CHAPTER III

THE PORTRAYAL OF EAST AND WEST

IN HAMID’S THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST,

MOTH SMOKE AND HOW TO GET FILTHY RICH

IN RISING ASIA
CHAPTER III- THE PORTRAYAL OF EAST AND WEST IN HAMID’S *THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST, MOTH SMOKE AND HOW TO GET FILTHY RICH IN RISING ASIA*.

This chapter will discuss the immigrant experiences of Changez, the impact of 9/11 on his American dream, the class realities, the portrayal of women, religion in the life of protagonist and the framework of the novels *Moth Smoke, The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia*.

*Moth Smoke* (2000) is a tale of the downfall of Darasikoh (Daru for his family and friends). It is Mohsin Hamid’s first published novel. The narrative maps his fall from the bank employee to a jobless man, a drug dealer and a drug addict. The novel opens with a tale from Mughal history while Daru awaits the verdict for the murder of a young boy. Flashback reveals Darasikoh was fired from his work due to behavioural issues. He meets his childhood friend, Ozi (Aurungzeb) and his wife Mumtaz after a long time. Entwined between the financial crisis and his affair with Mumtaz, Daru seeks easy wealth. He enters into the world of drug trafficking with his small-time peddler friend Murad Badshah. They plan to rob a boutique. He muses on the corruption and class chasm in Pakistan. The work ends with the latter part of the anecdote. The trial of Mughal prince Dara Shikoh is recreated in the contemporary setting. The corruption in Pakistan by the upper strata of rich and the Daru’s love story with Mumtaz are two main themes.

*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2012) was written before 9/11. The novel is an interesting study of structure, point of view as well as the character of Changez. He is torn between the USA and his home country Pakistan. The conversation between an anonymous man and Changez opens the novel in the Cafe in Lahore. Changez narrates the account of his love for America and his time in Princeton where he
studied. He recalls how he landed a job in one of the most prestigious valuation firms, Underwood Samson. Changez is infatuated by an American woman, Erica. She is emotionally wrecked and bereaving the loss of her childhood friend and lover, Chris. Changez excels at his job. The terrorist attack on Empire States building in New York becomes a catastrophe and changes everything in his life. He is drawn to his homeland and his priority changes from his work. It changes from his active contribution to the large American empire to his concern towards Pakistan. His relation with Erica deteriorates; Changez’s conversation with the unnamed US man assumed to be a CIA agent reveals his past. The whole dialogue has a threatening undertone. The last part of conversation mentions a glint of metal. The readers are left with an ambiguous ending. We can assume that either it was a friendly talk or one of them killed another.

*How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013) is a rags-to-riches journey of a nameless man in a nameless city. All characters are nameless; the protagonist is represented as You, an address to the reader. The wife of the protagonist is presented as ‘your wife’, and his love interest is simply a Pretty girl. The novel covers his journey from the dirt-poor kid in the village to the multimillionaire man with a social reputation in a big city. His advancement in the packaged water business and quest for the love of his life, Pretty Girl spans over his 80 years life. The book covers the life in the populated coastal mega city, the shady and sleazy ways to run a business. In his later life, he meets Pretty girl in a pharmacy; she almost didn’t recognise him senile due to old age. They both finally get to live with each other; the old man now stripped off his wealth and dependent on his son and Pretty girl’s savings. The unnamed protagonist dies on the last page of the novel.
*The anonymous central character in *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* is referred as the ‘Protagonist’ in the thesis to avoid confusion.

‘We are all refugees from our childhoods’ denotes the state of émigré. (HFR, 219) The reception of immigrants in the new country or city and identity conflicts are interconnected to two selected novels, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia*. Changez is an immigrant in the US, dithering between Pakistan and America and Protagonist in a new city when he is a child, both are very much embodiment of the immigrants from the South American countries and its Asian counterparts. Said arguments, the two grouping of Oriental and West are the opening and the conclusion of the investigation, public policies the results are bound to consolidate with a fissure.

—the Oriental becomes more Oriental, the Westerner more Western—and limit the human en-counter between different cultures, traditions, and societies. In short, from its earliest modern history to the present, Orientalism as a form of thought for dealing with the foreign has typically shown the altogether regrettable tendency of any knowledge based on such hard-and-fast distinctions as "East" and "West": to channel thought into a West or an East compartment. Because this tendency is right at the center of Orientalist theory, practice, and values found in the West, the sense of Western power over the Orient is taken for granted as having the status of scientific truth. (*Orientalism*, 45-46)

The US is the foundational nation to exert power and built up the empire. The US superiority of the Industries and dominance as a financial capital is unmatched. Said asserts the leadership of the West is ascertained exactly for its role in cultural,
financial and industrial leadership and monopoly by the concept of Gramsci’s hegemony of cultural leadership (Said, 7) Unlike nostalgic immigrants, Changez had an immediate and different influence of America. He assimilated in the new place, accepted working class role in US society. He declared early in the ‘never an American; I was immediately a New Yorker.’ (RF, 33) During his tenure at Underwood Samson, he is ‘proud’ to be where he is, looking at the finest offices. He admits he didn’t think himself as a Pakistani and embarrassed New York. The root of the US dream or to settle down in the Western country means to be part of the world’s thriving developed economies. The opportunities are beyond the differentiation of colour, race and sex or it seems at least. The settlers arrive to struggle and achieve their American dream. Hamid’s two novels are compared to the Pakistani version of Great Gatsby. Allima Mooltani, the palm reader in Moth Smoke has a son studying in Singapore and Protagonist’s son is seeking asylum in North America cannot visit ‘his visa status is linked to a long-standing asylum petition.’ (HFR, 193) The dominance of West standards is high that Raider Daru’s co-worker at bank prefers his jacket very European and sports west inspired suspenders. He dreams to make it to The Wall Street to be part of the ‘western’ life to fulfil his American dream. (MS, 20) The superior status of the West in the technological and advances in the lifestyle which in the East is still running around the basic infrastructure entice the migrants. The protagonist visualises his phase ten of business expansion at a level where drinking water matches the quality of the Western countries. He declares it as an experience to live in another country, ‘Another continent like you’ve gone to Europe or North America.’ (HFR, 164)

While Changez tries to detach himself from his country and his ethnic identity for the abundant external rewards offered at his workplace and in New York. The job,
wealth and status in New York make him happy and he is proud to be the part of the inner circle of American society. He belongs to upper strata of New York which he would not be able to access without Erica. He overlooks his roots in the company of Erica. On a cab ride at once he sensed the accent of a cab driver. Though, he sensed from the accent that he is from Pakistan, he avoids acknowledging it. Geoffrey Nash ascertains *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is a successful novel because ‘it is able to construct a Muslim identity that is porous to the values of both East and West even as it inverts the stereotypical image of the ‘Islamic’ terrorist.’ (116) Changez weaves the locations of New York TriBeCa, Upper East Side, and Duane Street to highlight his association. Along the movie reference of Batman and Terminator, the quote from Val Kilmer’s *Top Gun*, ‘no points for second place, Maverick.’ (RF, 35) Wainwright uses the dialogue from the movie *Top Gun*. The movie is about the trainee pilots, and they both are trainees. The quote from *Star Wars* (1980) is ‘Beware the dark side, young Sky-walker.’ is a warning to Changez when he is slipping into the nostalgia. (RF, 38) Tintin comics, Mr Palomar, novel of Italo Calvino from literature and popular music tracks and singers like Bryan Adams, ‘Summer of ‘69’, ‘Staying Alive’ song Aretha Franklin are plaited with Changez’s story to create a sense of familiarity with the American listener. He establishes his American identity and leaning towards America.

At work, Changez becomes the favourite candidate of his immediate superior Jim. Jim looks at him and senses the desperate, ruthless young man geared up to take the world in his wings. Changez finds his counterpart in Jim. Both of them had the modest background. They had to get a job and establish themselves in an act to pull their family up. Jim has grown up with the ‘sense of longing’ of a poor boy’ (RF, 71) They were challenged and pushed to do something bigger out of a ghetto and share the derision for the materialistic American society. (RF, 67) Changez is self-conscious
of his social and ethnic class. Spivak in *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (2012) that ‘The task of the “consciousness” of class or collectivity within a social field of exploitation and domination is thus necessarily self-alienating.’ (282). In this term, Changez is completely aware of his status in Pakistan and in New York.

The reception of Changez in the West is stereotyped. He is an exotic man with a serious sense of family and distinctive Eastern idiosyncrasies for Erica. Changez continues the exotic tag ascertaining Eastern mannerism and an image of family man ‘I-m-from-a-big-family vibe’ (RF, 19) Erica asks him the places and the concept of the picnic in the Sun must seem ‘very foreign to you’. (RF, 59) He is seen as an outsider who is not familiar. The interesting correlation between East and West civilization is drawn by Mohsin Hamid when on vacation in Greece Changez maps out that Greek towns were guarded against invasion through the wall. His Greek vacation symbolises ‘the redundant fortification dividing West and East in Rhodes’ (Moore-Gilbert, 192) *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* as Hamid claims is, ‘a look at America with a gaze reflection the part of myself that remained stubbornly Pakistani.’ (DIS, 67) The comparison between two countries is inevitable for Changez. He compares Lahore and Pakistan with New York and the US respectively. But it results in his resentment and indignation. The position of technologically unprepared nation of Pakistan makes him ashamed. ‘Eight months in New York, another world from Pakistan...achievements of the most technologically advanced civilization our species had ever known...comparisons troubled me...they made me resentful.’ (RF, 34)

On his first visit home, primary thoughts to compare home to the living conditions in the US ‘how shabby our house appeared...I was shamed’ The sudden attentiveness towards his inferior origin is perceived from the West’s point of view. In *Moth Smoke* Daru assumes Mumtaz is not happy in Pakistan because ‘Lahore isn’t
New York’ (MS, 110). Changez rates the West higher than East. The mental comparison between the expressions of the gatekeeper at Erica’s home with the gatekeepers as he is ushered into Erica’s home with Lahore’s large mansions is merely about the lack of warm welcome. The struggle becomes completely atypical and tormenting when he visits the Philippines to expect a city like Lahore or Karachi, a city that rings in Eastern memories and left astonished to see, ‘a poorer version of the 1950s America depicted in such films as *Grease*. It hurts his pride because he used to think ‘New York was more wealthy than Lahore....to swallow the fact that Manila was as well’ (RF, 64)

The range of emotions and reaction of a same immigrant in various countries can be fascinating. The reaction of an immigrant in the third place delves the issue of detachment and intriguing assessment. The third place is neither his home nor his host country. The basic standard of seeking parallel and contrast between an Eastern country and the Western country is disturbed. A visit to another Eastern country but well off than his own place thus challenges of Pakistan in the world map. A visit to the Philippines brings a new dimension to the whole comparison between the US and his home Pakistan. Changez is ‘trapped in a Third world sensibility’ which is the result of his identity crisis due to ‘global inequality and resists globalization as merely Westernization or Americanization.’ (Liao, 135) He is confused about what side he is on.

Changez takes advantage of his dual identity on his visit to the Philippines. He steadies his American identity as he witnesses his colleagues in commanding position due to their Americanness, ‘I attempted to act and speak, as much as my dignity would permit, more like an American.’ (RF, 65) The whole process of ‘de-easterizing’ himself and embrace the Western standards to create an authoritative
man from the US to overshadow his Pakistani ethnicity and eventually conceal his origin ‘the only non-American in our group, but I suspected my Pakistaniness was invisible, cloaked by my suit, by my expense account, and—most of all—by my companions.’ (RF, 71)

During his courtship with Erica Changez learns about her boyfriend. Erica’s childhood friend and lover Chris died a year ago. He considers under such circumstances of loss she might be impressed with an oriental man. To take their relationship to the next level, he requests Erica to make belief ‘pretend I am him.’ (RF, 105) Changez overlaps his Pakistani-ness with an assumed and dead western identity to access Erica completely. Erica shuts herself after this episode and suffers from the second bout of depression. The consequence of the same episode is a series of disasters in Changez’s personal and professional life.

The name Changez is the Eastern alternative of Genghis Khan, (a range of variants as Changez, Changes, Changis khan) an Asian ruler known for his strict policies against Islam. Bart Moore-Gilbert notes Changez echoes of ‘changes’, the name ‘suggests a Chameleon-like protagonist’ without fixity to his affiliation. (193) His faith towards America and his perspective on his job changes. After the failure of his dreams, he becomes ‘the man who lives alone and supports himself by wearing a suit in a city, not of his birth.’ (RF, 125) Spivak in ‘Subaltern Studies, Deconstructing Historiography’ proposes,

‘The radical intellectual in the West is either caught in a deliberate choice of subalternity, granting to the oppressed either that very expressive subjectivity which s/he criticizes or, instead, a total unrepresentability’ (In Other Worlds, 287)
It rings true in Change’s case, he decided not to represent his Pakistani identity and orientation. He mutilates it for the new found Americanness. Changez shades off his Pakistani self and denies representing his home country in the beginning. Gradually the shame crawls in as he failed to live up to his identity and he chooses to go back to Pakistan after the stimulated awakening of his repressive identity. The betrayal to look down own country builds up, and the cultural conflict enters in a stage where he is challenged by the identity in the host country. Changez’s dependence on West is of a colonised adhered to utilise the authority of the colonist. He wishes this inter-dependence when Pakistan is under threat. He develops rage and suppressed anger for the US. The US fails to take stand for Pakistan in the conflict between Pakistan and India. The love-hate relationship with Pakistan and USA makes Changez think America should return the favour and becomes Pakistan’s patron but fails to do.

Changez’s patriotism broadens Islamic brotherhood when Afghanistan is attacked. He feels ‘my mother continent of Asia’ is in trouble. (RF, 156) As discussed earlier the clash of identity in Changez is enticing. The hasty conversion in reception after 9/11 manoeuvres him back to East. At the beginning of the conversation, Changez discloses to the listener; he has spent four and half years in the US. He had been to college in New Jersey and worked in New York, in ‘your country.’ (RF, 3) Throughout their exchange Changez referred the US to the listener as your country. Only later he defends himself. He does not hate America after all he was ‘the product of an American university, earning ‘lucrative American salary’, in love with ‘American woman.’ (RF, 73) Hamid declares his confusion to choose between two countries, I am still split between America and Pakistan. (Italics in original. DIS, 70) The author and the protagonist both are coping with the same struggle. The final
mechanism required for the clarity on his state of mind according to Changez is ‘that catalyst took the form of lunch’ with Bautista. Juan Bautista is not fond of America and Americans; Changez feels ‘he and I shared a sort of Third World sensibility.’ (RF, 67) During the lunch Bautista invokes his sentiments to go back to Pakistan. Bautista makes him to understand the position he is in. It proves not just thought-provoking but life altering for Changez. The reality of his position gets clear once they discuss about janissaries. Janissaries ‘had fought to erase their own civilization, so they had nothing else to turn to.’ (RF, 151) Moore-Gilbert pointed out the importance of location in his essay ‘From ‘the politics of Recognition’ to ‘the policing of Recognition’: Writing Islam in Hanif Kureishi and Mohsin Hamid’ (2012), Chile where Changez changes his mind towards American Imperialism. During Chile trip, he visits the home of Pablo Neruda ‘the home of the socialist and anti-colonist Nobel Laureate poet’ underlines the allegory. (194)

The disarray post-enlightenment leads Changez to claim ‘I was a modern-day janissary, a servant of the American empire.’ (RF, 152) Subsequent to his conversation with Juan Batista realisation hits shortly. He is caught unaware of his contribution to the mega power structure. The apprehension, he is a modern-day janissary serving the Empire which can erase his own country and culture. Changez heads back to East, in this manner The Reluctant Fundamentalist is categorised to the Xenos- a return home novel. Liao while discussing the ‘Negotiating hospitality’ thinks, ‘through the ‘return home’ trope and the narrative device of a dialogue, takes a step further to probe into the question of ethics that hinged on the relationship between the self and the other.’ (Liao, 142)

The return home trope is otherwise successful in the other novels such as Yasmina Khadra’s The Attack (2007) features a privileged immigrant tangled between
love and calling of his country in West. *Season of Migration to the North* (1969) is a story of Mustafa Sa'eed an Eastern character ready to settle in West. Mustafa Ultimately leaves his life in the US for his home country. Hamid’s latest novel *Exit West* (2017) echoes the return to the East and Exit from the West. (Freeman) The novel is hailed as the exit from West fiction. *Reluctant Fundamentalist* is ultimately more about America than it is about Pakistan: despite being a ‘leaving America’ novel, it never fully escapes its discursive reliance on an imperialist US.’(Malashri et al. qtd in Maxey, 39)

The Ottoman Empire is Turkish Empire. The conquest of Constantinople in 1453 resulted in the rise of the Ottoman Empire in the centre of the Eastern and the Western world. Ottoman Empire swiped the orthodox Christian population. ‘The Ottomans had created a standing army, the converted slave army of the janissaries, by the late fourteenth century, an elite, highly educated infantry corps, drawn from the tributary Christian children of newly acquired Balkan territories.’ (Virginia, 26) According to Turnbull in *Ottoman Empire 1326-1699*, the janissaries were originally Christian boys of ‘between about eight and 15 years of age were selected from the conquered territories as ‘tribute children’. They were trained in Turkish speech and customs and converted (often willingly) to Islam.’ (24) Children were removed from their own group of people and taken away from their religious, ethnic and cultural backdrop to re-rooted to the Islam dominant camps. This ensured the complete transformation and loyalty were achievable from the Christian slaves. The light on his own situation by Joan Bautista made Changez contemplative and as he has admitted, it was the last strike on his thought process. It is noted, he began working with the US firm at the age of 22. (RF, 53)
The US is primary elitist empirical country and rules the whole world. With the powerful system that is ‘pragmatic and effective, like so much else in America.’ (RF, 4) During the holiday, his classmates would ask the Greeks twofold their age to get things done in their way adamantly, ‘in a position to conduct themselves in the world as though they were its ruling class.’ (RF, 21) In contrast to the behaviour of classmates, it is an eastern tradition to offer reverence while addressing elders. From a Pakistani man’s point of view, the conduct of American youth is self-centred. The pride of Changez as a descendent of one of the oldest civilisations in the world is inevitable when he thinks himself as a man of honour and manners in contrast to his classmates or average Americans. When Indus River basin civilisation advances to the underground sewer ‘the ancestors of those who would invade and colonise America were illiterate barbarians.’ (RF, 34) His Eastern character mocks and envies the progress of US, Britain and other Western countries as they were nothing but a Neanderthal brute.

The employees of Underwood Samson get luxury in and out comprising all comforts during business trips. The valuation firm plays an active part to help the companies taking over the smaller firms. The appraisal officers like Changez decides the value of a business and helps them to take over. The job is seen in the parallel of the Empire building policies of the US in Changez’s mind. The trope suggests US policies towards the lesser known countries succumb to the US Empire. The larger firms sprawl on the smaller units to build a financial empire. The company profile portrays the US absolutely. Princeton is embodied to designate how brazenly it attracts top students to maintain the monopoly of the US education system. The phrase Focus on the fundamentals is ‘Underwood Samson’s guiding principle.’ (RF, 98) It is decoded as on the focus primarily on elements to decide the value and take
the decision to benefit the firm. Underwood Samson refers to ‘underhandedness, undertaker, dead wood, biblical behemoth Samson- similar to Camus’ *The Fall.* (1956) (Chambers, 177) Changez reports to his boss Sherman post joining. Sherman was the most successful battle tank used by the United States and some of the other Western Allies in World War II. (Moore-Gilbert, 194) William Tecumseh Sherman was an Army chief. He played an important role in American Civil Wars (1861-65).

The admission process in the University is compared as Princeton ‘raised her skirt.’ (RF, 4) The dominance of US in the every sector is scorned by the Eastern characters. The owner at the Pak-Punjab Deli refuses to accept ‘American Express’ is a rejection of the imperialist country by another Pakistani. (RF, 39) The monologue based narration in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is thought to be a categorised method, Pei supports Hamid’s attempt to ‘reverse the stereotypical hierarchy inherent in Orientalism by empowering the Pakistani narrator’ rejecting the empirical superiority in the literary tradition. (Liao, 142) Hamid explained the choice to have the silent American man in the novel ‘For me, in the world of media, particularly the American media; it’s almost always the other way around.’ (Interview with Solomon)

The 9/11 attack is a theme in fiction. The clear division of the fiction based on 9/11 can be done into two categories; First, pro- Islamic fiction to advocate the innocence of Muslims in the US and Western countries. Secondly, the Anti-Islamic bandwagon deems and generalises people of certain religion as a modern oppressor and demands them to ban the immigration. The second category concludes Islam and immigrants as the root of the problems. The latter believes firmly in the failure of the multicultural society as a whole. Said remarks, ‘The Orient at large, therefore, vacillates between the West’s contempt for what is familiar and its shivers of delight in—or fear of—novelty.’ (*Orientalism*, 59) Post 9/11 dialogue in fiction and non-
fiction is a mammoth number and primarily divided into two parts; pre-9/11 and post-9/11 work. The novels are written by the authors from the East and West both. Don DeLillo’s *Falling Man* (2007), John Updike’s *Terrorist* (2006), Julia Glass’ *The Whole World Over* (2006), Jonathan Safran Foer’s *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* (2005), Ken Kalfus’s *A Disorder Peculiar to the Country* (2006), Jay McInerney’s *The Good Life*, Ian McEwan’s *Saturday*, Claire Messud’s *The Emperor’s Children* (2006), Amy Waldman’s *The Submission* (2011), Frederic Beigbeder’s *Windows on the world* (2003), H M Naqvi’s *Home Boy* (2011) and Khaled Hosseini’s *The Kite Runner* (2003) circles around the pre and post 9/11. Nash derives, the Eastern authors tried to capture the sketch of Muslim life in the Western countries which Western authors failed to do so. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *The Emperor’s Children* are some of the novels to capture life in Islamic countries such as Afghanistan and Pakistan. It captures the life post-wreckage by the US in their land. ‘Some crucial elements missing from Amis, McEwan, DeLillo and Updike’s writings on ‘Islamic’ terror are supplied by Mohsin Hamid’s *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*’ (Nash, 108)

*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is comprehensive work to understand the aftermath of 9/11 from the perspective of Muslim youth. The changing socio-political scene and discriminations faced by him after the Twin Tower attack. Changez’s decision to leave the US is the constant pressure and apparent failure to maintain the validity of East on the West soil. In the hotel room in Manila, Changez witnesses the second plane rushing towards Empire state building. The crux moment is his immediate reaction to the twin towers falling down. Changez warns the American listener about what he is going to say next and defends his reaction as the symbolism of the events had caught him.
What at first I look to be a film. But as I continued to watch, I realized that it was not fiction but news, I stared as one—and then the other—of the twin towers of New York’s World Trade Center collapsed. And then I smiled. Yes, despicable it may sound, my initial reaction was to be remarkably pleased...I was caught up in the symbolism of it all, the fact that someone had so visibly brought America to her knees. (73-4)

He put on disbelief and distress as his colleagues felt. Later a question is posed to the American guest, ‘Do you feel no joy at the video clips—so prevalent these days—of American mutilations laying waste the structures of your enemies? (73, RF) The representation of the tragedy and interpretation by the critics and orientalists is equivalent. Amiri Baraka’s “Somebody Blew Up America?” (2003) infers the tragedy is the impact of the authoritative policies of the US in the world. Jean Baudrillard in *The Spirit of Terrorism and Other Essays* validates that the Twin Towers dramatic collapse is a major symbolic event, for it proves strikingly ‘the fragility of global power’ (43-4) Baudrillard resonates Changez’s observation ‘the real victory of terrorism that it plunged the whole of the West into the obsession with security - that is to say, into a veiled form of perpetual terror.’ (81)

The World Trade Center did, of course, have symbolic significance, with its massive height and advanced technology (using the new tubular concept of structural engineering), and could be seen--in politically bellicose eyes----as an expression of Western audacity. (Sen, 68)

The controversial reaction of Changez to the 9/11 and Mohsin Hamid’s impression on witnessing the fall of twin towers across the Atlantic varies to a considerable degree. ‘I watched the World Trade Centre fall in a place I still thought
of as home.’ (DIS, 68) The author does not share the pleasure of Changez on such disastrous tragic event. Edward Said in *Covering Islam* (1981) questioned the role of media and the coverage that has successfully planted a notion that Islam is a threat to the Western civilisation. He thinks, the image of Islam is fed by the certain visual and stereotype including family lives are repressive, the leaders of the Islamic nations are some psychopath and illogical. (147) The image has created serious issues in multicultural countries across the world.

Pei-Chen Liao observed in the introduction of *Post*-9/11 South Asian Diasporic Fiction: Uncanny Terror* (2013) aftermath of 9/11 USA devotion was high. (1-23) The multi-cultural New York embraces various background into one cosmopolitan identity but the same city and rest of the country transformed after 9/11. Changez see the US flag in almost all places and confirms the whole country ‘was increasingly giving itself over to a dangerous nostalgia at that time.’ (RF, 114-5) The nostalgia of Erica and America represents,

[It is] sort of post-traumatic amnesia in reverse, in which the patient inhabits a moment in the past and progressively loses contact with the present. Don DeLillo’s *Falling Man* and Ian McEwan’s *Saturday* incorporate narratives of Alzheimer’s patients whose minds are disintegrating...the threat of individual memory erasure can be extended to embrace an entire culture’s fear of the present, future, and/or the desire for escape through solipsism or collective rites of nostalgia. (Geoffrey, 95-6)

The event shook the US, brought sudden awareness towards Islam and altered Changez’s outlook towards New York and the large American Empire. He grows a beard and his colleagues interpret in a negative light as Islam is seen with distrust after 9/11. Jim is the only one unchallenged by Changez’s beard and his ability as an
employee. (RF, 137) Beard heightens the chance of being racially profiled and creates a sense of Islamophobia. According to the definition of *Oxford English Dictionary*, Islamophobia is ‘Intense dislike or fear of Muslim especially as a political force. Hostility or prejudice towards Muslim.’ The term Islamophobia was first used in 1922 by the Etienne Dinet in his essay ‘L’Orient vu de l’Occident’ (347-8). The hold of Islamophobia is denser in the west after 9/11. The direct consequences of 11 September on immigrants of South Asian and Middle Eastern origin and of Muslim cultural identity is their lives have more difficulties to face on daily ‘in the Western host societies, especially in the US and UK’ (Liao, 6) Muslim men including cab drivers became target for racist attacks and were beaten. The number of young men disappeared to the vaguely located detention centres. ‘Religion is not race. And unless we unravel race from religion and employ different strategies for the different sites of struggle, while still keeping their relationship in view, we will be rendered ineffective on both sites.’ (Shivanandan: Interview with Institute of Race Relations) The religious identity is confused to take Muslims or Asians as the terrorist. Changez is hurled with vocal abuse and violence by strangers, in a grim racist attack, a man abuses him and calls him ‘Fucking Arab’ imitating and mocking Arabic greetings. (RF, 117) The rejection on the American soil sends him off to his home ground in due course. Alexander notes that around this time, ‘the term “Muslim” as a form of racial abuse became as common as “Paki” for all those of South Asian origin.’ (441). He goes through re-surfacing affection and nostalgia of the cultural heritage of Lahore, Princeton degree helps him to make his dreams true. In a deep nostalgia ‘But it didn’t, could not, make me forget such things as how much I enjoy the tea in this, the city of my birth.’ (RF, 15) The Mughal miniatures, the sweetness of Urdu and ancient carpets surfaces in the description. Chad in *The Black Album* declares he is ‘No more Paki.
Me a Muslim’ he is pushed to his Muslim origins after the fall of the Twin Towers. (Kureishi, 107)

The Bush Government introduced USA PATRIOT act in 21st October, (‘USA Patriot Act’ 107-56) The Patriot Act in the USA after 9/11, which allows a freer access to obtain personal data, records of a person or a group without obtaining court orders. The earlier restrictions to conduct the search are reduced to spot threatening and susceptive individuals to enhance the domestic security. Rehana Ahmad et al., have noted in the introduction of Culture, Diaspora and Modernity in Muslim Writing;

Since 9/11 the idea of Islamic civilization and culture has been stripped of its complexities, with debates over everything from foreign policy to the politics of dress becoming infected by the notion that the antithetical formations of Islam and the West are involved in a civilizational zero sum game in which no quarter can be given. (3)

Mohsin Hamid noted in the introduction of The Discontent and Its Civilization, ‘In the United States and Europe, the ‘war on terror’ has been accompanied by a great backlash against migrants.’ (xv) The border crossing after 9/11 for any Muslim ethnicity and Pakistani citizen is an adventure itself. The border checkpoint and thorough search at the airport make Changez question the fixation. At the airport, he is asked ‘to strip down to (his) my boxer shorts’ by the immigration officer, while he was sent to secondary inspection with ‘a tattooed man in handcuffs’ his colleagues leave without him. (RF, 75) Such stripping searches are experienced by Hamid on US immigration checkpoints thus autobiographical and relevant to the immigrants and Muslims across the world. In ‘International Relations’ Hamid probed the panic and irrational fear of West as well as difficulties of Islamic nationals at the
airport, there are ‘only a hundred and one points to the inspection a Pakistani must pass’ in order to travel. (22)

The malfunctioning strategies of United States are slammed in *Origins of Terrorism* (2001) a critical comment by Edward Said. Said demands new definitions of the terror and terrorist should be generated in order to be precise Islam population can be justified. He supports the symbolic significance of the event. Said ascribes the questionable role of media to present the 9/11. He raises the question in his talk with Barsamian which was later published in 2001 as *Origins of Terrorism*. *Origins of Terrorism* questions the coverage of 9/11 as one sided dialogue. (Interview with Barsamian) The terrorist and Anti-West views are the results of what West represents to them. West is the epitome of materialism and vulgarity. Diminishing the identity of a Muslim as a terrorist is a contemporary issue. The impenetrability ‘placed great strain on the hyphen bridging that identity called Muslim- American.’ (28, DIS) A. Sivanandan has put forward the idea that ‘war on terror’ has produced a racism which does not tell the difference between a settler, an immigrant, asylum seeker, Muslim and a terrorist. (Interview with Institute of Race Relations) Said, amplified the allegations in his interview with David Barsamian that every Arab or Muslim is not a terrorist. Said said, ‘The carefully planned and horrendous, pathologically motivated suicide attack and mass slaughter by a small group of deranged militants has been turned into proof of Huntington’s thesis.’ (‘The Clash of Ignorance’, 2). The events of September 11 became a classic demonstration of how a particular event could become the signature.

The prevailing stereotypes of fear and phobia inverse when the American listener suspects contamination in food served to him. The circumstantial evidence fuels the hype and fear of unknown. Changez’s suggests listener is working with the
intelligence services and inquires if he has visited East to confirm his role in Afghanistan. The beginning of all chapters in The Reluctant Fundamentalist raises the similar question. He inexplicably asks the American guest about his bulging pocket, insists him to remove his jacket. While ordering dessert, Changez reminds him, the soldiers of the US army are provided with chocolate in their supplies to imply ‘the prospect of sugaring your tongue before undertaking even the bloodiest of tasks’ is not a new concept for the listener. (RF, 138) The threats and tension about what might happen next build suspense. As the novel approaches the climax, the undertone involves more violent reference like ‘a great satisfaction to be had in touching one’s prey’, ‘meat roasting’ and unusual telephone beeping (RF, 116-23) When Waiter reads the menu, American is frightened to see the lolling head in akin to prayer recitation before killing, which was actually the recitation of the items on the menu. Changez feels like Kurtz waiting for his Marlow about to be killed.

Changez’s love for Erica is more about his fascination with America as when he says, ‘my duty to Erica.’ (RF, 158) The love-struck Changez is not an ordinary man in love, the lining is layered and symbolic. Hartnell maintains, ‘Changez’s relationship with Erica who, like Daisy in The Great Gatsby, carries the burden of representing far more than an individual love interest.’ (88) As soon as the love of Erica, his job along the the social and financial security slips from his hand, Changez crashes on the reality ground. If he was accepted as a non-threatening man, he might have continued his American life love affair. The focalisation of the US policies is the doom of Erica-Changez’s affair. Laila Halaby’s novel, Once in a Promised Land (2007) depicts the struggle of an Arab in America and life and relationship of Jassim and Salwa changed after 9/11. ‘September was ‘still the start of our relationship, just after the attacks on the World Trade Center’ (RF, 165) the start of their relationship
has gone sore as the attack propels her ‘deeper into her fantasy world’ She felt, ‘churned up old thoughts in my head’ later she is sent to the mental asylum. (RF, 81) Shaken by the devastating event, Erica drifts into blank state and drowns herself in Hudson. Changez’s love for the Erica can be seen as a bridge. A happy end of Erica-Changez love would have been the vantage point of East and West. The communion of the two individuals can be a bridge with the cordial relationship tying the distance between the East/West. The notion is challenged and failed in the novel so does the multicultural existence in society.

There is a great deal of similarity between the lives of Changez and Hamid. Changez is accepted as the author’s spokesperson ‘alter ego character of Changez’ (Christy, 24) Changez and Mohsin Hamid both are American Ivy league student. Changez mentions his great-grandfather and adds ‘a barrister with the means to endow a school for the Muslims of the Punjab...We employ several servants. (RF, 9) Hamid’s great-grandfather was a well-known lawyer. Hamid belongs to the upper strata of Lahore. As Huntington derives in The Clash of Civilization? (1993). ‘In the past, the elites of non-Western societies were usually the people who were most involved with the West, had been educated at Oxford, the Sorbonne or Sandhurst, and had absorbed Western attitudes and values.’ (26-7) Changez worked for the valuation firm, Hamid worked as McKinsey consultant and strategist at Wolff Olins. Like Changez, Hamid left his life in West to settle down in Lahore. The Reluctant Fundamentalist questions the stand of Americans and their stand for the terrorist in generalising every Muslim as one of them. At the same time, his character Changez opens up a new debate on the terrorism and counter-terrorism. Western critics have criticised it for its lack of depth, as Marlowe in a review of The Reluctant
Fundamentalist disparaged it as ‘anti-American agitprop’ (‘Buying Anti-American’ unpag.)

Due to male dominant society, the hypersensitivity of Pakistan male towards the female body is revealed in The Reluctant Fundamentalist. Changez comments ‘how being in Pakistan heightens one’s sensitivity to the sight of a woman’s body. (RF, 26) The restrictive dressing code in Pakistan is drawn attention to but to include the multi-faceted country, he points at ‘the girls in jeans’ and ‘female in traditional dress’, to draw out the balance. (RF, 16) The Pretty girl makes her career as a model of jeans brand personifies modern Pakistani women. Her interest in movies is due to curiosity for the world beyond reach and her only outlet to know the world outside the small, poor neighbourhood. Willing to do anything to get rid of small life, she becomes a mistress of the marketing manager. (HFR, 50) Mumtaz Kashmiri is analogous to Kashmira in Rushdie’s Shalimar the Clown (2005). Kashmir delineates identity of the character in both cases. Mumtaz’s mother was beaten by her husband regularly to an extent to the loss of auditory capacities in left ear. Murad Badshah’s father left his mother and he is brought up by the mother. Daru credits upbringing of his mother enabled him ‘to have a strong sense of wrong and right.’ (MS, 79) All women are capable of taking care of themselves and fight the unjust done by men is a break from the reticent, docile women characters in the eastern set up in immigrant novels.

The gender gap is projected with Mumtaz’s brother unable to express his feeling. He is a cast to compartmentalised Pakistani man. Mumtaz accepts, ‘I have an older brother, so I’m a fighter’, it clearly shows the male chauvinism exists in the upper society of Pakistan. (MS. 145) The protagonist does not accompany his wife during childbirth ‘hesitant by your upbringing and gender.’ (HFR, 147) The marriage
of the man with a younger woman is common in the society as Protagonist’s wife is ‘little less than half your [his] age’ (HFR, 124) She dreads marriage for rooted in lack of freedom women receive. Her conclusion is based on the conditions of married women in Pakistan. It includes her mother, aunt, sister, cousin, friends and every woman around her; her fear confirms the superiority and dominance of the patriarchy model in the society. Under the social pressure to find a wealthy Pakistani boy at the right age prepared her to accept Ozi’s proposal. Once bored of the domestic life, she finds her way out of marriage through an affair. Viciously, she encourages sexual advances with Darashikoh. There is a surety that he would keep mum about it as Ozi’s best friend. Mumtaz is drawn as a mean wife, mother and lover.

Chapter 10, ‘The Wife and Mother (Part One)’ is Mumtaz’s side of the story and introduced in the novel as ‘wife, mother, and lover’. (MS, 2) Mumtaz is neither an ideal wife not an ideal mother. Her decision to terminate baby was delayed and ceased by Ozi’s tactical manipulative arguments. Mumtaz suffers from the invariable strain of a life she never wanted to live. A Farewell to Arms is Mumtaz’s thought when she sees her son the first time. This is a significant reference as A Farewell to Arms is 1929 novel by Ernest Hemingway. Catherine, the heroine of the novel dies of haemorrhage after childbirth. It underlay the struggle between love and abandonment. The failure as a good mother to take care of son worries her, but on many occasions. Mumtaz feels she has done enough for Muazzam and needs to be herself. Mumtaz wants Ozi to share the responsibility of the kid. She asks him to take Muazzam to the bed when she is going out for a party in a farm house with Daru and Ozi. (MS, 13) She is ambitious to be more than a mother in her life.

In contrast to the dormant sexuality of Erica and the wife of the protagonist, Mumtaz is adventurous, a standstill from the rest of the female characters of Hamid.
She is well educated, keen to write and makes choices which all women characters fail to do. Unlike women with stereotype modesty, the wife of the protagonist affianced to the religious activities along the ‘the religiously-minded activists’ and the conservative Muslims with ‘heads covered and in several cases their faces too.’ (HFR, 147) Mumtaz is a dissenter. She drinks, smokes and her fascination with Saadat Hassan Munto characterises her audacity. Manto is exceedingly notable short story writer given that his stories unveil the female sexuality in the high restrictive Eastern background. The choice of her pen name shouts her liberal sexuality in conformist Lahore society. Manto’s pen was his sword so Zulfikar. In the last chapter, the readers come to know the title of Mumtaz’s short story is ‘The Trail by Zulfikar Munto’, hence the title pays multidimensional tribute to Manto and Camus.

The initial two novels of Hamid don’t touch the subject of religious practices. *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013) is the first work to accentuate the religious practices. The protagonist’s father has faith in his religion ‘manifesting itself in prayer, visits to shrines, religious music, and sacred verses written on paper and worn as amulets.’ (HFR, 93) Except for few references of a mosque in *Moth Smoke*, no other religious rituals are mentioned. Daru does not practice Namaaz since there is no indication of regular prayer. Changez drinks and fell in love with a woman out of marriage. Daru snorts and sells cocaine/heroine outside the mosque; he drinks and dates his best friends' wife. Thus, unfit to the religious Muslim identity. The issue of the drug consumption is also underlined; Erica’s father mocks Islam’s abstention of alcohol at the dinner table. For a befitting reply, Changez points at the drug issue of US, ‘alcohol’s illegality in our country has roughly the same effect as marijuana’s in yours.’ (RF, 53) In *Moth Smoke* Daru invents a name Aitch for the heroine. The drugs of various kinds and terminology of drug addicts, LSD and ‘Stoner’s paranoia’ are
part of the narration. (MS, 12) The drug issue is highlighted in the last novel with ‘the wife of some cocaine-snorting man-child’ and ‘a heroin junkie’s collapsing vein’ redirects to the issue. (HFR, 111, 165) ‘Afghanistan continues to produce over 80 percent of the world’s heroin, which is then trafficked into Europe via Iran and/or Pakistan, Turkey and the Balkans. (‘Overview and Challenges’, 20) Pakistan struggles with the drug issues in youth and the country plays an instrumental part to traffic the heroin produced in Afghanistan.

Right after the selection at Underwood Samson ‘Thank you, God!’ is perhaps only time Changez expressed religiousness (RF, 14) ) Hamid addresses the prejudice towards Islam in ‘Islam is not a Monolith’ (2013). When Changez gets his dream job, he thanks, God, ‘other than that exclamation (a common figure of speech) there’s no real evidence that Changez is religious.’ (DIS, 185) Changez described Erica as someone about to complete ‘the month of fasting….too consumed by prayer and reading of the holy book’ as she falls into deliberation. (RF, 134) Ramadan is the month of fasting in Islam, the context denotes is religiousness. The reception of the religion in West is complicated, ‘Islam is often presented as not just a “religion,” as understood in the “West,” but as a comprehensive and all-encompassing way of life that is static, unchanging, and monolithic.’ (Mavani, 211) The surety of the protagonist’s religion to be Islam in HFR is the festival month, which is Ramadan and he have sampled ‘alcohol only twice before’ since Islam do not permit alcohol. (HFR, 109) Alcohol consumption is forbidden in Islam but inebriation is a motif and catalyst of love and spirituality in songs and poetry. That is why Changez has a Christian bootlegger to deliver alcohol. The moderate Muslims stay away from alcohol. Aurungzeb’s contemporary counterpart Ozi is offered drink, and he replies ‘I’m a good Muslim.’ (MS, 16)
On the flight back home Changez is repulsed as a fellow traveller removes his shoes to pray in the aisle with a blustered declaration ‘nuclear annihilation is God’s will’. (RF, 122) The contempt is directed towards the godly aspect of the comment because he is not religious enough to see the role of God in the nuclear test. Changez is aware of the strict religious body of Islam. It cannot accept him as a convert since Islam does not accept other religion easily in matrimony, the wedding itself is not enough the conversion of the proposed spouse is the only way an Islamic individual can marry a non-Islamic one. The religious identity of Changez is null.

Since the title includes the word fundamentalist, it is bound to be misinterpreted. The term ‘Fundamentalist’ can be inferred as a religious zealot, a radical fanatic religious supporter. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, Fundamentalism is “strict adherence to ancient or fundamental doctrines, with no concessions to modern developments in thought or customs.” (“Fundamentalism” 267) The religious fundamentalism is an obvious conclusion by west while looking at the issues of Eastern countries.

Terry Eagleton writes, ‘The fundamentalist, whether Texan or Taliban, is the flipside of the nihilist: both parties believe that nothing has meaning or value unless it is founded on cast-iron first principles.’ (26) The Reluctant Fundamentalist also suggests Changez is reluctant to practice Focus on Fundaments dictum of Underwood Samson. He fails to focus on the ruthless practices of merging small companies. Erica’s father, an elite American adds later his problem is not with the Pakistanis in general but with the ‘fundamentalism.’ (RF, 55) The emphasis on the fundamentalism refers the class divide and the benefits elitists have the at the cost of the country. Changez questions listener if he is speculating ‘what sort of training camp could have given a fellow from the plains such as myself cause to engage in these activities!’
The thread of conversation hints Changez might have been a part of terrorist camp or he had spent time in a terrorist training camp or he could be involved with the radical groups. The teaching job has perks to influence the youngsters, later he reveals his object in campus was, ‘to advocate disengagement from your country to mine’, he flaunts beard, encourages students’ radical ideas after indignation in the US. (RF, 173) The eleventh chapter ‘Focus on the Fundaments’ repeats the title of the previous novel to indicate deterring society with heightened restrictions on the public fun and festivals and radicals’ and ‘pastimes include fighting the spread of primary education and stalling the census.’ (HFR, 205)

In *Pakistan in Crisis* (2012) Ahmad Rashid enlightens the political stability in the Pakistan and the contemporary issues the country is facing. ‘One-third of Pakistan lack drinking water, 77 million have no proper food sources, half of the school-age children do not go to school. The literacy rate is 57 percent, lowest in South Asia and just 5 percent growth literacy rate since 1947.’ (13) Rashid reckons amongst all threat Pakistan is facing. There are four things to tackle first. The national security theory, failure of the political balance and the failure of the rulers to bind the ethnic groups for the national identity, home front groups as ISI and the unvarying relativity of military and the political leadership of the country. The frail economy is a concern for the Pakistani government. (25-9) Candland maintains on same note culpability of politicians and government policies, ‘a lack of public responsibility and accountability, a weak civil society, corrupt governments, parasitic politicians, and avaricious industrialists’ are liable for the current state of Pakistan (265) Hamid confessed he could not look down the issues, ‘I didn't want to ignore the very real problems in Pakistani society, and this novel talks about that’ (Interview with Steve Inskeep)
Moth Smoke and How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia have the backdrop of a Pakistani city. The routine of life in the village is presented, a shower using buckets and ladles in The Reluctant Fundamentalist. Moth Smoke have use of lota to wash, spitting pan, bells on ankles and tradition of firing a gun on the occasions to celebrate. How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia mentions the expensive weddings, jewellery adorned man. The locations and geography are woven into the plot. While describing Lahore to the American visitor, Changez adds apart from the second largest city of Pakistan, the capital of ancient Punjab. The city is ‘home to nearly as many people as New York.’, he adds Lahore had ‘invaders from the Aryans to Mongols to the British’. (RF, 7) Historically it was an important centre, during India-Pakistan conflicts ‘Lahore was the last major city in a contiguous swath of Muslim lands stretching west as far as Morocco and had, therefore that quality of understated bravado characteristic of frontier towns.’ (RF, 127) Lahore in Moth Smoke covers the landmarks of the city, the various locations of the city; Town Hall, Lower Mall Road, Government College, Data Darbar, Circular Road, Badshahi Mosque (built by Aurungzeb), Minar-i-Pakistan, Jallo Park, Zam-Zammah, a canon in front of Lahore museum and the Heera Mandi in the old city. Pak Tea House with poets reciting poems, Sadequain a progressive Pakistani painter, The National School of Arts portrays the diversity, progress and creative part of Pakistan. Pakistan from the point of view of Ozi exposes the imbalanced wealth,

The roads are falling apart, so you need a Pajero or a Land Cruiser. The phone lines are erratic, so you need a mobile. The colleges are overrun with fundos who have no interest in getting an education, so you have to go abroad…Thanks to electricity theft there will always be shortages, so you have
to have a generator. The police are corrupt and ineffective, so you need private security guards. It goes on and on. (MS, 231)

Ozi belongs to the class of entitled, the upper crust of corrupt society. He had his share snatched from the common people just like his father. Murad Badshah holds Master’s Degree and works as rickshaw fleet captain and land pirate. He is a proof of what unemployment leads to in a corrupt country. The unpaved road, dirt path and pot holes describe roads. The protagonist’s illiterate mother buried ‘a tiny skeleton in a small grave’ points at the death of a child due to lack of proper medical services, (HFR, 33) The number of kidnapping case soars up. Akmal, a client in the bank Darashikoh used to work was sent to Lahore, as a number of kidnapping scared his family for his safety. Politicians are cautious of terrorist attacks and keep the securities extra tight. Shah household is rich with the guaranteed flow of money and useful fruitful connection in politics and military. Ozi is glad to secure a position in the corrupt country and reveres his father for the absolute skill to secure himself during the commotion in the country. Cilano accentuates, ‘From 1971 to 1998, the pattern of politicized corruption continues’ (National Identities in Pakistan, 95)

*Moth Smoke* accurately represents an upper layer of Pakistani society - the people with influential political connections in Lahore who are of the same stature of Ozi and Khurram Uncle. The youngsters driving SUVs like Pajero, Land Cruiser, drinks Belgian beer, sushi is being flown in Karachi for dinner in Lahore and customise music of DJs especially for their pool parties and they vacation in Santorini. This class can afford education in the prestigious institutes of the US and take over the job market in Pakistan. Daru is alienated from his friends and, his classmates. They all are blue-blooded and comes from the influential families. He compares himself to them often. Daru is jealous and facing inferiority after his
unemployment and the state of affairs in his home and think Ozi is lucky while he struggles in a job market that demands the foreign degrees. The job seeker is deemed incompetent without the Western degree. The protagonist thinks, ‘Wealthy civilians, in his view, are a subcategory of thief.’ (HFR, 162) The class discrepancy is a minute level robbery.

The boutiques represent high crust society in a country where the flour shortage causing death is a ground reality. Thus, Murad Badshah’s plan to rob high-end boutiques is symbolic. The ‘boutique’ is robbed in Moth Smoke the identical robbery takes place in a boutique owned by Pretty Girl in How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia. The unaffordable schools and unavailability of education for all, open defecation, cigarettes being sold near school, child labour, Pirated DVDs, gun threatening teenager are part of How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia Poor standards of food quality and safety as salesman with a firm which sells outdated food items with new expiry date labels in reduced price as exporters getting stuff without paying duty in the chapter ‘Learn From the Masters.’(HFR, 91) The water some companies sell is clear and odourless with human eye but it ‘reliably contain trace levels of faeces and micro-orgasmic capable of causing diarrhoea, hepatitis, dysentery, and typhoid.’ (HFR, 99) Hepatitis E is an epidemic in South East Asia. Such life-threatening diseases are the reason his sister is departing the life by dengue.

The packaging water business or any other business model is on a pedestal of corruption. Hamid confessed how the economy works in the country like Pakistan or any South Asian countries. The work ethics are a contrast to how things work in the USA with more rules and strict guidelines. ‘In a place like Pakistan, for example, or many other emerging economies, as they're called, there are fewer rules. So, there is
more corruption, there's more direct violence, intimidation, breaking of regulations.’
(Interview with Innskip)

The hot weather of South East Asia is highlighted continually. While *Moth Smoke* centres on the control over the climate to set a societal status, Daru is a certain advocate that an air conditioner represents the social status. *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* have a number of statements on the electricity and power shortage several times. (HFR - 31, 58, 93, 124, 130, 213) and later ‘electricity had gone that afternoon.’ (RF, 124, 47) The chapter ‘What Lovely Weather We’re Having (or the Importance of Air-Conditioning)’ in *Moth Smoke* can easily remind reader of a research paper from a Marxist. The chapter is an elaborated argument on the role of the air-conditioning in Pakistan to uphold the social status. According to the theory of Professor Julius Superb, there are two groups in the society; one has control over the climate and the other group sweats in scorching heat and battles with the power blockage. The elitist like Ozi, Mumtaz, Shuja and feudal families can afford air conditioners and fall into the first group. Murad Badshah, Daru or any working class people in Pakistan are part of the second group. (MS, 39-43)

Manucci believes air-conditioner as a machine that blows hot air because he had only seen them hissing hot air. He has never been inside a room with cool air, a poor on the other side of the wall justifies a class divide. The treatment of Manucci during his job at Daru’s household is a manifestation of master-slave tradition. When squashed by the system and frustrated with the order in his life, Daru burst out his aggravation on Manucci. Daru hits him harder on his face once he suggested him not to sell charas. Mumtaz thinks Manucci can be a good journalist if he learns how to read. (MS, 306) He himself is a part of rich-poor, superior-inferior bigotry. Darashikoh Shezad looks down to his servant Manucci and Murad Badshah since they
belong to lower social class to his own rank. Hamid admits initial shock at seeing servants in his ancient home in Lahore. After years in the US, as a child, he was bewildered to see the male-female working in the household. He enquire one of his cousins if these are slaves, to get the answer, ‘They’re servants’ (DIS, 7)

To describe his evolving relationship, Ozi creates a story of two characters, Ro and Lain, short for Hero and Villain. In it, Ro and Lain declare love for each other while they are on a terrace. Chapter 12, ‘the best friend’, is from the point of view of Aurungzeb. Daru feels the impact of his Suzuki and Ozi’s Pajero. Daru was financial dependent on Khurram uncle’s favour and emotionally dependent on Ozi, just like Changez was on the goodness of America. Pel-Chen Liao notes, ‘the intimacy between Changez and Erica is Changez’s naive assumption is ‘the social equivalence between the Punjabi elite and the American upper class’ because he is earning large amount as a base salary while his family struggles with the war and water crisis in Pakistan. (131) They struggle to keep up the diminutive financial status. Changez scrambles a social hierarchy in New York to balance the fall of his family in social rank of Lahore. he enters into the identical rank in New York.

Jim’s lavish house made Changez think about The Great Gatsby, relating himself with the Gatsby. Changez thinks of himself as a James Bond, ‘only younger, darker, and possibly better paid.’ (RF, 41; 64) The colour tone of South Asian is drawn attention to. Changez draws the attention of listener towards the ‘darkness’ of a lady’s skin as an exotic feature. (RF, 78) Pointing at the complexions Changez explained there is a range of complexions in his country, ‘yours occurs often among the people of our north-west frontier’ (RF, 1) The north-west of Pakistan is Swat valley, a region infamous for it was a ground of Taliban. (Williams B., 12)
Daru is an orphan. He lost this mother in a gun fire which he suspects was not a misfire. He lost his father in a war with Bangladesh when he was just two. He dies by gangrene in a prisoner-of-war camp near Chittagong. According to Cara Cilano in *National Identities in Pakistan*, the war of 1971 in *Moth Smoke* shares a ‘similarly involve father-child relationships, and they also signal the possible perpetuation of politicized corruption.’ (94) The corruption refers to the 1971 war which divided Pakistan into two parts, East Pakistan and West Pakistan. The war is associated with the corruption at a higher level that offered Khurram a desk job and Shezad’s death due to gangrene in war camp near Chittagong.

The obsession with the nuclear and war in the novels is notable. When Indian Parliament was attacked, Changez sees a possibility ‘my country could be at war’ (RF, 121) He is concerned about the airfield, the probability of war and fuming at the advances of the neighbour (India) to the limitations of Pakistan. He is assured with relief that his country had nuclear weapons. In *Moth Smoke*, the milieu of the novel is 1998. On 11th May 1998 India tested nuclear weapons, weeks later in the same year, Pakistan launched their nuclear weapons. The development of the events brought a great stress between India and Pakistan. The plausible war dreaded the both sides. The tête-à-tête at Murad Badshah’s rickshaw depot after the nuclear test has a unanimous tone; the Christians, the Jews, the Hindus and the Buddhist have a bomb, ‘Why should we be the only ones without it?’ (MS, 166) The enthusiasm for nuclear peaks when Underwood Samson employees ask each other what would one love to be Changez’s reply caught everyone off guard ‘the dictator of an Islamic republic with nuclear capability’ (RF, 29) He later justifies it as a friendly joke.

The post-colonial aspect is still perceptible in the British ruled countries. Changez tells ‘...like Pakistan, America is, after all, a former English colony’ further
adds that ‘Anglicized accent’ is associated with the wealth and power in Pakistan as well as the US. The remains of British rule in both countries. (RF, 41-2) This is a general tendency in South Asian countries to associate the fluency of English with superiority and willingness to adopt English language like Hullo from Murad Badshah in *Moth Smoke*. Changez boasts his mastery on the English language twice, ‘I am both a native of this city and a speaker of your language’ (RF, 1) Changez is strip searched at the airport, he remarks on the English language superiority of his own to the officer. ‘a solidly built woman with a pistol at her hip and a mastery of English inferior to mine’ (RF, 75) The swaggering declaration is made in order to be favoured by the listener with his familiarity with westernised life and command on the English language. Liao records, the Oxford education of Hamid’s great-grandfather suggest his elitist upbringing, ‘only 2.7 per cent of Pakistanis had some knowledge of English’ (Rahman qtd in Liao, 128) The acceptance of the empirical language in the colonised country is further stressed in Ashcroft et al.,

..by appropriating the imperial language, its discursive forms and its modes of, post-colonial societies are able, as things stand, to intervene more readily in the dominant discourse, to interpolate their own cultural realities. (*Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, 16)

The polyphony, multiple points of view and narrative in all selected novels is remarkable. Hamid announced in an interview on Literary Hub that in his first three books, he has ‘bent reality mainly through the framing devices’ (Interview with Freeman) He prefers a variety of the structure and experiment in the form of a novel, including post-modern devices of storytelling. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is in monologue form with twelve chapters in first person narrative. There are two
characters, Changez and an American. There is no role of the listener in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*.

The responses of Changez, his monologue lets us figure out American’s opinion. The reader has a role to fill in the gap. On the form of the novel in DIS, he explained the second-person narrative is ‘an invitation to create’ He urged his readers could ‘be audience and character and maker’ and mocks at the format of a self-help book. (HFR, 79) *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* discusses the form of novel at length and there are ‘two types of novels’ (HFR, 19) The structure of the novel is imitation of the self-help book with imperative chapters like, ‘Don’t Fall in Love,’ ‘Be Prepared to Use Violence, ‘Befriend a Bureaucrat,’ ‘Dance with Debt’ and in the penultimate chapter ‘We Must Hurry, We are Nearing Our End, You and I’. Each chapter has an introductory note on how the chapter is similar in the fashion of a self-help book. The format of a self-help book format is mocked and is taken for granted without any help to offer to its readers as suggested in the title. In Chapter twelve ‘Have An Exit Strategy’, author admits his failure to write a help book, a guide to getting filthy rich in rising Asia with ‘An apology is no doubt due’ as author regrets the failure to enlighten readers on how to be a filthy rich man in Asia.’(HFR, 219) There are clear efforts to be interactive with the reader in his all book. ‘The reader can take place of protagonist in any city. It has universal appeal.’ (Mohsin: Interview with Wajahat Ali)

The central characters in Hamid’s novels, Changez, Daru and the anonymous man are male characters. Hamid admits the monologue form in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is inspired by Albert Camus’ *The Fall* (1956), the similar journey of a man rose up to success and his fall.
Dostoevsky is a further acknowledged influence, for in common with Hamid’s novel both Crime and Punishment (1866) and The Brothers Karamazov (1879–80) play with the notion that characters are actually on trial, whether real, as in Moth Smoke, or metaphorically by means of the judgmental attitude towards Changez’s behaviour of the novel’s characters and readers in The Reluctant Fundamentalist. (Hamid qtd in Adriano, 68)

There is a quality of refined drama in the two chapters addressed to judge and the audience respectively in the court. The multiple narrative point of views are used for Moth Smoke. Chapter 4 ‘Opening the purple box: an interview with Professor Julius superb’ in Moth Smoke is in the form of an interview between Mumtaz and professor. The resurfacing narratives in the novels form a theme. There is a reference of a boxer in Moth Smoke, Changez is a good boxer in The Reluctant Fundamentalist and ‘the flattened feature similar to a boxer’ is part of the last novel. (HFR, 58) The marijuana sellers surrounded mosque where Changez sells powder and Protagonist’s residence near the much-revered tomb, which is busy with traffic during the day and ‘scented with marijuana’ during night reoccurs and convey what exactly happens in sacred place. (HFR, 89) The zoo visit with Mumtaz in Moth Smoke and Protagonist visit with nephews mentioned in How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia are similar.

The use of language in the novels is captivating. The alliteration is used in chapter two in Moth Smoke, ‘Sparks, no flame. Sparks, no flame; and ‘tip tip tip, repeat, tip, tip, tip rolling while rolling and baking while baking.’ (8-9) The phrases Reuters report, health-crazy Americans and Sandhurst are used. The terminology is influenced by the finance background and the American colloquial background. The author admitted the change, as he ‘had chosen to shift the voice into an American-accented first person.’ (DIS, 69) In How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia there are
images of Asian background and class. The language fits the characters. The protagonist refers his books as, ‘Textbooks, those whores.’ (20, HFR) The protagonist’s mother and sister use explicit words occasionally, highlighting the language of people in squalor.

Changez uses a maxim ‘in our language: the ruins proclaim the building was beautiful’ (RF, 144) is a translation of Urdu proverb, khandar bata raha hai Imarat kitni khubsoorat thi’. (my own translation) In Moth Smoke, the impact of the teenagers and contracted versions as Fundo for fundamentalist and yaar’ an Urdu term for friend or someone close is used frequently. The locale of the country with Urdu words, hakim, Tinky Phoppo, Chipkali, andhi, phirr, macchar, ai-bo, the way an Urdu speaker pronounce America as Amreeka and janoo and yaar, the terms of endearments in Urdu are used to create the real Lahore.

The narrative of realism in the novels has the thread of engaging history. The historiography supports the theme and characters in regard to Moth Smoke. A great deal of similarity intensifies the measures in the novel. The anecdote in accordance to Moth Smoke follows, Shah Jahan, the Mughal king inquires a saint who would take charge of his throne. The saint prophesies it will be Aurungzeb. The novel is parallel to the story. Cara Cilano in ‘Unfinished Business: Designs against the Nation’ finds, ‘Moth Smoke is the story drawn from the four sons of Shah Jahan.’ He notes the characters in the novel does, ‘show a repetitiveness of narrative action in that the four sons battle with the youngest, Aurungzeb prevailing.’ (National Identities in Pakistan, 99) Shah Jahan’s great grandfather, Akbar named him Khurram. Sultan Khurram had four sons, Dara Sikoh, Aurungzeb, Muhammad Shuja or Shah Shuja, and Murad Bakhsh. In accordance with the story, the most capable of the four sons of Shah Jahan and Mumtaz Mahall were Dara Shikoh, the eldest and his father’s favourite; and
Aurangzeb, the third son. These two contested for the throne. There is a huge distinction in their temperament and religious tolerance. Aurungzeb was more rigid ruler in the matter of faith and religion.

The lazy and arrogant Dara Shikoh had a gift for alienating others. Like his great-grandfather Akbar, he enjoyed theological discussions with Hindus and Jesuits and believed that all religions contained an identical truth. Aurangzeb was hard working and a devout Muslim...When Shah Jahan fell seriously ill in September 1657, the four princes began to manoeuvre for the throne. (McLeod, 62)

Murad Bakhsh declared his loyalty to Aurangzeb in order to defeat Dara. Defeated Dara Sikoh escaped in Sindh, took protection from Junaid Malik Jiwan. Jiwan turned him and betrayed. Dara was charged with apostasy. The future of three brothers of Aurangzeb was sealed under his command, ‘The unorthodox Mughal prince was tried for apostasy and idolatry, convicted, and executed. Another brother, Murad Bakhsh, was later executed on charges of murder; the remaining brother, Muhammad Shuja, fled to what is now Burma and met his death there.’ (McLeod, 63)

Rahmat-un-Nisa or Nawab bai and Aurungzeb had a son Muazzam. Nawab bai was a princess from Kashmir. (Saha, 66) Thus Mumtaz in Moth Smoke is Mumtaz Kashmiri. Niccolao Manucci was a well-known Italian traveller, documented Mughal era under the title Storia Do Mogor or Mugal India 1653-1708 (1826) Manucci the servant has an Italian name as discussed by Daru and Mumtaz foils the identity of Manucci the writer and traveller. Manucci is projected with ‘a past like Kim’. (MS, 154) Moth Smoke documents fall of Daru with the help of Shuza Rana, a teenager client and Jiwan Malik, his manager at the bank. The historical trial of Dara Sikoh
inspired artists in Pakistan. The wrapped up symbol of the other event occurs when
the listener stays in Pearl Continent. It is a reference to Wall Street Journalist Daniel
Pearl and his beheading. Pearl was an American Jew born in Princeton. He was
kidnapped and later murdered. ‘Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh was convicted in 2002 by
Pakistani court of the murder that year of Daniel Pearl’ (Radical Islam on UK
Campuses, 4)

The love of the moth embodies the destructive love between Daru and
Mumtaz. Without a job and almost broke, Daru spends his time observing moths and
their dance around the fire. Manucci enlightens him ‘The poets say some moths will
do anything out of love for a flame’ (MS, 171). The article ‘The Phoenix and the
Flame’ by Julius Superb deters the obliteration of Daru. He smells something burning
after Mumtaz’s denial to reverberate her love for him.

The chapter manifests how Hamid deals with the recurrent theme of the people
who are educated and enjoys the privilege in Pakistan. Thus, the novels of Hamid are
strategically penned down with the multiple themes such as the life of immigrants, the
harsh life of middle class and the class chasm in Pakistan. There is a clear dominance
of the urban characters in the novels. It highlights the issues of the society which is
above the middle class. The symbols and use of language successfully create the
world of the metropolitan life.
A COMPARATIVE STUDY:

SIMILARITIES AND CONTRAST IN

THE SELECTED NOVELS OF

NADEEM ASLAM AND

MOHSIN HAMID
COMPARATIVE: SIMILARITIES AND CONTRAST IN THE SELECTED NOVELS OF NADEEM ASLAM AND MOHSIN HAMID

I

SIMILARITIES IN THE SELECTED NOVELS OF NADEEM ASLAM AND MOHSIN HAMID

The first part of this chapter discusses the similarities between the selected novels. Part two discusses the contrast in the novels.

Aslam and Hamid’s first novel has background and characters from Pakistan. Aslam’s second novel is based on the immigrants with the mixture of the Eastern and some of the western characters. *The Wasted Vigil* is set into Afghanistan; *The Blind Man’s Garden* is between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The major characters in Hamid’s novels are settlers including the protagonist who has moved away from his village to the city in *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia*. Except *Moth Smoke*, all characters settle down in a new place. They arrive from their birthplaces to a distant land for on individual quest like Lara or political driven as Shamas and Changez who left Pakistan for the scope of better future. The immigrant dreams of Raider and Daru in *Moth Smoke* bears a resemblance to Kasa’s dream in *The Wasted Vigil* to go to England to start a new life and if lucky a chance to love and to be loved. Pakistan is a difficult country so ‘millions of its sons and daughters have managed to find footholds all around the globe in their search for livelihood and a semblance of dignity. Roaming the planet looking for solace, they’ve settled in small towns that make them feel smaller still, and in cities that have tall buildings and even taller loneliness.’ (MLL, 12) The rejection of the West by Eastern characters and rejection of Eastern immigrants by the West occurs at various levels. Kaukab rejects the West at all stages.
of her residence, and the seeds from Pakistan does not grow on the English soil in *The Map of the Lost Lovers* whereas Changez merges into the new scene in New York. The rejection of the East in West occurs with the hostile reception of immigrants, Muslims and beard after 9/11 in the US in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and the brandishing of the burqa in *Dasht-e-Tanhai*. Emerson traces the issues of the assimilationist society towards the elements of clothing like burqa and the tolerant reception of such clothing items, ‘The multicultural policy will tend to be supportive of such symbols, while the assimilationist policy will be restrictive or exclusionary.’ (6)

The class divide and awareness are prevalent; the woman who has studied in the Oxford is a minor character which shares the attitude of the privileged Pakistani like Changez. Jugnu and Changez share similarities of education. Both hold prestigious degrees and worked in various countries. Changez is well-travelled a student of the elite university flies continents hence geographically liberal and in love with American women. Jugnu has a career in Science as a lepidopterist and lived in Russia, United States and travelled to western China, India, Peru and Iran for butterfly collecting trips. He writes articles for *Afternoon*, a local evening newspaper. Like Changez, he is involved with a white woman and does not pray. Jugnu gives his opinion on the highest religious head and slams the religious blindness and the sheepish mentality of Islam. ‘the fact of the matter is that had I lived at the time of Muhammad, and he came to me with his heavenly message, I would have walked away..’ (52, MLL) The rebellious streak is visible when he mocks the five prayers of the day, ‘I smoke five a day. My five prayers.’(17, BMG) His apostate belief is partially due to the hold of his communist parents and his inclination towards the science. Among all, Kaukab, Rohan, Dunia, Casa are the primarily grey characters.
They follow the religion with sincerity. In between this dedication, the single value of the humanity slips from their actions.

The confusion and quest are the issues faced and recorded by the earlier generation of Pakistani creative authors. The poet, Faiz Ahmad Faiz and novelists, Zulfikar Ghose, Bapsi Sidhwa encloses the twinge of being twice removed from the motherland. After the first removal of Pakistanis from the India during the partition, the second deletion happened when they were detached from Pakistan as he moved out of the county. Eventually Faiz settled down in the US. Esra Santesso explains ‘The difficulty of “losing” the East even after moving to the West is out of the Disorientation, which she argues is a term for the Muslim immigrants in the West for woman like Kaukab.

Disorientation, in other words, is not a synonym for alienation or marginalisation, but rather a particular phase experienced by the devout Muslim woman estranged from her Muslim homeland and whose integration into Britishness depends on her ability to re-negotiate religious identity. (15)

There are two cultures in the society, the dominant and the subculture. The white culture/western dominated the subculture of the Muslims and other immigrants. The complex structure of cultures generates the identity concerns. The self-division of Changez is driven by the internal, external conflicts and quest for the Eastern identity. Shamas seeks change, but unlike Jugnu, he is stuck in the family duties. He faces the adversities to make a difference and favours the liberal religious views in the West. The past of his father, Deepak/Chakor, makes him challenge the religious conformity. He is a liberal squeezed between his confused identities, especially deciding factor is religious identity. Shamas connotes a broken link between the India and Pakistan.
He painted his home in the same fashion exactly like his home in Pakistan. The previous life in the form of rituals, religious beliefs, food habits and the moral of the society they grew up in is detectable in the all immigrant characters. Shamas, in the beginning compares the four seasons, among the other loses to be an immigrant; he acknowledges the loss of one season. With the failure to achieve other identities, unlike Changez, the immigrants in Aslam carry on the extreme chauvinism. They refer to the rich cultural heritage of Pakistan and keep looking back at the grandeur of the culture back home. Changez frowns on Western countries in the eighteenth century with the privilege and haughtiness of his refined society in the Indus valley. The nostalgia in the immigrants is immense and identical in connection to both novelists.

It is high time to discuss to define the relationship between the Islam and the West. The gap between East/West is an urgent issue to debate and understand. ‘The clash of civilizations thus occurs at two levels. At the micro level, adjacent groups along the fault lines between civilizations struggle, often violently, over the control of territory and each other. At the macro-level, states from different civilizations compete for relative military and economic power, struggle over the control of international institutions and third parties, and competitively promote their particular political and religious values.’ (Huntington, 29) Racism creates the sense of exclusion leading to a strong sense of community, ‘Our’ people/white, us/them and natives/immigrants diversions crop up. Racism by the white superimposes the patriotism of the immigrants. Bhabha aptly put the issues of the immigrants in Location of culture. ‘As a range of culturally and racially marginalized groups readily assume the mask of the black, or the position of the minority, not to deny their diversity, but audaciously to announce the important artifice.’ (Bhabha, 62) The
racism in Britain was worse than the racism in the US. The supremacist mind-set of Britain took the time to get out of the empirical outlook. A white traveller abuse the bus driver ‘Oi, Gupta, or whatever it is you call yourself, Abdul-Patel. Mr Illegal Immigrant-Asylum Seeker! Get back into your seat…Show us some respect. This is our country, not yours.’ (MLL, 255) This comment hurled at driver has the broad spectrum to insult immigrants from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. In Brick Lane, Karim’s father used to be a bus driver who has suffered and taken the abuses tossed at him during the 25 years of time-span of his job. (Ali, 233) The inability to understand or differentiate a Middle Easterner to the Pakistani is the generalisation of the identities. The prejudices are detrimental for the solidarity of the communities and nation. If one divide the population into two categories, the identity issues after 9/11 and 7/7 have been critical for the immigrants and Americans. Racism faced by Pakistani origin in America and England is the major theme in The Maps for Lost Lovers and The Reluctant Fundamentalist. Looking at the figures on the racist attacks on Asian, one can be sure it was a non-favourable time for any immigrants. The study showed that ‘South Asians were 50 times more likely than whites to be victims of racially motivated incidents’ (Home Office 1981: 10-11) The brown skin is associated with the stereotype of immigrants. The black rights movement is a long history of the White world.

In every age, authors portray the social politics. The revolutionary writers like William Golding, Walt Whitman have actively wrote about the contemporary issues in their work. The political correctness in the works of the Immigrant authors like Salman Rushdie, Mahfouz Hussain, lashes the vices in the East and West alike. Spivak affirms, in connection with the subaltern writers and their subject matter, ‘When we come to concomitant question of the consciousness of the subaltern, the
notion of what the work cannot say becomes important. (‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’,
82) Mohsin Hamid has been politically active with his articles on the political conditions and general understanding of Pakistan. His articles like ‘Refugees: Overcoming Our Fear’ (2016) in Time, ‘Unity, Faith and Discipline’ (2016) on Tin House are a critique on the contemporary issues. Hamid defends Pakistan as a country beyond the unsavoury reputation it has achieved with ‘Why They Get Pakistan Wrong’ (2013) He candidly admitted never agreeing, ‘with the claim that art must be kept separate from politics.’ (DIS, 64) Aslam’s unwavering stand on the Guantanamo Bay and the collateral damage in the Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan is perceptible in his interviews. He has been keenly asking questions on the violent deaths on both sides by Eastern terrorists or Western drone attacks in Pakistan. He stated in one of his interview with Marianne Brace, ‘I vote every time I write.’ and didn’t hear about the September 11 until September 20. On being asked about writing a novel based on 9/11. ’ (Aslam: Bookslut Interview) His political awareness on the current issues is evident,

the extraordinary decade beginning with 9/11 and ending with the Arab Spring....and between these two moments, we had the call to jihad, the War on Terror, Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib, the finding and killing of Osama Bin Laden, the murder of Benazir Bhutto. This clash between an incomplete understanding of the East and an incomplete understanding of the West. (Interview with Julian Gaugh)

But he has covered 26th February, the first attack the World Trade Centre when a car bomb detonated. ‘..just after 12:17 p.m. that February afternoon in1993, that the thirteen-hundred-pound bomb exploded a block away in the underground garage of the North Tower of the World Trade Center.’ (WV, 194) In Salman
Rushdie’s novel *Shalimar the Clown* (2005) there is an emphasis on remembering the 1993 bombing as ‘the first bombing’ on the World Trade Centre. (377) Mikal answers it is a monstrous crime when he is interrogated and questioned how he felt when he came to know about the Twin Towers. David mocks his sympathy, ‘Most of your people didn’t think so. They were pleased’ (BMG, 193) Changez was ecstatic to see the falling tower. Dunia is glad that America was attacked on its home front. For she thinks, without 9/11 US would never attack Taliban, ‘a part of her is glad America was attacked in 2001, because had it not been for that Afghanistan would still be suffering under the Taliban.’ (WV, 326) The delighted Muslims like Dunia and Changez have their reasons to validate the attack on the US. Jeo readies himself to help fellow Muslims in Afghanistan after the 9/11. October is the month of the beginning in the Afghanistan. When a country goes to war, the people are bound to be affected by the uproar, unease and proceeding madness. This critical period becomes an opportunity to gain profit by the arms dealers, the gun shop Mikal works in offers ‘piety discount’ to join the holy war after the invasion of the ‘West’ in the Afghanistan. (BMG, 16)

The anti-west dialogues take place in the novels which criticise the US interfere in the world and criticism of Empirical policies in the world affair in *The Blind Man’s Garden* and *The Wasted Vigil*, as well as in Hamid’s *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. The policy of US is part of the novels is a reflection of the political tensions amidst the war on terror. ) While discussing the threats from the west in the Islamic sense, Eagleton mapped out the assumed fears, ‘Islamic terrorism aims to bring down its Western antagonist by conspiring with a self-destructive impulse at its heart. It can rely on the aid of a fifth columnist: the overreaching will of the West
itself. The more Western civilization pollutes the planet and breeds poverty and inequality on a global scale, the more credence it lends to its opponents.’ (123)

The disapproval and concern over the interference of US in Afghanistan are comparable. The prejudice towards Islam is swiping the world through images, statements, media, news channels and opinions on the heating debate in every sphere. David, the interrogating officer in the US prison camp, emphasise why the US does not apply the torturous method to get information. He stresses on the moral correctness and boasts the stand of the US for not taking ‘uncivilized’ manners like terrorist groups. The very next day the soldiers beat a man in the cell next to Mikal’s to find his link with other organisations (BMG, 186) Such treatment to the youth fuel the civil agitation in the Muslim communities across the world. Maleeha writes, the Western countries have been engaged in the fight of terrorism. The disappearance of detainees in the interrogation clearly besmirches the intervention in a negative light. Maleeha slams the policies adopted by the West to deal and erase the terrorism have caused ‘disproportionate levels of civilian deaths and casualties in Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan and an overarching vilification of the Muslim community globally.’ (Maleeha, 10) The questions and doubts on the fairness are raised to validate the role of United States as a peacemaker in the world politics.

Changez condemns the fading support of US after Pakistan’s loyalty to the US during the war with Afghanistan. Changez blames the role of Empirical patterns and officious dealings of the US during Afghanistan and US war. ‘why America felt justified in bringing so many deaths to Afghanistan and Iraq, and why America felt justified in risking so many more deaths by tacitly using India to pressure Pakistan’ (RF, 178) More he understands, more he is detached from playing his part in the wealth creation of America.
The conflicts between East and West in Afghanistan destroyed the country. The region is raged with religion and extremists since last two decades. In 1989 Russian Troops backed out of Afghanistan. Afghanistan becomes the epicentre of the struggle for power. The number of Afghanistani refugees arrived in hordes in Pakistan since countries didn’t have a border checkpoint earlier. Aslam travelled to Afghanistan and Pakistan before penning down *The Blind Man’s Garden* to research the people and place. He communicated with the locals and interviewed ‘almost 200 Afghan refugees about their memories of Afghanistan’ in Britain on their loss of their motherland. (Interview with Naeem)

The contempt for the intervention of the US troops and intelligence services in the South Asian countries is encapsulated. *The Blind Man’s Garden* mentions the American military bases in Germany, Japan, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Albania, Macedonia, Qatar, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Hungary, Bosnia, Tajikistan, Croatia, Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Georgia, ‘a base in each vicinity ready to mobilize and put down possible threats..... Now it is about the survival of America itself.’ (56) Hamid narrated the presence of America in the world, the presence of the military bases. They are intruding the authentic cultures in the countries they are present, ‘your country’s constant interference in the affairs of others was insufferable, Vietnam, Korea, the straits of Taiwan, the Middle East, and now Afghanistan’ ‘detention facility…in some lawless limbo between your country and mine’ (RF, 182)

Pakistani youth’s brethren sentiments for Afghanistan, a fellow Muslim nation pushes them to visit Afghanistan and rescue the victims of the war. Jeo and Mikal too feel the kinship to help the neighbour country in need as the North-west territory of Pakistan shares close cultural ties with the Afghanistan. When Pakistan vowed to
support the United States for its ‘war on terror’ in Afghanistan, Changez too has brotherly emotions for Afghanistan ‘a fellow Muslim country’ and its starving and badly equipped tribesmen are facing the American with their high-tech armaments (RF, 99-100) The Wasted Vigil has a stanza from Daulat Shah of Herat’s poem Tazkirat-ush-Shuara (1487) about conversation between a poet and a landlord before the beginning of the book. The contrast between the love and openness is preceded by the declaration of the Jimmy Carter’s advisor’s statement whether he regrets the support of the US to the terrorist activities in the Afghanistan statements sums up the standing of the US forces and policies for the Afghanistan. The statement of the other military officers is given in The Blind Man’s Garden.

According to a newspaper, a brick from the pulverised home of Mullah Omar has been flown to the United States as a war trophy for the White House. And, according to another, on 19 September a CIA paramilitary officer was told by his chief at Langley, Virginia, ‘I want bin Laden’s head shipped in a box filled with dry ice. I want to show it to the President. I promised him I would do that. (BMG, 24)

The paragraph discloses the events of recent terrorist activities and the reaction of the US spokesperson, military chief on the terrorist is quoted. The characters in the Wasted Vigil are interestingly immigrants. Katrina is the only prime character from Afghanistan and belongs to the place. The area is occupied cannot be conveyed with any other significant events.

Kaukab cannot accept the modern changes in Mah-jabin. (Own Italics) As it simply signifies the adoption of western standards, licentious, outrageous and unacceptable as it suggests the abandonment of the tradition Islamic way of life. The
modernity does not have a positive connotation in the dialogue between Kaukab and Mah-Jabin. Changez could not continue his posh life in New York after realising his small part in the large US Empire. *Death to America* and *Kill Infidels* graffiti on the walls, *jihadi* material with the tapes of the scream of Russian soldiers to invoke the cruelty and single shoes for sale describe the market in the Afghanistan. The Pakistani man thinks Americans, ‘they are worse than Genghis and Halagu Khan.’26 (BMG, 383) In Islam along with Temur, Hulugu and Ganghes Khan are despised tyrant rulers. Hulugu Khan is Ganghes Khan’s grandson. ‘Mongols sacked Baghdad, ending the position of Caliph among the Sunnis in 1258. Hulugu had executed the Caliph rolling him in a carpet, and having him trampled.’ (Timothy, 55) Thus the contempt is palpable. The Americans are a curse, *Kill Americans* and President Carter must die shouted in protest is the voice of Pakistan residents in support of Afghanistan and for the role of the US in their country. The cleric who had inspired the attack lived and preached across the Hudson in Jersey. He seeks asylum in the United states to stipulate Muslims communally in the West to ‘revenge for the centuries of humiliation and subjugation.’ (WV, 196) The revenge to damage is to equate what West has done to Islam and the systematic subjugation at the hand of the supremacy in the East.

The population in Pakistan is 196,744,376 million as per the figures of *United Nations Population Division*27. The number confirms it is the most populous Islamic country followed by Indonesia. Pakistan’s nuclear tests of in 1997 to reinforce its standing against India brought economic breakdown and rampant employment. The nuclear tests of 1998 heightened the financial cataclysm. ‘In the wake of the 1998 nuclear tests, both states hiked their defence spending, India by 17 percent in real terms and Pakistani by 11 percent. While both states were initially placed under
sanctions, the effects on the Pakistani economy were more serious and led to an immediate capital scarcity.’ (Hewitt, 299) The shady role and involvement of state-sponsored terrorism through the US in Afghanistan and Kashmir tarnished its image and encouraged home front fatalists. The US attacked stealthily on the Pakistani soil and signalled the confirmation of the killing of one of the most wanted terrorist Bin Laden28. In 2008 Pakistan urged international Monetary Fund for aid to steering clear of the financial fiscal in the country. Ahmad Rashid noted in the chapter, ‘Pakistan in Crisis’, since last 20 years Pakistan has lived on the International Monetary Fund loan programme between 2001 to 2010. ‘the United States gave a total sum of $20.5 billion’ out of that only ‘$6.1 billion was used for the economic aid’ and rest of the donation was spent for the Pakistan Army operations for the Afghan border. (Pakistan on the Brink, 33) In Trespassing, Daanish, a young man assesses the position of Pakistan in comparison to the US, ‘The biggest problem is that we require aid at all. Beggars, that is what we are.’ (Uzma Aslam Khan, 262) Despite the drawbacks, the authors succeed to project their countries as a state with several political mistakes and vivid image. ‘Pakistan is a poor country, a harsh and disastrously unjust land, its history a book full of sad stories, and life is a trial if not a punishment for most of the people born there.’ (MLL, 12) Pakistani national identities Jasmine flower, ‘so rare in New York, so common here.’ features in the novels is similar to the Rohan wearing Jasmine in The Blind Man’s Garden. (RF, 84)

The corruption of the police is part of the novels The Blind Man’s Garden, Moth Smoke and How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia. After his failure to locate Naheed, Basie approaches the police. The careless answers and abusive language from the side of the police inspector are contrasted with and the six qualities of the Police force written on the chart. Later Tara has to offer her gold earrings to save
Naheed from the police inquiry, which can turn into any physical assault in the name of decent inquiry. The police accept bribe Daru offers a bribe to the policeman when Daru is caught for drink and drive, the policeman wants and accepts a bribe. But no one cares to question well-off Ozi when he accidently hits a boy and kills him. The derogating standard of the law protectors are tainted, the authorities have always jeopardised rules, imposed on weak and poor. The radical Islamic connection and the violence in Pakistan have exposed ‘A suicide truck bomb kills 12 people’ (BMG, 347) is scribed. A massive truck bomb attack on ‘a leading international chain’ is covered in Hamid is the attack on the Islamabad Marriott Hotel bombing on 20\textsuperscript{th} September 2008. (HFR, 103) The suicide truck bombing on the Pakistani landmarks is inspired by the real-life attacks in Pakistan ‘On October 18 a huge truck bomb has exploded, resulting 140 dead and hundreds wounded.’ (Rashid, 37)

Shamas wants to offer unmatchable hospitality experience to Stella. The hidden desire to present one’s self as the mascot of the origin country is normal. Kaukab wants to make sure the Western world should know how rich Pakistan culinary is. She wishes to present as many dishes as she can cook to impress. The hard efforts before dinner are to impress and alter the image of a Pakistanis who are clean and fit to equate with the western standards. When Changez offers his suggestions to try lassi, chicken, gulabjamun, he is wooing the guest with his hospitality. Wainwright likes the food at the Pak Deli, Changez feels the fraternity, ‘we Pakistani take great pride in our food when someone offers or appreciate the food, we feel gratitude.’ (RF, 40) Food and terrorism are strikingly related in the of Changez and American, ‘we Pakistanis tend to take an inordinate pride in our food.’ (RF, 101) The cricket laurel of Pakistan is one of the positive identities of the country. Changez feels Pakistan lacks wealth, development or power in international stage and sports achievements are not
outstanding apart from ‘the occasional brilliance of our temperamental cricket team’ (RF, 101) He bonds over cricket with Wainwright. Wainwright’s father is from Barbados where cricket is a very popular game. (RF, 39) The world cup final match between England and Pakistan evokes the spirit of the good cricket game in the witnesses in The Maps for Lost Lovers. (248)

*History is the third parent*, the first sentence of The Wasted Vigil insinuates the scope of imagination to present facts to question unruly history. In his interview with Kamila Shamsi, Aslam explained, the first sentence is closely linked to the politics, history of a family and history of a land. (Interview with Amina Yaqin) The native country and cultural background play an indispensable role to any author. The Indus land is rich in culture and history. The Silk Route passes by the Korakoram highway in the northern region of Pakistan was an important trade link between East and West in the past. Therefore the region attracted Colonists. The dominance of the British remains in the Pakistan is part of the life post-independence. The Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and were created on 15th August and 14th August respectively. The exodus of the Hindu-Muslims in the both countries became a tragic event. Muslims in the Indian side migrated to Pakistan side. The Hindus in Pakistan migrated to the Indian domain. Better known as the partition of 1947 in both countries was achieved after the death of millions on both sides. Kamila Shamsie’s *Kartography* (2002), Khushwant Singh’s *A Train to Pakistan* (1956) documents partition. Kiran’s father, a migrant worker, had ‘lost all other members of his family during the massacre that accompanied the partition of India in 1947.’ And he is a survivor of the massacre during the partition. (MLL, 14) The timing of Chakor’s death in the novel corresponds to the year 1971 and the termination of East Pakistan
from West Pakistan. Thus the pain of exile is carried by Muslim and non-Muslim characters.

Urvashi Batalia records in her *The Other Side of Silence* (2000), that among the other facts, the partition is one of the largest human migration in few months. The countries, homes, and businesses were changed in a single decision. There were deaths due to malnutrition and disease while migrants were en route. The sexual attack on women was higher in the commotion and chaos. The death toll rose in few months, Batalia noted, ‘In the space of a few months, about twelve million people moved between the new, truncated India and the two wings, East and West, of the newly created Pakistan. By far, the largest proportion of these refugees—more than ten million of them—...Estimates of the dead vary from 200,000 (the contemporary British figure) to two million (a later Indian estimate)’ According to her the acceptable number of death is around a million. The number of women is about 75,000 who were abducted, raped by the men from other religion. (Butalia, 41)

The partition influenced narration is part of Hamid and Aslam. Daru’s forefathers had to depart from India during partition in 1947. The loss of loved ones made Dadi fragile. During the partition, she lost her husband on a train from Amritsar to Lahore and lost her eldest son Shezad, Daru’s father in Bangladesh.’ (MS, 64) Her insistence on seeing the whole family together is out of post-traumatic shock in *Moth Smoke*, and in April 1930 British soldiers had massacred a crowd of unarmed protesters there, a defining moment in the struggle to drive the British out of India. (WV, 151) Jalianwala Bag tragedy on 13th April 1919 is one of the prominent incidents to ignite the revolution of Indian freedom movement. The infamous general Michael O’Dwyre, the governor of Punjab then, ordered to fire on a peaceful protest. Almost 600 people were killed in this attack. He was later gunned down by one of the
Punjabi, Udam Singh in 1940 in London. Udam Singh was later hanged till death in Pentonville for committing murder. (MLL, 75) The historical tragedy is in the connection of the subjugation of the natives by the English rulers.

The relationship between India and Pakistan are estranged since the partition. Though both countries share common rituals, language, social structure and the same past, it didn’t work to acquire cordial relationship. Border and national securities are the concern for India and Pakistan, and abhorrence and loathing on both parts for the ownership of the Kashmir elevated the differences. Hewitt observed on the Indo-Pakistan relations, ‘The mutual mistrust that lies at the heart of Indo-Pakistan relations has been historically and politically constructed in the minds of specific elites, and although these elites have changed since Independence, they remain profoundly influenced by the trauma of partition.’ (Hewitt, 285)

In Orientalism, Said explains the fear of the Islam is not imaginary as ‘Not for nothing did Islam come to symbolise terror, devastation, the demonic, hordes of hated barbarians. For Europe, Islam was a lasting trauma. Until the end of the seventeenth century the "Otto-man peril" lurked alongside Europe to represent the whole of Christian civilization a constant danger, and in time European civilization incorporated that peril and its lore, its great events.’ (59) Decades after the same trauma was generalised in West as the militant Islamic organisations are operating actively. ‘Criticising Islam is not racist’ the title of the interview of Stephen Idams is the statement of McEwan during the promotion of his novel, Saturday (2006) which centres on the 9/11. The criticism here is subjective and blinkered. Rushdie has repeatedly clarified, ‘It needs to be said repeatedly in the West that Islam is no more monolithically cruel, no more an ‘evil empire’ than Christianity, capitalism or communism. (Rushdie, 54) The janissaries in Hamid and incorporated Islamic history
in Aslam’s writing propounds the glimpse of the rich heritage along the story telling. The stereotype of the nations and ethnic identity are exigent in the present time and well documented. ‘The logic is that there are no innocent people in a guilty nation.’ (BMG, 6) and ‘you should not imagine that we Pakistanis are all potential terrorists, just as we should not imagine that you Americans are all undercover assassins. (RF, 182) The Westerners take every Pakistani as a Taliban and bloodthirsty race. Authors propose to shun the typecast based on the nationality as the disproportion between the reason and religion has proved terminal for the rational decisions between East and West. The representation of the Islamic/Eastern characters is prejudiced in the past. In A Passage to India (1924) Dr Aziz is painted as the sexually vigorous and repressive, he is involved in the rape case easily. The brown skin or being a Muslim pinpoints him to the crime is the empirical regression based on the perception. This fear of immigrants in the US in The Reluctant Fundamentalist echoes as Lara is alone and terrified of an intruder sneaking around in Marcus’s house, the fear is projected to the burglar of Islamic nationals, but she assures herself there is no thief around. ‘Nor an Arab, Pakistani, Uzbek, Chechen, Indonesian terrorist’...the seeds of such acts sprouted from the Muslim countries. (WV, 14)

The use of the symbols in a rich context helps us to decode the culture in Pakistan. The typical use of the Peacock in Maps for Lost Lovers suggests religious openness since Peacock is a symbol of the fall in the Koran. (334) It represents the sexuality, it is something that is considered disgusting in Islam. The love between Jugnu and Chanda is allusion with the theme of the fall of man according to Quran. It helps the Satan to enter in the Paradise inadvertently. The use of the sacred flowers and birds in the Islam invokes the rich heritage of Islam. Muslims do burn lamps on graves, and the moths they attract are said by some to be angels, the spirits of the
departed by others, or lovers in disguise come to say prayers for their beloveds’ souls. The similar trope occurs in the Hamid, ‘butterflies and fireflies, they belonged to a dreamier world incompatible with the pollution and congestion of a modern metropolis. (RF, 65)

The characters in Maps for Lost Lovers represent light and darkness, enlightenment and ignorance. The characters have a name related to light. Shamas (sun), Kaukab (star), Ujala and Charag (light), Charag is light, Chanda, Mah-Jabin and Mehtaab (Moon). Suraya and Parveen (a star in the seven sisters constellation of Pleiades/ the Seven Sisters) Dipak (source of light). Kiran (a ray of light). ‘The novel’s central characters Shamas, Kaukab, Mah-Jabin, Chanda, Charag, Ujala are given names that recall the sun, the moon, stars setting up a cosmology that echoes some of the stock characteristics of the lyric.’ (Yaqin A. unpag.) Dipak is named Chakor (Moonbird) for his fascination for the moon. Chakor is a moon bird that flies high to catch the beams of moonlight and can be found deadbeat on the roof during the morning. It is precisely the reaction of a moth around the light. On the first meeting, his future wife complements him to be rightly named because her name is Mahtaab (moon).

Amputation and the loss of body part are intermittent in the novels. Rohan loses his ability to see and is blinded by the ruby. Mikal loses his index finger. Marcus loses his hand as a punishment from Taliban. He paid the price of a hand for a robbery he never committed. Kaukab’s womb is slipping. The loss signifies the inability of the character in the respective areas. As Rohan fails to see the facts, Kaukab fails as a mother. The lost son or daughters are never found in all novels. In The Blind Man’s Garden, Rohan cannot locate Jeo; his dead body arrives at home. Naheed terminates her kid. The same loss of son like a brother to Shamas faces after the disappearance of
Jugnu in *The Maps for Lost Lovers*, Marcus and Lara lose daughter and brother respectively. Zameen loses her young son who was never found regardless of continuous efforts of her grandfather, Marcus in *The Wasted Vigil*.

Aslam completed his primary education in Urdu medium. In his interview with Terry Hong in July 2013, Aslam states his gratitude for his knowledge of two languages, ‘I don't just have the twenty-six letters of English, I have the thirty-eight letters of Urdu, too... And my language is influenced by Urdu poetry, by the Koran -- which of course is Arab poetry.’ (Aslam: Interview) The addition makes his alphabet outsized; his ability to think in two languages clearly gives him an edge as a writer. Aslam’s writing is opulent with the subtlety and delicacy of the Urdu. The Urdu terms Jamun, Shaftalu, Falsa, chor batti, *vie jaaj* for aeroplane and Urdu translation of *Madame Bovary* are fused in the description. The same inclination for Urdu is discernible in the novels of Hamid. The search for the two parallel cultures in the daily life incidents can be seen in the works of the both authors. Orhan Pamuk and Rushdie attempted to bring the Urdu history in their English versions in *My Name is Red* (1998), and *Snow* (2002) and *Haroun and the Sea of the Stories* (1999) follow the storytelling methods analogous to the *Arabic Nights*. Aslam’s writing style has the poetic quality and subtlety of Urdu literature. Hamid’s *Moth Smoke* has the Dara Sikoh trial as a foil to the novel. With Urdu terms and fusing of the English and with Urdu it builds a Pakistani urban locale. Like the Ozi in the *Moth Smoke*, Aurungzeb is depicted as a stern restrictive Islamic emperor in *The Blind Man’s Garden* (264)

The novels pay homage to the classics of the literary traditions in East and West. The Classics *Aeneid, Iliad, The Epic of Gilgamesh, The Charterhouse of Parma, War and Peace*, , Shakespeare, Joyce, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, John Burger Vasko Popa., Anna Akhmatova, Marina Tsvetaeva, The hymn of the (Genesis 3:24);
from Urdu-Eastern tradition and folklores, Syed Abid Ali Abid, Munir Niazi, Qani, Hiraman and princess Padmavati, *Muraqqa-e-Chughtai, Taos Chaman ki Mynah by Shilappadikaram* and Sanskrit poetry, creates a literary rich layer in Aslam’s novels. The chapter titles are inspired by various artists. ‘You’ll Forget Love. Like Other Disaster’ is from the Anwar Saeed, a Lahore born poet. A chapter title ‘vvv’ is borrowed from the painting of the Indian artist, Bhupen Kakar and ‘The Circe’ chapter of from James Joyce *Ulysses* and Bloom wears the Koh-i-Noor in the same chapter. Sufi mystics and Zen masters, Urdu poems of Faiz and Ghalib, The Arabian Nights, Kafka, Zulfikar are implicated in Hamid’s novels. The influence of Manto is certain in Aslam and Nadeem. Mumtaz’s pen name is Zulfikar Manto and Toba Tek Singh, district in Pakistan is named after Manto’s short story is mentioned in *The Blind Man’s Garden*. It adds a rich texture to the novels and indicates similar impact.

The music is interlaced in the novels with a Rolling Stones concert in Hyde Park in July. Nusrat Ali Fateh Khan, Naseebo Lal, Umme Kulsum and Jazz music are intertwined with the story. The medium of Music is used to synthesise universal love and brotherhood. Jazz is introduced to the migrant community by Kiran’s father, and Basie is named after Count Basie, a jazz player. Nadeem Aslam deploys Qawali, a genre of devotional Sufi literature usually attached to patron shrines. The internationally renowned Pakistani singer Nusrat Ali Fateh Khan performs for the community and renditions local aesthetic form of devotional music. Sufism is a cult of the divine bond between God and music in the Indian subcontinent. All folktales present women’s repressive state, their vulnerability. Aslam uses the blend of poetry in his novel to deepen the narrative voice and inherent subjectivity. Sufism is linked to Hinduism and favours music and singing, intimate knowledge and awakening it is also ‘the opposition party of Islam’ in line with rigid Muslims. (MLL, 275)
To highlight the South Asian feature of black hair, Changez described himself ‘a distraught and hirsute Pakistani carrying an unmarked box’ (RF, 160). In his last novel the wife of Protagonist ‘instructs her waxing lady to remove all of her pubic hair’ (HFR, 130) which is similar to full body waxing of Suraya in Maps for Lost Lovers. (301)

Aslam believes on global oneness and freedom beyond borders. He opined in British Muslim Fiction ‘Nature, beauty and art belong to everyone and is without nationality.’ (Aslam, 157) The similarity between the River Murghab and Colorado and Towns named Delhi, Dinosaurs in Colorado. The similarity of the river based towns makes it less strange to each other. The universal motifs of the human emotions and the universality of the places are weighted upon. The term ‘Global Village’ was coined by Marshall MacLuhan during the 1920s. The credit was claimed by his son Eric MacLuhan. All the novels of Nadeem Aslam highlight the failure of the multicultural dream. In The Wasted Vigil, the community in the unknown town in Britain never tries to integrate with the natives. The cultures and the countries are at the intersection of the knowing each other. The environment of the Pakistani society has been exposed.

Erica and Changez, Mumtaz and Daru and Protagonist and Pretty girl, romantic linkings in Hamid’s novels are not materialised due to the power structure in Moth Smoke, the clash of civilisation and the social constraints respectively. In Aslam’s novels, The marriage of Charag with Stella is a union of the West and East. Charag’s English wife leaves him. Chanda is brought up in the England, accepts her life in Pakistan after betrothed to a cousin back home. There are no happy lovers in the story. Multicultural marriages or relationship never worked in the works discussed in the research. Their strong integration of East and West signifies the change in the
stereotyped characters. There is only one exception of Marcus and Katrina’s marriage which is a momentous alliance of coherent matrimony bound by love. Their marriage is marred by the Taliban.

The similarities exist in the structure of the novels. The plot of The Wasted Vigil begins from sentence one. The story starts moving with the arrival of Lara in Afghanistan. The story of Maps for Lost Lovers does not begin till the page seventy. Moth Smoke and The Blind Man’s Garden open with an anecdote. Maps for Lost Lovers develops gradually with the change of seasons since the chapters are divided according to the seasons. Hamid’s novels are divided into chapters with the experimental point of view in each novel. He used monologue, second person perspectives and multiple points of view in his novels. Hamid’s desire to create a nameless city with universal appeal in How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia is similar to the unnamed community in Aslam’s Maps for Lost Lovers. To describe the bracelet of Kiran like semicolons are used in a series (17) and the position of the Kaukab with her family in the photograph is presented in a square box with the name of everyone in the exact order. (453) Thus, the various writing devices are employed. The discussion on the topics above helps to understand the similarities between Mohsin Hamid and Nadeem Aslam.
II CONTRAST IN THE SELECTED NOVELS OF NADEEM ASLAM AND

MOHSIN HAMID

The dissimilarities in Nadeem Aslam and Hamid’s novels surface in the narration and characters. The characters in Hamid’s novels are ambitious young men. The old Marcus, Lara, Shamas and Kaukab are battered with the events around them and fate. The joint family or the family like the unit in *Maps for Lost Lovers* and *The Wasted Vigil, The Blind Man’s Garden* are distinctively different. Hamid’s novel does not throw any lights on the generation gap except when Fatty Chacha Daru’s home. He advises him to stay grounded reflects the changes in the aim from one generation to another. The presence of the joint family in Hamid’s novel is nonexistent. The bus driver is upset and in tears after being racially abused, When racially profiled Changez grabs tire iron ready to face the attacker ‘had my share of fights.’ (118, RF) Daru kills the moths for his pleasure and feels proud. Thus, the violence in the central character is manifested.

The predicament of women is a grave issue in Pakistan. The immigrant women have little, or no education in Pakistan is helpless in a new country. Their ignorance of the world they live in, and inadequate understanding of the English language separates them from the daily life around them since there is no communication outside their ethnic groups. The role of women is limited to the home; they barely go out except grocery shopping at Chanda’s Grocery Shop. They are assisted by their husband or sons on an excursion. Sijal Sarfraz notes that Aslam presents stereotyped characters and events to feed the image presented in the media about Islam and Pakistan, ‘Aslam endorses stereotypical images of Pakistani Muslim men. Keeping up with Orientalist traditions, men are described in relation to violence, and subjugation of women.’ (508) Pankaj Mishra in his review of Nadeem Aslam
writes that Aslam has a penchant for the conservative Muslim. (‘Post-Colonial Enchantment’ n.p.) The subjugation of women is an issue to discuss. The view of Sarfraz and Mishra are countered by other critics. As Lente notes, ‘The radical Maps For Lost Lovers was not received with so much protest against alleged ‘misrepresentations’ of Muslim communities and honour killings – quite probably because its highly artistic language and complicated constructions have brought along a different audience that does not look for ‘authentic’ accounts in works of fiction and is not a mass-market audience.’ (59)

Women with education and opinions are pigeonholed as sluts. Most of the married women follow the same chores as they would in Pakistan. The conversation of Kaukab with other women ranges from cooking method, what clothes they would like to borrow, exchange of clothes and food, matchmaking, and gossip. They are consumed by their own domestic affairs and the tiny circle of the immigrants. The group is an ethnic minority and marginalised class out of the part of the broad picture of society. The oppression of females in the domestic sphere as well in social constraints is narrated in Aslam’s novels. His female characters like Kaukab, her daughter, Mah-Jabin, Suraya, Chanda, Naheed, Zameen, Katrina are subjugated females. In contrast to the females in Nadeem’s novels, all novels women in Hamid’s novels are head strong. They play a huge part in the story, Mumtaz, the Pretty girl and Erica is determined dominant women with their choices without being pitiful victims. The liberal women are free to drive, follow their careers and go around with the man they love. Mumtaz is completely contradictory to docile, uneducated, illogical and religious Kaukab.

The classification of a Western woman by immigration is precisely poles apart from the codes applicable to Eastern women. The women are perverted, fallen,
shameless and easily available for the sexual encounter. The prostitution of the 
woman next to Kiran’s house is taken lightly by the community. One community 
member feels if she had been a woman from India or Pakistan, she would have been 
dead for the matter of honour. Her Western ethnicity protects her due to stereotyping 
the prostitution of white woman is taken for granted. Education is not easily available 
to women in Aslam’s novels. Naheed, Kaukab, Dunia and the vast majority of women 
in Pakistan and Afghanistan struggle to get an education, ‘locked up girls’ school and 
the worms eating books’ in Usha are just the example. (WV, 19) The books are used 
in rich context in *The Wasted Vigil*, Katrina pierced books with nails to hold them on 
the ceiling symbolises the constraint on the free ideas, the subjugation of the 
knowledge, science to everyone under the Taliban’s grip. Yet books manage to travel 
with visitors indicates the free spread of the ideas under a despotic regime. A young 
man reads books or around knowledgeable ‘had to be a communist like Zameen’s 
lover.’ (WV, 26) The spirit of learning is on its last legs in the town Usha. In *The 
Blind Man’s Garden*, the library is close and inoperative. Naheed began reading from 
it and is curious about the world wider than what she was brought up into. The books 
transform her views to muster the courage to get an education so she can teach 
women. The chronology of her reading suggests a reading of the 14th century in 
Christian calendar, which is a chronicle of the religious influence and wars like the 
John Wycliffe and 1429, Joan of Arc, the war of catholic against Jan Hus and religion 
based fights of kingdoms in Europe. (301-2) There is this description of events from 
Venetians at war with Milan, the University of Florence begins teaching Greek and 
Latin literature, Naheed wonders

According to the Islamic calendar, it is currently the early fifteenth century, 
the 1420s. She wonders what was occurring in the Christian lands in the early
fifteenth century of the Christian era... Were things better in Christendom ten years on from 1423? Would things be better for Pakistan and Islam in a decade? (BMG, 301-2)

This would be an interesting parallel if Islam was still in the 14\textsuperscript{th} century and the timeline before 1423 was the period of Dark Ages in the Europe. She compares dark age period to the contemporary Pakistan circumstances and waits for the renaissance.

Marriage in the novel is a forced decision of the parents since they see the early wedding in their country would result to preserve their culture. Chanda and Jugnu are not married. Shamas and Kaukab’s marriage is due to courtship; there is no choice or willing courtship in any other marriages. Mikal is rejected as the suitable partner for Naheed. ‘Islam underwrites the masculine as primary, while the feminine is almost an afterthought.’ (Geoffrey, 38) The repressive sexuality of women is in attendance. Suraya is a traditional Muslim who decides to lure Shamas’ son for the licentious affair. She offers herself as bait to get married to a man and leave him for her son back in Pakistan. Suraya is involved with Shamas sexually. Initially, the reader thinks she is affected by the affection or attraction, but her religious side does not let her enjoy the company of an interesting man and sensual pleasure. Once home from her encounter, she scrubs her body roughly to wash the stains on her sacred body. Kaukab does not take marital bliss as it is, in fact, her desire is never to be touched or feel the physical warmth from Shamas. Kaukab notes, the desire outside the reproduction is not allowed. She acquiesces based on the religious belief that if a wife does not make her husband happy, Allah will send houri for him in the Heaven. (369-70) Moore remarks, ‘In Maps, two of the three female characters to express sexual desire are killed, and the affair of the third (Kiran) is the indirect catalyst for
The sexuality is a condemnable in Islam and taken as a taboo in *Dasht-e-Tanhai*. Despite the ban on the natural feelings in a religious context, there is secret lovers and love. Ironically, it is morally correct society, Shamas and Suraya, Chhota and Kiran share a passion for each other outside the marriage. The under carpet abundance of secret affairs of teenagers exists, and adultery becomes the catalyst of the death of Chanda and Jugnu. In fact, suppression of the natural instincts brings more complex issues in the double lives of affairs.

The thought process, monologues and dialogues of the women is limited to the domestic affairs. They are not active on the bigger issues like female characters in Hamid’s novels. Mumtaz is writing in order to expose the corruption and the dark sides of the Pakistani society. Mumtaz and Katrina share the streak of rebelliousness. They confront the norms of how a woman should behave. The women in Hamid are stronger and in charge of their lives, sexuality and independent than Aslam’s. There is a clear clash between Eastern and Western ideology and progress.

The death of the female character in the *Wasted Vigil* and *The Blind Man’s Garden* are the catalyst of the religious oppression. The death of the lovers in *Maps for Lost Lovers* is driven by the religious concepts of the shame. The death of Erica is her own invention of the imaginary world with Chris. The death of the mother of the protagonist in HFR is a natural cause. The life and death in Hamid’s work are not affected by the tragic mishaps. There is no role of the terrorists and nefarious force in their lives.

Nadeem Aslam in his broader tolerance of the all religions highlights the historical facts of India and Indian civilisation, Tansen, Ram-Sita (Indian God and Goddess) temple, Gwalior (a city in India) association between India and Pakistan is active through the letters being posted to a third country, to some relative who can
post it back to its final destination. (MLL, 104-5) The tamarind tree in the Indian subcontinent is associated with Kabir, a saint revered by the Hindus and Muslims in India and Pakistan. There are characters from India, a Hindu religious priest, a Gujarati woman, Kiran and her father. Kiran was in love with Kaukab’s brother, but families never accept or approve the union. (MLL, 28) The unification of two natives from India and Pakistan in love never takes place.

Changez is wary of possible war with India on the contrary Pakistan government is accused to create a war in Kashmir ‘to distract the attention of the public who had become disaffected following that election back in 1964, the government had sent that army into Kashmir, and India had retaliated by crossing the border into Lahore.’ In Aslam’s plot. (MLL, 114-5) Kashmir conflict has been part of another novel, Shalimar the Clown (2005) develops during the political turmoil in the Kashmir, 9/11 and the attack on the Afghanistan. Hewitt unisons in the light of the recent tension between India and Pakistan ‘The changes throughout the Islamic world following the Iranian revolution and the inflow of arms and Muslim fighters for the Afghanistan conflict also led to the growth of insurgency in Kashmir against what many saw as the Indian 'occupation' and demanded widespread political change.’ (Hewitt, 290)

In The Wasted Vigil Casa recounts ‘the training camp in the jungles of Pakistani-occupied Kashmir.’ to free Kashmir. (343) Major Kyra actively train youngsters to fight for radical Islam, has a scarred face due to an explosion during ‘the war with India two years ago.’ (BMG, 33) The same issue is criticised by a young illegal refugee. The tone for the freedom movement in both nations is criticised as the Freedom for Kashmir ‘Pakistan can’t afford to feed the people it already has within its
borders, and yet it wants more people, a bigger territory. The same goes for India of course.’ (MLL, 315)

The religion is an important part of the Aslam’s novels. The discourse and critique by the characters’ de rigueur superiority and religious certainty of the Islam tug the disputes. On the dinner table, Shamas serves wine to the Stella as a friendly gesture. Kuakab infuriated with her husband’s defying action Islamic serves the daal in shoes. The family dinner to bring children and parents together is spoiled. Shamas’ attempt to mediate fails. The rejection of alcohol is similar to Hamid’s novels as discussed in the previous chapter Suraya thinks if she is nicer to her husband and helps him to control his anger and ‘…be a good Muslim, stay away from alcohol?’ it would be ideal. (MLL, 239) To her, alcohol abstain define the religious identity.

The agnostic west irritates religious inhabitants in the Pakistan and Afghanistan ‘The West has dared to ask itself the question, What begins with the God?’ (BMG, 362) The indispensable religion cues the damage done to the communities by authorities of religious body; some of the clerics and Imams are the corrupt and in position to take advantage to establish superiority over commoners. Maps for Lost Lovers covers ‘the period up to 1997 before Islamism gained a firm hold in West Yorkshire.’ (Weedon, 23) In an interview with Brace Marriane Aslam identifies himself, ‘a culturally Muslim but a non-believer.’ In the same interview he defended the role of a moderate Muslims is to raise the right issues in the chaos. He criticised the role of the radical Muslims, Osama Bin Laden who fail to do constructive works for society.

Mohsin Hamid advocates innocence of Muslims in the contemporary terrorised society in his non-fiction. The religion is not the essential part of his fiction yet Changez and Daru are conscious of religious identity. Islamic Fundamentalism in
the West is well articulated in the novels of Aslam. Radical Islamists characters of Fedella, Major Kyra, and Casa are waging war in the real term for the rise of Islam. To some extent Rohan, Kaukab, clerics and fanatics are far from basic humanity and linked to the violent Islam. Muslims love Islam. But Muslims hate fundamentalism. (WV, 312) Militant Islam is a counter turn on certain interpretations of fundamental Islam and a distinguished reaction to modernity especially, the globalising, intrusive, consumerist culture. The 9/11 is seen through the lens of the native of the Afghanistan, the terrorists are innocent men destined to paradise, ‘the blameless Muslims who died in the attacks of the Twin Towers: Allah has sent them to Paradise.’ (Italics in original, WV, 75) Several prophets and twenty-six prophets are part of the Kuran. Naheed is one of the ancestors of Mohammad’s daughter Fatima. Each time the name of Mohammad, the creator of the Islam is with the salutation in the similar fashion of the Quran, ‘Prophet, peace be upon him’ the phrase is repeated right through the novel. (MLL, 42)

The metaphorical element is a reminder of the magic realism. The bullets are fired at the status of Buddha at Marcus’ house. The idol seems to open eyes and dozens of bullets could not disfigure the face. (WV, 42: 141) Aslam skilfully inserts the supernatural elements in his work. Buddha with infinite eyes occurs in The Wasted Vigil, the luminous hands of the Jugnu, the transformation of Leila into a bird in his novella Laila in the Wilderness (2013). The experimental transformation and superpowers to his characters add more credibility to the readers.

The assimilation to the West in terms of the relationship with the native people can be seen as a bridge between East and West. There are relationships between the immigrants and the natives in The Wasted Vigil. The very first affiliating relationship between East and West is through Mikal and his attempts to save the American
soldier. He wants redemption from the killing of the American soldiers, unaware of the fact that the man he is trying to save is the elder brother of the American soldier and develops the affinity towards the brother of the soldier. (BMG, 393) The use of the charcoal to deliver a message to him can make a point that the language barrier is not a hurdle to communicate if both sides are willing to make a dialogue. Mikal thinks about W.B. Yeats’s poem Naheed had quoted. (BMG, 393) Out of penitence after killing two American soldiers resolves to save an innocent American who happens to be the brother of the same soldier he killed. The events come to a full circle in the novel. During their journey towards Megiddo he becomes the protector of the American soldier and develops affection towards everything and everyone. Mikal comes to the terms with the torture and detention he had undergone. The American soldier is in search of his brother’s killer. Mikal, the man he aims to kill, becomes a medium to save his own life. Thus, it brings an end to the series of the revenge prejudices and bitter rage. Michael is ‘Mikal in Islam.’ (BMG, 201) This relationship symbolises the complex relationship between East and West which accomplishes a reconciling ground.

While he is at the Bagram prison, Christ appears in Bihzad’s dreams several times. He is seen with ‘carrying the Koran in his right hand, the Bible in the left.’ (WV, 62) In Father Mede’s school, Urdu prayers and the Bible get same importance. ‘The Muslims say they revere Christ.’ Qatrina had said, ‘pointing out the fact that Mary is the only woman mentioned in the Koran, and that Jesus is mentioned more times in there than Muhammad.’ (WV, 352) Said thinks, the Western representation of Islam in classic texts is prejudiced. He discussed the example of Dante’s *The Divine Comedy*. In sustaining the common teaching and appearance of the Jesus in Koran, Said stated, ‘Even though the Koran specifies Jesus as a prophet. Dante
chooses to consider the great Muslim philosophers and king as having been fundamentally ignorant of Christianity’ (Said, 69) To symbolise the oneness of the three continents Marcus, Lara and James think their togetherness is faithful to ‘William Blake prophecy! America, Europe and Asia.’ (WV, 210) The prophecy of William Blake about the Europe, Africa and Asia as the unified body is part of the famous prophecies in his book The Song of Los. According to a critic, this is a book on comparative religion. (Mee, 122) The book clearly shows the faith enthusiasm of Blake, covering the history of the religion. The intersection, a meeting point of the East and West is the focus in The Wasted Vigil and the Blind Man’s Garden as it approaches the climax of the novels.

Aslam actually binds the origin of the mankind, he notes that the whole of humanity is one creator and the first man was created from the various parts of the world. ‘His hand was made from the soil of the East, his breast from the soil of the Mecca, his feet from the soil of the West.’ (MLL. 42) The middle class Pakistani migrant family in England is the central theme of The Map of the Lost Lovers. Marcus and Lara’s life in Afghanistan and Naheed, Mikal and Rohan’s lives in Pakistan traces marginalised people in the backdrop of war. Dasht-e-Tanhaii inhabitants are chiefly of working class; odd job people and taxi drivers. (46, MLL) Higher education is a harbinger of the better social standing and their space in the immigrant land. Thus immigrant kids are expected to perform better in the academic life. Men with menial jobs and in a constant struggle to keep the immigration dream alive expects a better job for their kids. The education in immigrants is not high, Jugnu, aspiring doctors of the second generation, have higher education and white collar jobs. The kitchen, the house and the suburbs around Dasht-e-Tanhaii are the settings. The narration never takes place any other part outside the town. In Cosmopolitanism In Contemporary
British Fiction, Fiona McCulloch noted, ‘Echoing the despair of transnationals, Aslam draws attention to global capitalism’s culpability in generating an ever-widening poverty gap where its victims are further impoverished by the constraints of religious discourse.’ (McCulloch, 103) The village, communities and towns with closer internal interference of the neighbour and society is feared in the Aslam’s works. Daru, Ozi, Mumtaz, Pretty girl and Protagonists belongs to the upper middle class family in Lahore. The food in the Mohsin Hamid is westernised, chicken-pesto-in-sun-dried-tomato wraps, ketchup, soy sauce, lychee juice where Kaukab prepares food, all home-made naan in her kitchen. Nusrat Ali Fateh Khan is re-mixed and clubby in The Reluctant Fundamentalist whereas in Aslam’s Nusrat Ali Fateh Khan is revered artist and an artistic medium to convey immigrant’s pain. His inspirations are drawn from the ‘classic theme of Islamic literature: the quest for the beloved. Aslam maintained that The book [The Maps for Lost Lovers] wouldn’t be what it is without 1001 Nights, the Koran, Bihzad. (Interview with M. O’ Connor) Aslam is inclined to classic references; Mohsin Hamid’s western perspective is part of the narrative. The reference to popular art forms like movies, music and other popular symbols are in abundance in Mohsin Hamid. One can take it as a mighty attempt to pay homage to the classics of the literary traditions, and it adds a rich texture of the books reference. In Milan Kundera in The Unbearable Lightness of Being (1984) Tereza feels,

Being in a foreign country means walking a tightrope high above the ground without the net afforded a person by the country where he has his family, colleagues, and friends, and where he can easily say what he has to say in a language he has known from childhood. (27)
The country the authors are hailing from has a colonised past. The impact of the English language in the colonised countries is at all times measured high. The English proficiency was limited to the upper class of society. Hamid’s grandfather was a successful lawyer with a good command on the English language. Thus, it becomes easy to deduct the fact that he is from an affluent background. The wealthy looking Pakistani woman is vocal about the ignorant people tarnishing Pakistan’s image because she was attacked by a white man, ‘I who speak better English than him, educated as I was at Cambridge, my sons studying at Harvard right now’ is a female counterpart of Changez who claims his language superiority over a female officer at the immigration. (MLL, 443) On his first homecoming in Lahore after 6 years in Stanford, Hamid is not able to speak Urdu. He endorsed it in ‘Once upon a life’ an essay in *Discontent and Its Civilisation*, ‘..my first language would be a second language for me from then on.’ (8) Aslam humbly accepted his limited use of English since his arrival in England. (Interview with Hasan) The non-English background is not a barrier. ‘Writers of ‘symbolic’ texts, on the other hand, are more aware of the inevitable necessity of using the native as a mediator of European desires. Grounded more firmly and securely in the egalitarian imperatives of Western societies’ (Janmohamed, 66) The characters in Hamid speak polished impeccable English, they are outgoing and easily mingling with the hip society. Shamas is the Director of the Community Relations Council He deals with the immigrants and explain the official procedure to them ‘who are unemployable in two languages, loathed in several, who know no English or are too intimidated to walk up to someone white-skinned for help.’ (273)

The migrants have an issue with the expertise of English language. Anglophone characters belong to the second generation of the immigrants. The
inability to speak English in the first generation migrant is stressed in the Nadeem Aslam. ‘According to the Office for National Statics, 2011 Census indicates, ‘Of the foreign-born residents who had been in the UK for 5-10 years and 11-30 years, those born in Bangladesh (43% and 46% respectively) and Pakistan (50% and 48% respectively) had the lowest proportions in employment.’ (The Office of Statistics, 15) The report of November 2013 indicates there are 116514 Pakistanis who cannot understand or speak English. (English Language Proficiency by Ethnic Group: Office of National Statics 2013) When Stella, his son Charag’s wife visits Kaukab and Shamas, Kaukab makes an extra effort to look presentable. She practices sentences to speak in a language Stella would understand. Her preliminary efforts to familiarise with English and her aspirations to master the language are reflected in the notebook. In which she attempts to write down words, phrases and proverbs she overhears without completely catching every word such as ‘Heaven is other people.’ (MLL, 45) When she hears the cuss words from her kids’ speech, and wonders to speak same phrases is ‘to sound more like a person who belonged to this country.’ (MLL, 374) During the visit to her sons in prison, Chanda’s mother is told not to speak ‘Paki language’ ‘Speak English or shut up’ (250) Nazneen in Monika Ali’s Brick Lane decides to learn English to connect to the main stream society.

The current building of the mosque in Dasht-e-Tanhaii was a property of a woman who went insane after losing her son. In England, her husband convinced her for hysterectomy after doctors’ suggestion. None of them had proper English to understand what hysterectomy means. Later their son was charged and killed by police. In a shock, mother became insane. It may be a far-fetched instance but accurately defines the language barrier. Mikal cannot talk to the American soldier, as ‘Vere is gurl? (BMG, 355) When he is reading maps with Jeo, Mikal reads each
English word very slowly ‘syllable by syllable. Sometimes letter by letter. ’ (BMG, 34) The constant language parallel the narration in the two languages essentiate new place from the language struggle of an immigrant.

To conclude, the chapter brings out the aspects which are comparable in respect of the selected novels. The similarities are accessed how the immigrants and the reception is dealt with. It further describes the role of women, the religiousness of characters, the language and structure of the novels. The part two of the chapter highlights the contrast in the novels, in connection of the female characters, the class these characters belong to and the impact of English language in the writing of the authors.