times a day, but every morning, first thing. Doesn't drink or eat pork. She fasts during Ramzan. Wears a hijab." "Uh-huh. But she has no problem" (H.F, 85). In contrast to this, Michael Murphy claims, "Indeed many of the policies supported by different champions of multiculturalism—such as anti-discrimination legislation or cultural sensitivity training for public officials—are specifically designed to ensure that minorities are not treated unequally or deprived of equal opportunities because of their ethnic, religious, racial, or other differences.." (Murphy, 2012, 21) Peter Morey, referring to Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and Post 9/11 fiction, states, "However, the novel itself is not at all celebratory about our "globalized" world. In the most detailed consideration of this aspect of the novel, Hart and Hansen identify its key themes as "cross-cultural romance [as a metaphor for] the limits of cosmopolitan space", and the lure of transnational capitalism. But this is not a Rushdie-esque celebration of hybridity or cultural translation" (Morey. 2011, 142). In such places, facilities and many benefits are provided, and there is no discrimination based on caste, color, or race. As Gunew postulates, "the community spends the first generation struggling to survive so that cultural production is kept to a minimum and appears to be most authentically captured by oral life-stories. To some extent these tales are rendered all the more poignant by their seeming artlessness. The tension in these accounts is that individuals, as well as the group, are pitted against a cultural norm, a way of being in the world with which they are at odds, through language, through skin color, or some of the other markers of difference which are to some



extent always arbitrary and all the more painful for being that " (Gunew, 2004, 119). Eamonn's declaration of love for Aneeka, and the complex dynamics surrounding their relationship, shed light on the challenges and prejudices faced by Muslims in multicultural societies, highlighting the potential for inclusivity and equality in such diverse communities.

In the context of Karamat presenting Eamonn's phone and call history with Aneeka to explain their suspicious situation, Gunew's agreement with Rossi Bradotti's response to Garner's collection becomes relevant. Bradotti criticizes Garner for portraying migrant subjects as "intellectually superior" but with "poorly educated parents", characterizing it as "ethnocentric" and unaware of its own ignorance about these individuals (Gunew, 2004, 36). This criticism aligns with the narrative in the novel, which highlights how certain events can escalate hostility and mistrust, such as American airstrikes in Syria and terrorist attacks affecting European citizens (H.F. 90).

Patrick Williams and Laura Christman's assertion about nationalist aspirations leading to an extension of citizenship rights, particularly benefiting women, is also pertinent in this context. Their statement emphasizes that women's emergence as citizens often requires transformations in institutions and customs that bind them to the traditions of their ethnic and religious communities, with the modern state acting as a potential force for more progressive gender politics (Williams and Christman, 2013, 376). The scrutiny and monitoring of Aneeka's actions, along with the broader societal attitudes discussed by Gunew and Williams and Christman, underscore the complex dynamics of power, identity, and societal pressures within multicultural societies. This complexity necessitates a nuanced understanding of these dynamics. Furthermore, Karamat Lone's speech about a place where migrants are treated well and where diversity in terms of race, religion, and culture is celebrated adds depth to the concept of multiculturalism. It aligns with Benedict Anderson's idea that the emergence of imagined national communities goes beyond replacing "religious and dynastic realms". Instead, it reflects a fundamental shift in how people perceive the world, allowing them to conceive of nations (Anderson, 1983, 22).

Parvaiz

The intimidating presence of Farooq and Parvaiz in the electronics store, as well as Parvaiz's later encounter with neighborhood boys, reflects the complex intersection of cultural identity, power dynamics, and perceptions of foreignness, aligning with how modes of apprehending the world influence the emergence of imagined national communities. Farooq and Parvaiz enter an electronics store in Istanbul to buy an audio recorder. Their appearance and air of superiority intimidate the man behind the counter and the rest of the customers, "though their South Asian features marked them as foreign. Their white robes, shoulder-length hair, and long beards further distinguished them as men whose attitude of ownership you don't contest" (H.F, 91). Gauging this, Benedict Anderson's disputes this monolithic version of identity:

"It would be short-sighted, however, to think of the imagined communities of nations as simply growing out of and replacing religious communities and dynastic realms. Beneath the decline of sacred communities, languages, and lineages, a fundamental change was taking place in modes of apprehending the world, which more than anything else, made it possible to think the nation" (Anderson, 1983, 22).

This underscores how the interaction between Farooq, Parvaiz, and the locals in the electronics store exemplifies the complexities of cultural identity and power dynamics, echoing



Benedict Anderson's insights into the evolution of imagined national communities through shifting modes of perceiving the world.

In the context of Muslims living in America and the challenges they face, Muhammad Waqar Azeem's article on post-9/11 fiction highlights how immigrants can become convenient subjects for laws that transcend territorial limits, leading to their dislocation and a sense of not belonging in their new land (Azeem, 2018, 77). Parvaiz's experience at school, where he is questioned about his father's alleged involvement in Jihad, reflects the pressures faced by young Muslims in Western societies. Claire Chambers discusses the evolving terminology used to define Muslims in Britain, from "Black" in the 1980s to "Asian" in the 1990s, and finally, "British Muslim" after 9/11 and 7/7, underlining the shifting perceptions of their identity (Chambers, 2011, p.17). Peter Morey's assertion about the Nation of Islam's relevance in the context of African Islam in the U.S. and the connection to Middle Eastern orthodoxies adds depth to the discussion of Muslim identities in different contexts (Morey, 2011, 891). The complexities of multicultural societies are further emphasized by Tripathy's observation that even in non-liberal democracies, various groups engage in contestations (Tripathy, 2016, 10).

Parvaiz's rant about Muslim women and men, as well as his perception of Aneeka's scholarship, showcases the disorientation experienced by Muslim immigrants caught between two worldviews (Santesso, 2013, 14). This sense of dislocation and identity struggle aligns with R. G. Davisand's idea of displacement caused by migration and cultural oppression (Davisand, 2000, 21). The encounter between Parvaiz and Aneeka at school exemplifies the challenges and stereotypes often imposed on Muslim individuals, underscoring the need for a more nuanced understanding of cultural and religious diversity in multicultural societies.

In Margaret Atwood's novel "Cat's Eye," the portrayal of the confusing imperial doctrine taught at school in postwar Canada reflects the children's ambivalence towards their Canadian identity. While they are instructed to be grateful and proud of their place in the British Empire, which aimed to civilize indigenous peoples in Canada and across the globe, they are also aware of their distinct Canadian identity. This dual identity creates both complicity and conflict with the taught imperial doctrine, exemplified by the children's struggle to draw the maple leaf correctly on the Canadian flag (Beautell, 2000, 22). Bruce King's analysis of Shamsie's novels draws parallels between the atomic bombing of Nagasaki and U.S. involvement in Afghanistan, linking these historical events to the consequences for Pakistan and Muslims worldwide. The novel highlights the Americans' disregard for the lives of others, from the atomic bomb to the mistreatment of suspected terrorists in Guantanamo (King, 2011, 158). Peter Morey's examination of the misrepresentation of Muslims as terrorists underscores the politics of representation and the framing of Muslims as the "Other". He discusses the assertion that beards and Muslim prayer signify religious devotion and goodness but overlooks the broader context of these symbols being construed as markers of "Otherness and threat" (Morey, 2010, 535). Gunew discusses Fiona Foley's artwork, "Native Blood," which challenges colonial narratives. Foley replaces the colonial figure of a white woman with her Aboriginal ancestress in the artwork, symbolizing the reclamation of indigeneity from the colonial gaze. This act aligns with Derrida's concept of "hauntology", where history is reinterpreted and reinserted into modernity (Gunew, 2004, 131). Farooq's explanation of Parvaiz's situation underscores the concept of disorientation and the challenges faced by Muslim immigrants caught between two different cultures, leading to feelings of "separation", "uncertainty", "confusion", and "estrangement". Parvaiz's experience



as a “diasporic” and bilingual individual exemplifies this struggle (Santesso, 2013, 14) and exemplifies him Gunewen subject of diaspora.

Months later, Parvaiz's fear persists after fleeing the electronics store incident. He decides to shave his beard, cut his hair, and buy new clothes, illustrating the internal conflict when the dominant culture clashes with one's cultural and religious identity. Claire Chambers discusses how revolutions and protest movements in the Arab world have had varying impacts on different Muslim communities, both within their “home countries” and among the “diaspora”, with some individuals becoming “radicalized” due to perceived oppression of fellow Muslims in conflicts like the Syrian Civil War (Chambers, 2015, 12).

Parvaiz experiences a sense of overwhelm in London, stemming from the corruption and decay he perceives in Western society. His inner conflict intensifies as he considers the divergent paths chosen by his sisters – one traveling to a country associated with their father's death and the other to a place championing universal rights. When Farooq questions how he can live in such a place with full knowledge of its shortcomings, Parvaiz grapples with these complexities. He reflects on the stories of abuse at Bagram prison and images of tortured bodies, leaving him in a state of uncertainty. His empathy is evident when he recalls the man with a blade at his throat, whose only crime was “being born into a particular nation” (HF, 129).

Benedict Anderson highlights that “racism outside Europe” in the nineteenth century was closely tied to “European domination”, particularly through official nationalism and colonial policies, driven by dynastic and aristocratic groups responding to popular “vernacular nationalism” (Anderson, 1983, 166). On the other hand, Avatar Brah discusses the polarization of the debate between 'multiculturalism' and 'anti-racism' in the 1980s. This polarization often forced individuals to choose sides, although in practice, these approaches shared more similarities than acknowledged and were sometimes selectively combined in institutional policies. Both tendencies were internally diverse, containing contradictions, achievements, and failures. The New Right's vehement attacks on both categories underscore their significant impact in their respective domains (Brah, 1996, 227). Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak assesses the boundaries of civil society in today's transnational and globalized world. She observes that despite the increasing “transnationalization”, individual states' boundaries still define civil society. Spivak suggests that a hyperreal class consolidates international civil society to secure the post-statist era, even as religious nationalisms and ethnic conflicts represent alternative responses to the transformation of the state in “capitalist post-modernization” (Spivak, 1999, 399).

The man's only crime was being born into a certain nation, as Aroosa Kanwal indicates, “In this sense, *The Night of Broken Glass* brings horror to the forefront through the pulverization of the body. The novel is replete with scenes that effectively fictionalize Debrix and Barder's description of a pulverized body that is made to experience a horrified violence, which is even more inadmissible than death” (Kanwal, 2021, 524). This underscores the brutality, ferocity, barbarity, and sadism faced by minorities in foreign states and without the citizenship of minorities. As Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman argue, “Most of the discussions of immigrant groups in this volume concern people who have citizenship or access to citizenship, and who sometimes ask for special accommodations in their new countries for their religious, linguistic, or cultural differences” (Kymlicka and Norman, 2003, 21).

Aneeka



Aneeka's insistence on proof of Parvaiz's death and the official's acknowledgment of political motivations behind Muslim immigration issues exemplify the challenges of cultural integration and the perception of Muslim communities in Europe. Aneeka has no way to process the news of Parvaiz's death after being denied getting on a flight to Turkey. She disregards the concept, demanding proof that it is, in fact, Parvaiz who has died. The Pakistan High Commission official who informed them of Parvaiz's death returns, but Aneeka insists that they have the wrong person and that Parvaiz is a British citizen. The man apologizes and says he's there because "the home secretary wants to prove something about Muslims" (H.F, 147). Samuel Huntington says, "By the early 1990s two-thirds of the migrants in Europe were Muslim, and European concern with immigration is above all concern with Muslim immigration. The challenge is demographic—migrants account for 10 percent of the births in Western Europe, Arabs 50 percent of those in Brussels—and cultural. Muslim communities, whether Turkish in Germany or Algerian in France, have not been integrated into their host cultures and, to the concern of Europeans, show few signs of becoming so. There 'is a fear growing all across Europe,' Jean-Marie Domenach said in 1991, 'of a Muslim community that cuts across European lines, a sort of thirteenth nation of the European Community. With respect to immigrants, an American journalist commented'" (Huntington, 1996, 194). Aneeka's quest for proof and the official's acknowledgment shed light on the complex challenges posed by Muslim immigration issues in Europe, where cultural integration and perceptions of Muslim communities remain contentious subjects of discussion and concern.

The home secretary's ideology silently stimulates an undeniable attitude towards his own community, and a certain approval of whatever ferocity is confronted by Muslims is totally justifiable. As Rajeeve S. Patke argues, "instead, for an idea of a nation based on the recognition that races, religions, cultures, and languages interact as part of shared histories. He believed that attachments developed naturally over time towards places and peoples, fostered a sense of community that did not have to be racially homogenous or mono-cultural to expect mutual respect" (Patke, 2006, 224). Adducing this, Mahmood Mamdani propounds the example of Hikmatyar. The ISI allowed Hikmatyar substantial control over Afghan refugee camps around Peshawar. Expert Barnett Rubin testified that Hikmatyar's rule was described as a 'reign of terror' by a UN refugee worker. Hikmatyar operated like a violent drug lord, using force for all relationships. "Stating that this was a jihad, he took no prisoners: instead of welcoming defectors from the government side as would a guerrilla army interested in winning support, his forces simply killed them" (Mamdani, 2003, 97). The home secretary's stance and the example of Hikmatyar exemplify the complexities of multiculturalism, where the recognition of diverse races, religions, cultures, and languages interacting within shared histories can either foster mutual respect or, in certain cases, lead to divisive and challenging dynamics.

Aijaz Ahmad propounds that if one believes in the Three Worlds Theory, and thus in a "third world" defined solely in terms of the context of experiencing colonialism and imperialism, nationalism tends to become the prevailing ideological framework for left-wing intellectuals. This may lead to an exaggerated assertion that "all third-world texts are necessarily... national allegories." This emphasis on nationalism is noticeable in Jameson's initial paragraph, which presents the "third world" as having just two choices: "nationalisms" or a "global American postmodernist culture." Is there nothing else to do? Is it not possible to enter the "second world," for example? There was formerly, in Marxist rhetoric, a socialist or communist culture that was



neither nationalist nor postmodernist. Is that completely gone from our conversation, even as the name of desire? (Ahmad, 1987, 8) Affirming this, Kymlicka disputes, “Multiculturalism is fundamentally about the treatment of immigrants after they have settled rather than about who is admitted in the first place. However, multiculturalism for settled immigrants is more controversial in circumstances where citizens fear that they lack control over borders and hence lack control over who is admitted” (Kymlicka, 2012, 22).

The ongoing British investigation into Parvaiz as a suspected jihadist, potentially a terrorist, also alleges that he was carrying weapons at the time of his death. It further reports his involvement with the media wing of ISIS, responsible for recruiting fighters and so-called "jihadi brides" (H.F, 152). In light of this, Stuart Hall critiques the concept of rediscovering an essential identity, which, in this case, pertains to the lost identity of Muslims amidst the terror and ferocity fueled by Islamophobia. Hall argues that we should not underestimate the significance of this act of imaginative rediscovery associated with the notion of a rekindled essential identity (Hall, 1990, p.224).

Supporting this perspective, R.C. Tripathi and Purnima Singh highlight that this issue is not exclusive to non-Islamic nations but also extends to predominantly Muslim countries like Indonesia. Veiling politics and practices are intertwined with local customs, traditions, and attempts to challenge the monolithic construction of Islam (Millalos, 2007). These issues are pervasive in multicultural societies worldwide, even in non-liberal democracies, and often lead to various forms of contestation and violence (Tripathy, 2016, 10).

The investigation into Parvaiz's alleged ties to ISIS underscores the intricate challenges surrounding identity and perception within Muslim communities, both in non-Islamic nations and predominantly Muslim countries. Upon her arrival in Karachi, Aneeka claims to be transporting Parvaiz's body back home. Her cousin raises concerns about individuals like him, whose passports are often disregarded by the rest of the world, and who must constantly tread carefully to avoid visa rejections (H.F, 164). This situation highlights an enduring classical divide, as identified by David Waterman, rooted in racial binaries. Waterman emphasizes that social transformation requires those in power to adopt more humane behavior and questions the gender and age roles within systems of “dominance and submission” (Waterman, 2011, 59). In this context, Gunew posits that contemporary racism is ideologically grounded in the insurmountability of cultural differences. This form of racism does not necessarily imply superiority but seeks to expunge and eliminate boundaries, reflecting a “differentialist racism” (Gunew, 2004, 80).

Karamat

In response to Aneeka's appeal during a session of Parliament, the Prime Minister asserts that Parvaiz joined a group of individuals known for gruesome practices, such as puncturing heads on peaks and dumping bodies in shallow graves. Members of Parliament rally behind his statement, commending Karamat for his commitment to doing what is right. Following this, Karamat initiates a phone call with Pakistan's High Commissioner, conducting their conversation in both Urdu and English. During their exchange, Karamat holds the High Commissioner responsible for allowing Parvaiz's body to be brought to the park. The High Commissioner contends that they had no grounds to deny Aneeka's request and no reason to intervene on Britain's behalf. He emphasizes that Aneeka is being embraced as a woman who stood up to a



powerful government, one that has a poor reputation in its dealings with Muslims and had recently insulted Pakistan directly (H.F, 178). This situation draws attention to the concept of "Islamic revivalisms," which stand in contrast to other efforts. These revivalist movements seek to assert a distinct identity and form of recognition, often employing Islamic language or slogans in response to injustices "targeting Muslim identity and culture". They manifest as emancipatory social movements, expressed in urban Islamic culture and political protests, with Islam serving as the dominant mode of expression (Abbas, 2019, 86).

In reference to Andrea Levy's novel "Small Island," Bruce King's analysis in his article "Review article. Diaspora Novels" underscores that the narrative encompasses various aspects, including the Empire, wars, history, and education, alongside racial and cultural prejudices. The novel depicts how World War II initiated a transformation as West Indians came to England to support the British war effort, while nationalist movements in places like Jamaica and India opposed fighting for the British. The narrative portrays the complexities of life for British citizens and immigrants, revealing their struggles for rights and recognition in a society marked by racial biases and resource competition. Interracial relationships, mixed-race children, and the shock of white American servicemen's racial riots in cinemas are also depicted (King, 2011, 142).

The exchange between Karamat and Pakistan's High Commissioner underscores the intricate dynamics of identity, power, and political activism faced by individuals like Aneeka as they navigate the quest for justice and acknowledgment in a multicultural society. This aligns with Abbas's concept of Islamic revivalism and the historical context portrayed in Levy's "Small Island," shedding light on the enduring challenges of confronting prejudice and inequality. As Karamat watches the news, he comes to the realization that he doesn't need to strip Aneeka of her citizenship to thwart her aspirations, as her British passport was confiscated when she attempted to join her brother in Istanbul. He believes, "Let her continue to be British; but let her be British outside of Britain" (H.F, 179). Homi K. Bhaba, in this context, asserts:

"This emphasis on the representation of the political, on the construction of discourse, which is the radical contribution of the translation of theory. Its conceptual vigilance never allows a simple identity between the political objective and its means of representation. This emphasis on the necessity of heterogeneity and the double inscription of the political objective is not merely the repetition of a general truth about discourse introduced into the political field" (Bhaba, 1994, 27).

This underscores the intricate relationship between political objectives, their representation, and the perpetuation of racism within the context of British citizenship and identity. Bhaba's insights align with Karamat's realization, revealing the complex interplay at play, as well as the political motivations behind such actions. This mirrors the observations of Ello Shohat and Robert Stam regarding the historical intertwining of racism and colonialism, particularly its impact on marginalized communities:

"Racism, although hardly unique to the West, and while not limited to the colonial situation (anti-Semitism being a case in point), has historically been both an ally and the partial product of colonialism. The most obvious victims of racism are those whose identity was forged within the colonial cauldron: Africans, Asians, and the indigenous peoples of the Americas as



well as those displaced by colonialism, such as Asians and West Indians in Great Britain, Arabs in France" (Shohat & Stam, 2014, 18).

Karamat's actions and Bhaba's theory resonate with the analysis of Shohat and Stam, shedding light on the historical context of racial discrimination and its enduring impact. After texting James to inquire about Eamonn's recent passport use, Karamat resumes his conversation with Isma, who serves as a reminder of a world he feels he has lost. Karamat informs Isma that Parvaiz and Aneeka won't be granted entry "if there is an Almighty and He has sent His angel Jibreel to lift up [her] brother." Despite Karamat's open atheism, he grew up with Islamic beliefs and still recites Muslim prayers. This complex interplay between faith and politics is noted by Anastasi Valassopoulos in the article "Britain Through Muslims Eyes with Claire Chambers," where she observes the diverse religious, class, and ethnic backgrounds of Muslim authors in Britain:

"It's a process of defamiliarizing. This is not a hostile gaze. In fact, often these authors' views of Britain are highly positive. An additional key finding was that the writers were often quite unusual or unorthodox in their religious, class, and ethnic backgrounds. There were a lot of Shia, Ismaili, or Bohra writers, and the characters that they create tend to be only minimally practicing Muslims. They had an attachment to Islamic culture but for the most part they didn't think of religion very much in the early period" (Valassopoulos, 2008, 126).

Karamat's complex relationship with religion and his political decisions are reflective of these observations, highlighting the multifaceted nature of identity and belief among Muslim individuals in Britain.

Aneeka confronts Karamat about the unfair treatment of Parvaiz's body and straightforwardly questions the alleged crime that justifies the decision to send his body back home. This same question, when echoed by Karamat's son, deeply saddens him. Karamat is depicted as an ambitious child of immigrants who pursued success by marrying into wealth and class, even at the cost of denying his Muslim faith when it became a liability: "He used his identity as a Muslim to win, then jettisoned it when it started to damage him" (H.F, 192). This illustrates the aftermath of the War on Terror, which created a distorted perception of Muslims worldwide.

Adam Hodges observes how various foreign policy issues were merged into a single narrative during the War on Terror, such as the transformation of the pre-9/11 goal of regime change in Iraq into a central component of the fight against terrorism. This resulted in statements like "the battle of Iraq is one victory in a war on terror that began on September 11, 2001, and still goes on" (excerpt, 1). Asma Zahoor points out that Kamila Shamsie's literary works draw upon the unique contextual circumstances in which her characters exist, both as individuals and as citizens of specific nations. These characters navigate a global community where the rhetoric of globalization and shared humanity clashes with an underlying struggle for dominance. Discussing Shamsie's characters, Zahoor notes:

"We live in a world where, despite all segregation, boundaries, and barriers, people at the helm of affairs continue to incite visible and invisible riots in the lives of innumerable innocent people whose entire existence becomes entangled in a series of chain reactions that are not of their own making" (Zahoor, 2015, 11).

The label "war on terror" serves as a type of "captioning label or image," as described by Silverstein (2003), which allows various events to be seen as examples of one underlying



principle, shaping the perception of a nation and aligning with ideological policy objectives (Hodges, 2011, 71). The complex character of Karamat embodies the multifaceted impact of post-9/11 politics on Muslim identity, where the strategic manipulation of one's identity for personal gain reflects the pervasive influence of the "war on terror" narrative.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the intricate interplay between the characters' unrelenting nostalgia for their homeland and their ongoing struggle to align with the political and cultural identity of the USA underscores the complex dynamics of multiculturalism and diaspora experiences. As demonstrated, despite the unrelenting nostalgia of the characters for their country, they continue to struggle to align themselves with the political and cultural identity of the USA. The core of the politics of difference lies in the monolithic notion of dominant and host country's nation-state agenda. This definition of multiculturalism is based on the rebuff of heterogeneous identities. Vertovec and Wessendorf (2010) contend that multiculturalism presupposes minorities' and immigrants' own aspiration to uphold cultural tradition and disparate identities, which has a negative impact. This viewpoint emphasizes the value of respecting one another's cultural differences and elaborates the need for and pursuit of identity in the diaspora as a harmful path and behavior. In this intricate interplay of multiculturalism, diaspora experiences, and the politics of difference, as delineated by theorists such as Gunew, Said, Hall, and Bhabha, the characters' unrelenting nostalgia for their homeland and their ongoing struggle to align with the political and cultural identity of the host country emerge as a poignant reflection of the multifaceted challenges faced by immigrants and minorities. Gunew's perspective acknowledges that multiculturalism not only encompasses the relationship between former imperial centers and ex-colonies but also accounts for migrants, refugees, and diasporas. Said's observations on culture and identity underscores how culture can become a source of combative identity, fueling religious and nationalist fundamentalism in the diaspora, as exemplified by the characters' quest for belonging. Hall's concept of diaspora as a world of displacement, marked by a desire to return to origins of history and past to overcome political, racial, and cultural exclusion, resonates with the characters' struggle. In particular, the characters' return to their homeland, as exemplified by Aneeka's journey to bury her brother in Pakistan, signifies a moral and ethical reconnection with their cultural roots, transcending the hyphenated identity imposed by the diaspora experience. However, despite the promise of multiculturalism, the deeply entrenched Islamophobia in Western societies, following events like 9/11, continues to marginalize Muslims, making it clear that true acceptance remains elusive within multicultural societies.

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