NEGOTIATING MULTIPLE IDENTITIES POST-9/11: HYBRIDITY AND TRANSFORMATION IN
THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST, HOME BOY AND THINNER THAN SKIN

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in
Linguistics and Literature

DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES, FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
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To

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No part of this thesis has been submitted anywhere else for any other degree. This thesis is submitted to the Department of Humanities Air University Islamabad in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Field of Linguistics and Literature, Department of Humanities Air University Islamabad.

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Date:
DEDICATION

This thesis is blessedly dedicated to all my family members, who have been compassionately kind to me, all my life.
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ABSTRACT

The present thesis seeks to explore and analyse three select representative Pakistani diasporic pieces of fiction: Mohsin Hamid’s *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007), H. M. Naqvi’s *Home Boy* (2009) and Uzma Aslam Khan’s *Thinner Than Skin* (2012) written in the backdrop of 9/11. The research focus is on how hybrid identity (of the Pakistani targeted affectees in the novels) is transformed in the background of 9/11/2001 attacks. The novels negotiate diverse and divisive identities resulting in the transformation of individuals. Unlike a wave of fictional themes such as trauma, fear, disillusionment, *Islamophobia*, Orientalism, and so forth, these three novels attempt to portray the resultant multiple and conflictive identities in the post-9/11 chaotic world. Postcolonial theory, featuring cultural hybridity, has been invoked as a theoretical framework with particular emphasis on theorists like Frantz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), Edward W. Said’s *Orientalism* (1978) and Homi K. Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture* (1994). However, the researcher probes and substantiates the strategy of disengagement and detachment from the U.S., geographically and ideologically. The theorists and a host of fiction writers have argued engagement and reconciliation between the East and the West, whereas the current discourse in the selected texts reiterates disengagement for greater self-reliance and autonomy. Even Frantz Fanon advocates engagement and reconciliation. Cultural hybridity and transitional transformation are the dominant discourses to be argued in the case of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist, Home Boy and Thinner Than Skin* in the post-9/11 socio-political and literary milieu.
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PLAGIARISM REPORT
1.1. Introduction

The September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States, commonly referred to as 9/11, resulted in the most substantial number of 2,996 casualties of any single documented terrorist attack in history (Ender & Sandler, 2005). Intensifying the devastation of the event, Hoffman (2002) states that the collapse of the Twin Towers has formed the most recognised image of the attacks, and resulted in the majority of the casualties. The transnational and transcontinental nature of the 9/11 attacks established a transcultural response and created a conflict, including the issue between Islam and the West (Munthe, 2005; Geaves, 2004). The size and scale of the event and its immediate findings initiated several moves, including the issue of repositioning and relocating the subjects of home and identity. As a result, the whole scenario contributed to the identification of the 9/11 attackers—exclusively. This decisive question became central to the discourse of fiction (9/11, or, more precisely, post-9/11 fiction) produced afterwards by the overseas’ Pakistani diaspora, specifically, American.

Post-9/11 fiction in the English language is as important and influential as the magnitude of the event, itself. No matter to what extent and degree the fiction has encompassed the event and its ramifications, its bearing is irrevocably institutionalised. That is why, 9/11 is considered as an Age (more specifically, an Era, e.g., A.D. and B.C.), leaving deep-rooted imprints and reflecting excessively across every field of human interest, study, and research. The 9/11 incident has invited, stimulated, negotiated and promoted fiction across the globe and received critical judgements for furthering research in the domain under discussion, including Pakistan.
The tragedy of 9/11 in the U.S. altered the sequence and development of contemporary-current history, alongside reinventing and redefining identity and distinctiveness of the characters, mainly in fiction, more than ever before, tiling the way for change and granting new dimension(s) to post-9/11 fiction around the world. Perspectives and perceptions may vary in content and style, linguistic and literary standpoint, yet the fact remains that the rich literature produced in fiction (in the meantime) is of an awe-inspiring magnitude and import, because it opens avenues of inquiry and research for enriching the 9/11 fiction. Such fiction spotlights physical, psychological, and emotional unease and anxiety. Nevertheless, it also paves the way for emerging immigrant, anti-conquest and resistance narratives for transforming the characters, who experience the outcome of the 9/11 circumstance, and for understanding the self in response to a discourse which distorts the self.

Post-9/11 life, as portrayed in fiction, is principally essential for grasping critical opinion(s) of and about the Euro-American attitudinal outlook, and their domestic discords. Also, it reasonably covers the gap created by 9/11 between the East and the West, geographically and ideologically. Thus, the politics of trauma, the rhetoric of terror and terrorism, the language and intent of misconception of/about Muslims and Islam, and the concern of identity are presented distortedly. David Simpson (2006) observes that:

> Many who died [in the towers] were indeed foreign nationals, who imaged a kind of global diversity, but…in a distinctly American drama…[t]hey died as employees of global capital in a place telling of its dedication to trade and profit. (p. 62)

Victims of the event are portrayed as American nationals in post-9/11 fiction. American independence and sovereignty are narrated as being challenged violently; subsequently, forcing Euro-America into ‘War on Terror’. Nonetheless, the researcher focuses on the subjects of hybrid identity (9/11 circumstance) and gradual transformation (post-9/11 condition) in the novels under research in the Pakistani context. Thus, the present research investigates how the 9/11 strikes participate in sorting out the identity crisis and promote indigenisation. Exploring this dimension of
research in the combined study of the three novels (in the title) is ground-breaking. Adding to such hypothesis, Pakistani literature in English is mainly classified as post-independence/postcolonial literature and post-9/11 literature. Post-9/11 literature, particularly fiction, emerged as a challenge to the centrality of Western fiction and its attendant stereotyping of Islam and the Muslims. Therefore, post-9/11 Pakistani fiction writers received global acclaim due to centering the subjects of home and identity, Islamophobia, Orientalism, Occidentalism, counter-Orientalism, ‘the language of Islam’, alienation, and other related topics. The novels (with added ground-breaking evidence) under review stand out as at par with Western fiction readership to encounter their criticality and foreground approaches, to resolve the dilemma of identity clash and double consciousness.

The use of the tellingly distinctive term ‘Pakistani diasporic fiction’ is essential for two reasons:

(i) To identify it as fiction by overseas’—American—citizens of Pakistani origin who have lived through the post-9/11 tragedy, and continue to experience its Islamophobic aftermath; and,

(ii) To distinguish it from Pakistani English creative and critical writings—fiction, verse, journalism and research work.

Similarly, the Pakistani diaspora narratives under thesis experienced and related the pre and post-9/11 conditions, explicitly. As the principal characters in the said fiction lived through the traumatising tragedy, they potentially convey the magnitude of the event and its shocking consequences because of having their attachment to Pakistani identity. The theme of hybridity reinforces pre-9/11 cultural assimilation of the characters into the American society and describes their socio-economic stability therein. Following the post-9/11 sordid circumstances for the Pakistani expatriates in the novels, they had to revisit indigenous identity for a return to their cultural roots and historical origin.

1.2. Thesis Statement

Post-9/11 Pakistani diasporic fiction in English covers the issue of identity politics alongside other themes of national and international interest and relevance. The identity
of Pakistani expatriates is maligned in the wake of 9/11 strikes, thereby, earning a label of extremism and terrorism for Pakistanis living abroad. The current problem about negotiating multiple identities in the post-9/11 scenario is taken up by Pakistani diasporic English fiction writers with varied perspectives and prospects. The present thesis highlights the concerns of identity politics (subject in question) in Mohsin Hamid’s *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007), H. M. Naqvi’s *Home Boy* (2009) and Uzma Aslam Khan’s *Thinner Than Skin* (2012). The present thesis also explores and examines progressive transformation in the selected literary texts.

1.3. **Research Objectives**

Following are the objectives of the thesis:

- To probe the effects of 9/11 on English fiction in general and Pakistani diasporic English fiction in particular, with particular reference to *The Reluctant Fundamentalist, Home Boy and Thinner Than Skin*.
- To investigate the subjects of hybridity and transformation in the novels. Also, to explore the cause(s) and rationale of transformation in the narratives.
- To research the justification for detachment and disengagement from the American lifestyle to Pakistani culture and society in the triad of the novels.

1.4. **Research Questions**

The study seeks to respond to the following questions:

- How is the issue of identity addressed and resolved in the novels?
- How is hybrid identity turned into transformation over the course of time and place in the novels? Also, what is its significance in the narratives?
- What is the cause and effect of detachment and disengagement, in the titled novels, from the thriving American lifestyle to indigenous Pakistani culture and society?
1.5. Conceptual Framework and Methodology

Postcolonial theory featuring cultural hybridity is applied as a theoretical framework to the present thesis. Frantz Fanon, Edward W. Said, and Homi K. Bhabha are the foremost theorists whom the researcher dwells on, to justify the theme of cultural hybridity in the mentioned narratives. These theorists substantively contribute to the postcolonial theory regarding hybrid identity and discourse of resistance. Nevertheless, the meaning and message of transformation in the novels under research is an innovative strategy that is not being debated by any of the said theorists. Testing and verifying the argument of detachment and disengagement is the focal point on which the researcher concentrates. In a nutshell, while theorising the existing research, a balanced blend of postcolonial theory (of hybridity) and ground-breaking domain (of transformation) are the foundation for moulding the argument.

Essentially, the current study employs a qualitative research paradigm that concentrates on organising and carrying out the research along the following lines:

(i) Reading and reviewing the identity politics in the backdrop of 9/11 strikes and its aftermath, in connection with the three narratives under research;

(ii) Reading and interpreting postcolonial theory highlighting cultural hybridity, with focus on Frantz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), Edward W. Said’s *Orientalism* (1978), and Homi K. Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture* (1994), for analysing the said novels;

(iii) Examining and applying transformation as a way out from American-led cultural hybridity in the novels, and testify indigenisation as a solution to the issue at hand; and,

(iv) Based on the given readings, a detailed analysis is provided in the core chapters followed by conclusions and recommendations, objectively.

Thus, to test and verify the hypothesis of transforming multiple identities in the said novels, the narrative data collected from secondary sources are examined and analysed, critically, through interpretive approach, to probe the project. The approach interprets the data (of the novels) through an analysis of plotlines, thematic structures, and socio-cultural referents, in order to arrive at a logical conclusion. These meanings are to be
analysed and interpreted concurrently in a transitional period to the narratives under research. As qualitative research goes through the process of data analysis, it engages in a detailed description of what is discovered from the analysis of the novels, classifying the information for the readers (discussing relevant themes), and provides an interpretation of the findings in the light of the literature and its theoretical perspective. Therefore, the method covers every stage of study ranging from conceptualisation of research to data collection and the analysis of texts under reference. The research pattern and design followed is A.P.A. (American Psychological Association), 6th edition, July 2009.

1.6. Chapter Division

The overall plan of the thesis is divided into six chapters.

Chapter 1: Introduction: This chapter covers the overall layout and design of the present thesis in brief.

Chapter 2: Literature Review: An Overview: This chapter reviews the corpus of post-9/11 fiction written in the English language, relevant critical inputs and insights, and highlights the scope and significance of the three novels.

Chapter 3: Fanon, Said and Bhabha’s perspective on hybridity vis-à-vis the Researcher’s Model of Transformation: This chapter explains the theory of cultural hybridity concerning the said theorists and their seminal works mentioned. That too underscores the need and importance of transformation as an outlet from cultural hybridity.

Chapter 4: Hybridity in The Reluctant Fundamentalist, Home Boy and Thinner Than Skin: This chapter applies cultural hybridity as a theoretical framework to the select narratives. The socio-cultural fusion of the main characters (in the American system and society) is underlined as a focal pattern of this chapter.
Chapter 5: Post-9/11 Transformation in The Reluctant Fundamentalist, Home Boy and Thinner Than Skin: A Paradigm Shift: The chapter highlights the need and importance of cultural transformation, that is, a return (of notable characters in the novels) to Pakistani socio-cultural roots and historical mooring. Also, it underscores the institutionalised bigotry of the U.S., in the wake of 9/11 strikes, that finally leads to the weaning of protagonists from the American hegemonic system and society.

Chapter 6: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations: The chapter summarises (analytically) the central themes and patterns discussed in the core chapters along with recommendations in the light of findings of the current thesis. That too answers the research questions being posed in Chapter 1.

1.7. Rationale and Significance of the Study

The study’s significance lies in the scope of the post-9/11 English fiction in general and Pakistani diasporic English fiction in particular. A distinct and distinguishable study and research of The Reluctant Fundamentalist, Home Boy, and Thinner Than Skin are of related and relevant significance and value in the Pakistani context. This research signifies the need and importance of locating and relocating multiple identities in these novels, about 9/11-and-post-9/11 events. Also, the research pinpoints, notably and substantially, the implications and import of hybridity and transformation in the said novels. The research, while spotlighting Pakistani culture and society as juxtaposed to the American way of living implies similar critical concerns and findings that eventually lead to transformation. So, this study is noteworthy because of its rational disengagement from the grasp of American socio-cultural imperialism to Pakistani national and cultural identity. Therefore, this research largely substantiates the significance and rationale of the ground reality of the event and seeks solutions to the problems involved. In the ongoing situation, global issues of human concerns affecting their lives, are of higher gravity and relevance than individual and domestic disputes. That is why, the research has globalistic implications and applications for insightfully discerning the American consumeristic system that distorts the self; and, consequently, leading to socio-cultural metamorphosis through a fictional narrative.
1.8. Conclusion

In a nutshell, the current chapter synopsises and conceptualises the core substance of this thesis, while underlining a way out from cultural hybridity to cultural transformation in the light of postcolonial theorists mentioned above. This chapter accentuates (in brief) how the conflated identities of the protagonists in the fictional narratives (under thesis) are transformed in the context of post-9/11 tragedy and turmoil. Thus, this hypothetical chapter is the foundation for the following chapters which, in turn, justifies and explains the current argument.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: AN OVERVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter attempts to cover a full-size and notable mass of creative and critical writings about 9/11, especially fiction about its technical and artistic attributes. The inadequacy of this fiction in the English language is elaborated critically by highlighting its limitations, scope and significance, and global projection and implications. In the light of the analytical views of the post-9/11 critics and reviewers, it is observed that fiction produced after the 9/11 miserably lacks what it tried to claim and contain. The substance of the post-9/11 fiction says the least about the event, itself; it instead projects traumatic and stressful narratives, perplexing the reader between the myth and reality. The reality of the 9/11 event is undesirably mythologised. The actual representation of the reality is yet to be discovered and discussed. Trauma, domesticity, personal accounts, marital relations, demonisation and dehumanisation of individuals and institutions, and filial-familial relationships sway the said fiction. Likewise, the language used is inadequate to accord with and justify the 9/11 fiction. The fusion of language, with perspectives and prospects of representation distance it from the 9/11 reality, thereby preventing its faithful narration. Therefore, this muddle of content and representation confounds the 9/11 literary purview, especially, the novel. Dominic Head (2008) is of the view that “the illusiveness of the terrorist’s psyche implies an alien and resistant otherness that seems to make the novel out belonging to a very different camp” (p. 106). The quote conveys that the post-9/11 novel does not live up to the extent of the event and succumbs to surrender.
“The historical significance of 9/11 appears relatively assured in that it provides us with a convenient starting date for the twenty-first century in that so many of the decade’s most important events have been triggered by the attacks” (Randall, 2011, p. 1). Nonetheless, no telling and evocative expression come up, except terror, trauma, and tension in post-9/11 fiction. Martin Randall (2011) further observes and clarifies that “if art is to continue to wrestle with the implications and meanings of 9/11 perhaps one must look beyond already familiar discourses of tragedy, mourning and redemption and acknowledge less conventional representations” (p. 93). The analysis communicates that post-9/11 fiction does not fulfil fully the purpose assigned to, or expected of it.

David Holloway (2008), while referring to “early 9/11 novel[s]” states that the 9/11 novel replicates history as a traumatic acquaintance and spin around narcissism, individual self-reflection and narrative internalisation, rerouting, and suppression (p. 107). The diagnostic judgement reveals that the 9/11 fiction is, by and large, disoriented and disordered, recurrently, and brooks no laxity in doing so. Christina Rickli (2009) goes beyond what Holloway views as traumatic, and differentiates between three subcategories: texts that include 9/11 as a destabilising shocking component that is never unambiguously represented but plagues the texts as an engraved memory; texts that refer to 9/11 as a constituent of narrative misrepresentation, without allowing it to enter a larger narrative space; and those texts that immediately focus on 9/11. All the three subsections vex the situation and partake the least in the meaning-making process of the 9/11 fiction. Reminiscences of the 9/11 disaster and disorder are misrepresented without permitting the fiction to participate in any meaning-making process. This chapter also examines the 9/11 fiction with various critical methods and approaches for an all-inclusive grasp and comprehension. For that matter, literary and critical texts are brought to light for thorough consideration, and the texts under reference are excluded (with their detailed analysis in chapter 4 and 5) from the continuing tenuous discourse of conflict, tension, trauma and domestic discords.

The current chapter underlines the exclusion of three novels, that is, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, *Home Boy* and *Thinner Than Skin*, from the on-going discourse as being definitive in portraying hybridity vis-à-vis its visible and viable transformation. A specific case is made for the novels under reference in the Pakistani diasporic English fiction, and it investigates how these novels are discernibly distinct from other works.
of fiction in English. The novels under analysis are exceptions in a sense, for they join in problematizing the situation by extending hybridity (see chapter 4) in individual and collective capacities, thus, resulting in deliberated and well-thought-out transformation (see chapter 5). Transformation-propelled thought and action go parallel in characters, plots, language and themes, for resolving the identity crisis which is thought of as a prominent characteristic of the 9/11 fiction.

In a nutshell, the present chapter stresses how the three novels under argument are different and definitive from the corpus of 9/11 fiction in the English language, regarding, focussing identity crisis and consequently the following transformation. Protagonists in all the three narratives (willingly) merge into the American system and society with the hope to secure a stable future for themselves. However, in the later part of the novels, after 9/11 attacks, their main characters disengage themselves from the neoliberal and neoimperial system that they were part of. Furthering their repugnance and reverting to their indigenous Pakistani identity, in the existing context, the researcher concentrates on their transformed character traits. This innovative research is being carried out in the combined study of the three novels, in the context of the 9/11 attacks and their aftermaths.

2.2. 9/11 and “War on Terror”

September 11, 2001 happens to be one of the momentous events in the history of the U.S. ever since its War of Independence (1776-1783), the Civil War (1861-1865), the Great Economic Recession (of 1930s), World War II (1939-1945), and the Cold War (1945-1990), as it globally changed the course of time and clime. A series of traumatic attacks on the U.S. homeland left close to three thousand people dead and scores injured in a single day. Subsequently, the 9/11 strikes brought about a historic rupture in the global geosociology: socio-cultural, political economy, the geostrategic and geopolitical scenario. Epochal and apocalyptic, the event also reshaped American foreign policy and international relations. All walks of life were impacted, including trade and commerce, international politics, economics, media, history, people-to-people relationships, and above all, literature. All the above-said disciplines responded and reacted promptly. However, the extent of the magnitude of their rejoinders was variously experienced and documented.
The Twin Towers were the targeted symbols of the sole American superpower and international imperialism-cum-corporate capitalism. Since the 9/11 event took place in America and was considered as an attack on the global superpower, the impact was equally felt and recorded globally by all means and channels of human observation, interest, and understanding. David Holloway (2008) observes: “from the very beginning, ‘9/11’ and ‘the so-said war on terror’ was so appropriated by storytelling and mythmaking that events themselves became more or less indivisible from their representation, or simulations” (p. 5). Thus, the 9/11 event was so pervasively employed that it left indelible imprints on all walks of human life, regardless of its consequences.

Because of the magnitude of the event and its attendant impact, each institution was so motivated and affected, that without discoursing the event, every other aspect of life became considerably insignificant. 9/11 and its aftermath became the focal point of concern for further exploration and research. Art, in all its forms and manifestations, was spectacular in accepting, experiencing and projecting the transition and reorientation.

2.3. The Cultural and Literary Rejoinder

Hence, the cultural rejoinder to the 9/11 attacks and post-9/11 socio-political climate subsumes works of art and design, music, film, theatre, television, and literature, both fiction and non-fiction. The resultant literature includes all popular genres like poetry, drama, and fiction in the English language, globally. It investigates the ways and means by which the literary genres have participated in epitomising, embodying and elucidating the tragedy, with their different analytical lenses. This has been either a historical literary rupture or continuity of literary convention, focally, neocolonialism (the economic and political policies by which a great power indirectly maintains or extends its influence over other areas or people) and neoinperialism (the practice of using capitalism, globalisation and cultural imperialism to influence a developing country in lieu of direct military control). For the construction of meaning and message, a variety of realistic and figurative approaches are employed, resonating individual and collective lives even outside the U.S. The epoch-making event was seen and recorded in literature from different perspectives, locally and globally, seen as a turning point in
reshaping the future of the world. In doing so, literature has critiqued the political discourse, which reduces the complex challenges to the simplistic bare bones of a terrorist attack on the U.S. homeland. As a counter-narrative, creative literature, in different contexts, has offered alternative possibilities for understanding and explaining the event. Shorter forms of literary expression include essays, personal accounts and anonymous poetry. Fiction appeared later.

Poetry (written in the context of 9/11) entails themes of despair, disillusionment, bravery, steadfastness of America, and so forth. Some earlier poets also attempted to bridge the gap between individual loss and greater political upheaval. Chiefly, it is sentimental portraying sympathy and empathy, alike. For example, Allen Cohen and Clive Matson’s anthology of poetry edited in 2002, _An Eye for an Eye Makes the Whole World Blind: Poets on 9/11_, purposely attempted, as its editor asserts, to express through poetry: “a...historical record of these monumental events” which were “different” from that set forth by “corporate controlled media, presidency, and Congress [sic]” (p. i). Sam Hamill’s poetic collection of 2003, _Pets Against the War_ celebrates its “rising tide of voices” which “the Bush people” were unsuccessful to “quell” (p. viii). Galway Kinnell’s long poem _When the Towers Fell_ from the poetic collection _Strong is Your Hold_ (2006), highlights the state of aphasia and the scarcity of articulation about the 9/11 attacks, on account of their enormity and atrocity. Robert Pinsky’s “Anniversary” from _The Best of the Best American Poetry_, also tells the same tale of being linguistically dumb about narrating the 9/11 event. J. D. McClatchy’s “Jihad” speaks of the identity issue and the notion of “other” as well as “othering”. Some of the well-known poetic works are: Seamus Heaney’s _Anything Can Happen_ (2004), Wisława Szymborska’s _Photograph from September 11_ (2002), Frank Bidart’s _Curse_ (2002), Ben Lerner’s _Didactic Elegy_, Richard Howard’s _Fallacies of Wonder_ (2001), Dionne Brand’s _Inventory_ (2006), Thomas Flynn’s _Bikeman: An Epic Poem_ (2008), and Ismail Khalidi’s _Routine Procedure(s) 2: Prayer Beads of Cold Sweat or Driving While Izlaamic_ (2006).

Conclusively, post-9/11 poetry is tacit about consciously considering and sensibly resolving the issue(s) coming into view, after that, nor does it voice a definitive sense and significance about it for the global readership. Thus, it is purpose-and-pleasure free.
Ostensibly, it is evasive of the reality and attempts to jeopardise identification and speech, related and relevant to the 9/11 literary discourse. Though, for the most part, poetry has tried to diagnose and examine the truth beyond and above the political and partisan rhetoric, it is abortive in its approach and analysis, as well as in content and language.

The drama presented for theatrical display has issues of conflict, clash, and encounter with terror and fear. At times, politicians are projected as significant characters. The following are a few famous plays written and published in this context: David Hare’s *Stuff Happens* (2005), Wajahat Ali’s *The Domestic Crusaders* (2005), Sam Shepard's *The God of Hell* (2004), Anne Nelson’s *The Guys* (2001), Neil LaBute's *The Mercy Seat* (2002), Craig Wright’s *Recent Tragic Events* (2003), Theresa Rebeck and Alexandra Gersten-Vassilaros' *Omnium Gatherum* (2003), Ismail Khalidi’s *Truth Serum Blues* (2005) and Giannina Braschi’s *United States of Banana* (2011).

Such plays grapple with pseudo-representation of the event and do not echo its reasonable resolution. Most, if not all, the plays reflect comic and satirical themes and tropes. Dramatic description and literary narration are scarcely present in these plays. Likewise, they can be categorised as distant from the dramatic and cinematic convention of the past. That is why they did not meet the artistic and technical requirements of drama as a literary genre. Later it was realised to get acquainted with the evident and substantial issues of the event. However, traumatic aftereffects of the apocalypse enveloped the drama for quite long. Thus, the overall effect of such drama is sadly bleak and miserably forlorn, as it does not present any real artistic and technical features of the genre concerning the event.

Media discourse also had a role to play to cover the occasion and its fallout. “Early evaluation of the U.S. media coverage of the 9/11 attacks was replete with critics lining up to accuse American journalism of abandoning its republican obligations in a rush to wage war on ‘terror’” (Holloway, 2008, p. 58). A notable critic on Media Studies, McChesney (2002) observes that “whereas Americans once tended to be misinformed about world politics…now they are uninformed”, a state of affairs, he wrote, that underscores “a deep contradiction between the legitimate informational needs of a
democratic society and the need for the profit of the corporate media” (p. 99). The corporate culture patronised and sponsored media cartel explained the 9/11 event in its terms and interest. It thus blurred the truth, creating a make-believe situation. Corporate owned media discourse misled the general public and manipulated the popular sentiments of the masses, serving the corporate financial needs. Also, it reshaped, somewhat misshaped the drift of adverse opinion, causing an antagonistic outcome. Thus, the media also failed to fulfil its responsibility of realistic journalism regarding authentic information and factual analysis.

Consequently, the post-9/11 literature in the English language concentrated on themes, like trauma, anguish, gloom, depression, desperation, filial-familial relationships, identity crises, the valour of the U.S. and its alliance, triumph over the guilty, division between the East and West, Orientalism, counter-Orientalism, Occidentalism, and so forth. In a nutshell, it is diverse in its real aims and objectives, the valid obligation of interpretation, and need(s) of the hour and global readers. Partiality is its hallmark, presenting the West as the victim. Thus, the overall picture portrayed in and by it did not cover and connect with the truth behind the event—exceptions apart.

The related fiction has invited much attention of its large-scale readership. The magnitude of fiction-writing was prompt and prolific. Themes and motifs such as terror and trauma, despair, aggression, conflictive identities, cultural difference, the thesis of “Us” and “Them”, family relationships, domesticity, disillusionment, and exploitation are recurrently reflected in it. These themes are best reflected in notable works like Monica Ali’s *Brick Lane* (2003), Iain Banks’ *Dead Air* (2002), David Llewellyn's *Eleven* (2006), Jeffrey Archer's *False Impression* (2005), Sarah Winman's *When God Was a Rabbit* (2011), Alissa Torres’ *American Widow* (2008), Ken Kalfus’ *A Disorder Peculiar to the Country* (2006), Philip Roth's *Everyman* (2006), Pete Hamill’s *Forever* (2003), John Irving’s *Last Night in Twisted River* (2009), Colum McCann's *Let The Great World Spin* (2009), Jacob Appel’s *The Man Who Wouldn’t Stand Up* (2012), Eric Walters’ *United We Stand* (2009), Tom Robbins' *Villa Incognito* (2003) and Eric Walters' *We All Fall Down* (2006). A study carried out by Webb, J., Mishra, P. and Burke, J. (2011, September 2) shows the following few as well-known fiction works (excluding their non-fiction opus from the present findings): Don DeLillo’s *Falling*

Most of these works have dealt with impending terror and fear, looming jeopardy, imminent peril, likely risk, and the lurking enemy. Islam and Muslims in particular, and the East, in general, have been portrayed as the foremost antagonists of Euro-America, responsible for the 9/11 strikes, and their aftermath. David Holloway (2008) aptly remarks about the post-9/11 novel as: “the early 9/11 novel generalised from contemporary events a working definition of historical experience as trauma” (p. 107). The quote explicitly illustrates inward-looking morbidity in the early 9/11 novel. Trauma—internalised—and from an unknown terror, is the outcome of a pathological fiction: fiction that is yet to seek guidance, growth, and maturity. Creating horror, institutional, especially, family fabric, adversity, traumatising the society without any credible solution of the issue, is sheer laxity of the literary convention. He writes further that “the 9/11 novel sometimes seemed more concerned with debating the responsibilities and limitations of the writer, than writing about 9/11 itself” (2008, p. 108). That is endorsed by Literature After 9/11 that the early 9/11 novel deals with ‘self-reflexive meta-narratives, disrupted temporality, multiple viewpoints’.

Continuing the argument, Anne Keniston and Jeanne Follansbee Quinn (2008) state that “later novels have tended to be more formally conservative, yet these more straightforward narratives grapple with more complex representational challenges” (p. 4). Therefore, the novel does not truly reflect the significance of the event, itself, nor does it represent the fateful repercussions of it, especially regarding identity politics.

The above quotes portray such English language fiction as having many things missing in it, which otherwise should have been part of it. Either deliberately or ignorantly, the writers seldom touched upon the eye-opening facts that would enable the readers to analyse the event, objectively. Such critical and literary void led to a more confounding situation that readers would be unable to unravel realistically.

2.4. The Categorisation of Post-9/11 Fiction

To the researcher’s review, the post-9/11 fiction falls into three main groupings: those in which men and women must live in the aftermath, and those in which the 9/11 attacks
are little episodes in a broader environment of terror, where politics is more telling than moral experience. Only three novels cover the day in question. Some of the well-known novels are as follows:

2.4.1. 9/11 Fiction


2.4.2. Living in the Aftermath/ Post-9/11 Fiction

2.4.3. The Global War on Terror/Post-9/11 Fiction: War on Terror


The above classification into three main categories entails distinct and distinguishable themes, tropes, and contextual, situational and linguistic twists and turns. The categorisation covers, relatively, all aspects of the 9/11 event and its aftereffects. However, one can per se argue about their substance, style, and structure of the narratives. The following paragraphs attempt to summarise the themes, storylines, styles and core contents covered in this fiction. The intention is also to highlight how different the current thesis is in dealing with the 9/11 incident from the corpus of fiction written in this context.

In the first category, the contents covered and events spotlighted befall on the day in question—9/11. It is an immediate and pressing interplay of the event and the victims who encountered the strikes. The action and reaction are so instant and proximate that decoding the storyline becomes difficult to understand the plot and to unravel it. Thus, it creates a vacuum of blankness and bleakness, accompanied by chaos and commotion. Besides, the massive loss of human lives and property did not allow the novelists to contemplate the disastrous occasion, itself, resulting in an unrehearsed response in the novel. That reflects knee-jerk reactions under those critical circumstances. It is a case of verisimilitude.

Living in the aftermath is another group that primarily deals with trauma and terror in the wake of 9/11 strikes. This traumatic spell is so pervasive in individual and collective lives that it delimits the physical, emotional and psychological powers of the characters,
equally and terribly. Since unabated irrational fear drives the characters, nothing redeemable happens, except greater dismay and disappointment. In such a state of phobia, the creative impulse is drastically damaged, continually, if not continuously. Excessive extortion and panic reign across the novels of this group, involving the readers themselves, to try to resolve the tangle. Here, too, the reaction being natural is understandable. The novelists try to reflect the reality of the event.

The third group of novels is reactionary in tactic, as it deals with the “War on Terror” narrative trite tradition. Nevertheless, the reaction in the form of war is again irreconcilable. So is religio-political perturbation and perplexity. Seeing the condition through a political lens and partisan perspective, one can only arrive at misleading conclusions. That leads to the division between the victims and the victimiser and disillusionment of the related reality. Political division and religious dichotomy classify this category as limited and partial in many ways. The trauma was an immense human tragedy, which got politicised instantly, polarising the partisans into subjective punitive perspectives. The politicisation turned victimisation on either side continues as war and terrorism.

Resultantly, each of the three groups contributes to the circumstantial deficiency of artistic and technical parameters of the novel. More precisely, this fiction has little or no relevance to the event and its significance and sequel. In doing so, the clash and conflict, terror and trauma, identity crises, and above all, the solution to the issues concerned, are left unaddressed and, in turn, unresolved.

As mentioned, the post-9/11 novel is divided into three main categories: political; traumatic; and, identity-linked. Art Spiegelman’s In the Shadow of No Towers (2004), Frederic Beigbeder’s Windows on the World (2005), and Safran Foer’s Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close (2005) struggling hard to strike a balance between political history and trauma. In the Shadow of No Towers, the graphics are highly partisan and doctrinal. The latter two novels express the issue in deconstructivist and graphic representation, which perplexes the meaning. Typically, in tune with the tenor of postmodernism (a style in architecture, art, literature, and criticism developed after and often in reaction to modernism, characterised by reference to other periods or styles in a self-conscious way and a rejection of the notion of high art), they are evasive in granting meaning to
the text, but traumatic effects as a substitute are predominant. Another classification entails the novels like *Falling Man, The Good Life,* and *The Emperor’s Children,* which deal with domesticity and marital relationships. Besides, there is a situational turmoil for reversion to the status quo and routine life, as stability and balance, reinstated. Nonetheless, the household and marital uproar are so overwhelming that the reality of 9/11 and its factual exposure, recedes and regresses. Cormac McCarthy’s *The Road* (2006), attempts to elude the 9/11 catastrophe and seeks Hurricane Katrina’s disaster of New Orleans as a substitute subject-matter.

Joseph O’Neil’s *Netherland* (2008) and Amy Waldman’s *The Submission* (2011), attempt to pinpoint the conflict and recognise the way out to settlement and compromise between the two prominent strands in the post-9/11 novel: politics and trauma. In so doing, they have endeavoured to highlight the political parity of the Bush administration, accompanied by their expansionist designs and invasive executions. Examining the clash-of-civilizations thesis, promoted and propagated chiefly by Samuel P. Huntington, Francis Fukuyama, and Bernard Lewis, they evaluate the discourse of “continuity” and “discontinuity”.

In a *New York Times* (2005) interview, V. S. Naipaul argues for the urgency of non-fiction while claiming that the writing of novels was “of no account.” In an accompanying interview, Rachel Donadio expressed that it is reliable to state that no novel has critically touched upon Sept. 11, 2001, in a meaningful and consequential manner. It was also in 2005 that the serious 9/11 novels began to appear. Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* (1987) writes the same more or less about this *unsayability,* as pointed out by Stacey D’Erasmo’s lecture “On The Unsayable”. The usual approach has been to write about people who experienced 9/11 the same way the novelists did: in Julia Glass’ (2006) words, only touched by it, intimidated by it, but not having lost anyone immediately.

Conflict-ridden post-9/11 fiction does not fill in the space left over by other literary genres (like poetry and drama) and stage presentations, except for few. Euro-American diverse and divisive reaction and response to 9/11, early graphic tactics, match-making and family relationships, and focusing on meta-fiction in recent novels are the pivotal subjects covered in the fiction under discussion. However, fiction enables an exhaustive
and comprehensive textual investigation and exploration of the themes and tropes that post-9/11 offer. Other art forms like cinematic adaptation, theatrical presentation, and television shows have the narrative gap for explicitly covering 9/11 and its aftereffects. Hence, it is fiction/novel because of its extended-narrative technique, which is capable of analysing the apocalyptic effects of the 9/11 attacks. Another reason for producing novels about the meaning-making sense of the event was anticipatory and at hand. Don DeLillo’s *In the Ruins of the Future*, published in December 2001, foresees that “the writers begin in the towers, trying to imagine the moment, desperately. Before politics, before history and religion, there is the primal terror” (p. 39). Don DeLillo’s essay invited others to contribute to *Portraits of Grief*: a series of individual stories which appeared in *New York Times*.

There are, of course, exceptions that the researcher would highlight for verifying the theoretical framework of his thesis. In such a case, crises in multiple conflictive identities are located by applying the post-colonial theory, featuring hybridity, and issues at hand regarding identity are reflected and resolved through cultural transformation and indigenisation. The principle of transformation is new and innovative in post-colonial theory and among post-colonial theorists. Cultural indigenisation concerning one’s roots and origins are the keynote features which the researcher focuses on as a solution to the identity crisis: clash and conflict appearing after 9/11 in the subject novels. The researcher probes and proves how Pakistani diasporic English fiction, especially the novels under discussion, provide the potentials in the literary journey of transition from hybridity to transformation: alienation to indigenisation.

The necessity for producing a definitive counternarrative that opposed the political rhetoric of the George W. Bush regime evoked fiction writers to action. Don DeLillo (2001) points out that “the Bush administration was feeling a nostalgia for the cold war. This is over now. Many things are over. The narrative ends in the rubble and it is left to us to create the counternarrative” (p. 33). Political manoeuvring and manipulation by the Bush administration was confronted by a counternarrative of implicit meaning and significance. Don DeLillo’s essay spearheaded a violent literary response, including personal accounts, quick and short stories, shocking reports, and so forth, in a variety
Significantly, early literary attempts anticipated clash and conflict in the upcoming fiction. Issues about the novel regarding suitable style, befitting tone and tendency, and apt expression were yet to be considered.

Alex Houen (2004) comments on the role and responsibility of the novelists in the following words: “call in the novelists—experts at imagining the unimaginable, the masters of other worlds of possibility. What was remarkable about the novelists’ newspaper articles, though, was that fiction is precisely what they were not being asked to produce” (p. 419). The authors did not produce what they were supposed or expected to, to inform the readers about the reality of the event and its attendant happenings. Therefore, the readers were left stranded and disturbed about the hard-core truth. Such a baffling situation does not allow the general readers nor connoisseurs to arrive at a logical inference and opinion-making solution. Thus, even the counternarrative to the ‘war on terror’ narrative has pitfalls in code and context, style and structure, in depicting the insanity of the situation.

Because the preliminary literary responses were mainly journalistic based on real-time stories and factual accounts (both individual and collective), they cannot be categorised correctly as fiction in the real sense. That is exemplified by a renowned American novelist, John Updike’s (2001) portrayal of the falling towers: “watched from the Brooklyn building’s roof as the south tower dropped from the screen of viewing….We knew we had just witnessed thousands of deaths; we clung to each other as if we ourselves were falling” (para.2). Such lyrical reportage, though heart-searing, is not fiction. Alex Houen critiques the novelists’ role as negligent of their responsibility. They need to relearn literary theory, precisely, the role and function of fiction, for proper global understanding and impact.

Jay McInerney (2005) supports this evaluation that: “most novelists I know went through a period of intense self-examination and self-loathing after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. I certainly did. For a while, the idea of “invented characters” and alternate realities seemed trivial and frivolous and suddenly, horribly outdated” (para.7). The discontentment is reflected in the canon of the post-9/11 fiction. This disorientation causes a divisive and split outlook on the issues involved. The fictional
characters in the novels enacted inapt roles relevant to the tragedy. Thus, both substance and style, as well as characterisation, are inadequate because of weak plots. Internal and external conflicts are not covered to satisfy the readers’ curiosity and intense interest. Of course, from Art Spiegelman’s *In the Shadow of No Towers* (2003) to Amy Waldman’s *The Submission* (2011), they do try to cover the notion of clash and conflict, divergence and difference, and disputes and discords. However, this does not offer a solution (about the politics of identity, in particular) to the multiple and complex crises. Thus, the plots’ movement/development and weak characterisation are apparent. The characters are mostly narcissistic and the plots, paradoxical.

2.5. **The Binary Lenses: Continuity-Discontinuity**

One perspective of looking at the post-9/11 novel is through the binary lens of socio-political “continuity” and “discontinuity”. Regarding the pattern of “continuity”, it falls in the category of the prevailing political paradigm of Western imperialism and its expansionist colonialism (territorial expansion and domination in an economic, political or social context). On the other hand, “discontinuity” or historical rupture focuses on the subjects of trauma, trauma theory and terror. Trauma and trauma theory are of foremost importance to understand the post-9/11 novel. While the former category of novels plays the role of projecting 20th-century wars as the expansion of Euro-America, the latter deals with the mania of 21st-century western wars in the post-9/11 world, with its rhetoric of terror as a tool. However, it is patently prejudiced fiction with a biased distortion of reality and its malicious misinterpretation.

In Kristiaan Versluys’ *Out of the Blue: September 11 and the Novel* (2009), the critic comments that “in the instantaneity of its horror and in its far-flung repercussions, 9/11 is unpossessable. It is a limit event that shatters the symbolic resources of the culture and defeats the normal process of meaning-making and semiosis” (p. 1). Inspired by Dominic LaCapra, an American historian of European intellectual history and trauma studies, and Emmanuel Levinas, a French existentialist philosopher, he probes the strategies novelists adopt to reinstate trauma into a system of meaning, without normalising or naturalising the experience. Pivotal to his interest is also the works of relevant and related authors to cope with 9/11 as a most tangible symbol of an uncontrollable enemy by guiding the circumstance, i.e., by discovering ways to evade
a simple binary dichotomy between wholly right and utterly wrong. All cultural signs, symbols and symptoms, literary narration and description, and stylistic features, presented in the 9/11 fiction are unable to convey the reality with the construction and communication of any sense and sensibility. In *Out of the Blue*, Kristiaan Versluys concentrates on novels that step beyond the nationalistic maxim and reduced exaggeration, and impart a new vision to the emotional and moral influence of these shocking events; and all it takes to portray them. Versluys highlights the notable post-9/11 fiction oeuvre of Don DeLillo's *Falling Man*, Art Spiegelman's *In the Shadow of No Towers*, Jonathan Safran Foer's *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, Frederic Beigbeder's *Windows on the World*, and John Updike’s *Terrorist*. He evaluates how these novelists acknowledge the humanity of the disoriented individuals, as opposed to the arrogant killer or politician, and reinterpret reluctance, or stammering into an unstable feat of insolence. Also, he discusses works by Ian McEwan, Anita Shreve, Martin Amis, and Michael Cunningham, disagreeing with the novel’s distinctive and definitive power in transforming the trauma, which is missing.

David Holloway (2008), on the other hand, examines the fictional narrative, stating that: “9/11 was long in the making, and the pre-9/11 and post-9/11 worlds were broadly continuous, not discontinuous, however much it suited politicians to claim that the attacks came out of the blue” (pp. 3-4). Thus, the 9/11 event was an orchestrated execution. Securing the U.S. political aims and objectives, the apocalypse was focused, highlighted and projected as a decisive moment for protecting American freedom and sovereignty by the preventive and preemptive strategy of the “war on terror”. Political rhetoric like, “regime change”, “extraordinary rendition”, “coalition of the willing”, “enhanced interrogation”, “preemptive war”, and “homeland security” were structured and employed for gaining political legitimacy through popular platforms. Such political rationalisation helped Euro-America to invade Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria. Pankaj Mishra (2007) endorses this in the following words while critiquing Martin Amis’ (2007) analysis: “this is, of course, an exaggeration. Many writers had intuited that religious and political extremism, which had ravaged large parts of the world, would eventually be unleashed upon the west’s rich, more protected societies” (p. 4). To Mishra, the event is the continuity of the imperial hubris of the Euro-American globalisation, and cultural hegemony that has its roots in the eruption of World War I.
“Domesticity” and “familiarity” are the key features of post-9/11 American literary fiction. To John N. Duvall and Robert P. Marzec (2011), “the last ten years have not been kind of artists’ attempts to represent 9/11. Everyone seems to find something wrong with 9/11 art—both the visual and the literary” (p. 382). Thereby, post-9/11 fiction has its roots ingrained in the longstanding imperialistic designs and hegemonic domination of the Euro-America. Reflection of such themes and motifs (in fiction) blurs the meaning and message of the incidence. Also, employment of such a premise distracts the global readers who aspire to understand the import and implications of 9/11.

The critical evidence shows that the post-9/11 novel is yet to be written, which genuinely reflects the event and its global repercussions. A brilliant collection of critical essays, Literature After 9/11 (2008) edited by Anne Keniston and Jeanne Follansbee Quinn, also comments on the post-9/11 fiction as a “transition from narrative of rupture to narrative of continuity” (p.3), while discussing early fiction Windows on the World (2004) to “grapple with representing 9/11” (p. 4), and later novels such as Falling Man (2007) “grapple with more complex representational challenges” (p. 4). They thus generalise post-9/11 fiction, as “the reverberations of 9/11” (2008, p. 5). A canon of post-9/11 fiction also came under criticism for its dealing with domestic setting and family rifts, apart from representational issues.

David Holloway and James Der Derian are of the view that the Bush regime had the nostalgic urge to repeat the history of the Cold War and that of World War II. David Holloway (2008) terms such continuity of war-mongering by the Bush administration an “ideological lynchpin” (p. 4). James Der Derian (2001) calls it “sepia tones of the Second World War” (p. 178). This reminiscing rhetoric of division led to further conflict. The rupture between the pre-and-post-9/11 periods became vitally important, resulting in more chaos and commotion, as propaganda fiction falsifying reality. Susan Faludi (2008), a post-9/11 critic, also probes the post-9/11 nostalgia and the organised orchestration of reactive and reactionary assaults by the U.S. Thus, the military adventures and preemptive measures taken by the U.S., manifest its aggressive attitude in fiction, as well.
The above-said debate and discussion resulted in producing fiction that had nothing to do with a literary rendition of 9/11 and its broader global impact. Therefore, novels need to be rewritten in the post-9/11 setting and scenario for understanding the situation and its broader impact on the global society. However, the novels under analysis concentrate on the issue(s) at hand that are left unaddressed and unresolved by the post-9/11 fiction. The novels, too, take into account the geosociological imperative and Euro-American imperialism while arriving at a definite conclusion.

### 2.6. Terror, Trauma, and Tragedy

Kristiaan Versluys’ *Out of the Blue: September 11 and the Novel* (2009) studies 9/11 fiction, and assigns the collapse of the World Trade Centre to the category of the “unsayability” or, more precisely, “the unnameable”—inexpressible because the Western (American) English-language novelists have shown a marked reluctance to dramatize directly the events of that day (p. 15). He also adds that the “novelists arrogate to themselves a certain power of explanation…comprising not systematic knowledge but a kind of affective and empathic understanding” (2009, p. 12). Overwhelmed and obsessed by over-brimmed emotions, the novelists display cheap sentimentality and sensationalism (the presentation of stories in a way that is intended to provoke public interest or excitement, at the expense of accuracy). He adds that *unsayability* is a psychoanalytic premise that breaks down the meaning-making sense in the novel. It is deviating and distracting the reader through the style and subject matter of the novel, and not precisely fulfilling the true spirit of fiction. To him, the language of terror, psychological harassment, historicising the present, irony, and ethereality manipulate the post-9/11 novels that, in effect, disappoint their readership. The book is not a pioneering academic treatment of the subject, but it is the first famous book that purports to discuss exclusively and discursively the novel. The novels above directly describe the devastation of the World Trade Centre (WTC) and its psychological impact. They focus on the different forms and manifestations of trauma, each of which fails to recognise the intensity of the event and to suggest a viable solution that works out.

To Versluys (2009), the novelists need to bypass the “jingoistic discourse or media insipidities” seeking success and popularity (p. 14). They should not consider the event
as “all that remains is bafflement and pain” (2009, p. 14). The banality of narration followed by the cliché of nothingness, do not make a popular novelist who truly represents his age and its concerns. The rhetoric of terror and politics of trauma are insufficient to convey the meaning and message of the subject. Sequentially, the novel as a systematic narrative of events in prose, having a cause and effect relationship, and constructing a make-believe environment for the reader, needs to focus on the issues at hand to suggest their suitable solutions. The post-9/11 novel rarely does so; thus, creating a gap of evocative and expressive scope and significance. The course of novels, according to Versluys’ (2009) examination hangs between *Falling Man* as a novel of “pure melancholia without the possibility of working-through or mourning”, and *Terrorist* as a fiction of “dichotomising discourse” of “us” and “them” (p. 15). Hence, trauma and tragedy, in different forms and manifestations, permeate in the related novels. Therefore, the novels’ “plots are informed by the mental mechanism of recovery and repair”, by techniques to help equate the traumatic fits and outburst. (2009, p. 14). Healing trauma or recovering lost memories, for constituting a traditional narrative structure, is defectively non-existent in the novel. The core cause and the underlying effect are noticeably absent. Any specific conclusion and sensible solution in the post-9/11 novel is beyond communication and understanding. Comfort and condolence are not shared with the bereaved individuals and families in the novels, thereby offering strength and intensity to anguish and woe.

Well-known literary critics have ticked off and rebuked the post-9/11 fiction, and categorised it as the fiction of loss, terror, and violation. They are also questioning its coping with traumatic themes and tropes. On healing trauma in a fictional narrative, Kitty Klein (2003) comments: “the emphasis is on how developing a narrative produces a new version of the original memory, as opposed to helping a person understand what ‘really’ happened”(p. 65). Fiction is expected to cure trauma and relieve distress. Contemporary Trauma Theory may disagree with that, as it mainly focuses on repetition and re-enactment of the event(s); thus, intensifying the environment and creating more fright and anxiety.

The thesis in hand is distinct in the sense that it deals with the real issues of split identity and recovery through self-healing employing self-realisation of the characters in a diasporic environment. They are not lost in the poignant memory of the past; instead,
they consciously opt for disengaging themselves from socio-cultural clutches of the U.S., following the institutionalised discrimination of post-9/11 America. That is the approach of Islamic psycho-spiritual therapy, as distinct and distinguishable from Western psycho-therapy, discussed below (Azam, 2010).

Daniel R. Heischman’s (2002) paper, titled, “Terror and Uncanniness”, refers to Sigmund Freud’s concept of uncanny terror as under:

Sigmund Freud's concept of the "Uncanny" can serve as a means by which we can more fully comprehend the depth of our individual and collective reactions to the tragic events of September 11th. Through the interplay of the familiar and unfamiliar, life and death, as well as through the concept of “the twin”…and the evil but powerful figure. (p. 197)

The concept of binary opposition (and opposites, e.g., good and evil) in Freud’s theory of the unconscious “uncanny” may help the readers to understand the extent and nature of the 9/11 trauma fiction. However, more significantly, detraumatizing the fear and defusing the terror are yet to be worked out and answered, even under Western psycho-therapy. Dealing with trauma and living amid apprehension pile on panic, which deepens and intensifies, over time and place. That is why assessing the extent of fright becomes merely repellent and abandons solution to the issue at hand. Thus, the Freudian concept of terror may help the readers to understand the post-9/11 fiction.

Studying the post-9/11 fiction in the above literary conditions becomes even hard for critical evaluation and appraisal. The three different standpoints about coping with trauma crisscross one another in the ongoing debate. Firstly, recreating and magnifying trauma; secondly, according to the modern trauma theory, the fiction recuperate lost memories and keep repeating imitation of the natural-normal past; and thirdly, constructing a new form of the original trauma. Since, the tragedy is so intimate in spatio-temporal terms, that generating a new narrative of it is difficult to believe for readers. That is why even critical commentators and reporters are hard pressed to explicate the catastrophe present in fiction.
Referring to and probing the post-9/11 novel, Martin Amis (2002) agrees with Kristiaan Versluys’ analysis, regarding “discontinuity”, stating that:

After a couple of hours at their desks, on September 12, 2001, all the writers on earth were reluctantly considering a change of occupation…

A novel is politely known as a work of the imagination; and the imagination, that day, was of course fully commandeered, and to no purpose. (paras. 4-5)

The study reflects a temporal breakdown and the emergence of a new era of discord and divergence, wherein nothing but clash and conflict appears in fiction, divest of objectivity.

Judith Lewis Hermann’s Trauma and Recovery (1992) establishes the fact that trauma itself is divergent and unsteady. “The conflict between the will to deny horrible events and the will to proclaim them aloud is the central dialectic of psychological trauma” (p. 1). Psychological trauma is the outcome of a conflict that overlooks and refutes the tragic event while bemoaning it publicly. So, the struggle between this overt and covert manifestation of traumatic experiences are conflictive and erratic. They can also have schizophrenia in extreme cases. The post-9/11 fiction that deals with trauma lead to further confusion and disorientation, complicating the situation for the readers. Cathy Caruth (1995) opines that: “the event is not assimilated or experienced fully at the time, but only belated, in its repeated possession of the one who experiences it” (p. 5). Nevertheless, trauma (both individual and collective) is not associated with the historical breakdown or “discontinuity”. Michael Rothberg (2009) writes that: “the structures of individual and collective memory are multidirectional” and “difficult to contain in the molds of exclusivist identities” (p. 19). Hence, in the light of the above-said discussion, trauma discourse is dealt with impulsively that confounds the reader. Besides, such treatment not only befuddles the reader but also keeps him engaged with fluctuating facts of the 9/11 event and its following disfigured findings.
2.7. Insufficiency of Substance and Representation

As early as 2003, Michael Rothberg evaluates and anticipates the 9/11 incident with its reference to meaning and interpretation regarding trauma and tension. He considers trauma and terror in the post-9/11 novel as a manipulative rendition for media coverage and depoliticising the event. Critiquing the fiction, he says that “most disturbing would be the possibility that a focus on the trauma… might…end up unwittingly reinforcing the repressive liberal-conservative consensus in the United States that attempting to…explaining them away or excusing them” (p. 151). Thus, the media discourse and fiction, Well-known literary critics have ticked off and rebuked the post-9/11 fiction alike, are responsible for deviating the attention of the public from the real issues. That is done by strategies of disorientation, ignorance, and insensitivity. The primary focus of such gimmicks is to brain-wash and cause panic among the public with the message that the world’s sole superpower is under severe threat and looming peril. Such persistent propaganda by the media paralyses the American mind to think for itself.

That also incapacitates the novel, in its lack of proper understanding. While depoliticising the event, the novel underscores the importance of domesticity, individual and collective trauma, and, above all, clash and conflict in the American family. At The End of Innocence (2007), Pankaj Mishra expresses his dismay by asking “are we meant to think of domestic discords, also deployed by DeLillo and McInerney, as a metaphor for post-9/11 America?” (pp. 6-7). Before that, he has considered Ken Kalfus’ A Disorder Peculiar to the Country (2006). It is like evading the issue and the responsibility that needs to be addressed right away and resolved, instantaneously. Endorsing the argument made by Pankaj Mishra, Richard Gray, in his article, Open Doors, Closed Minds: American Prose Writing at a Time of Crisis (2009), says that the post-9/11 novel “assimilate[s] the unfamiliar into familiar structures. The crisis is in every sense of the word domesticated” (p. 134). He argues this while critiquing Jay McInerney’s The Good Life (2005), Claire Messud’s The Emperor’s Children (2006), Ken Kalfus’ A Disorder Peculiar to the Country (2006), and Don DeLillo’s Falling Man (2007). Later, in his critical text, After the Fall: American Literature Since 9/11 (2011), Richard Gray continues his denunciation of these post-9/11 notable literary texts. Subsequently, the novel produced following the 9/11 is negligent of the fact and abandons its role to perform as a literary and artistic response. Michael Rothberg
(2009), in his formal reply to Richard Gray, advocates Gray’s findings thus: “the fiction of 9/11 demonstrates...a failure of the imagination”, and thus, “we need a fiction of international relations and extraterritorial citizenship”; quoting Joseph O’Neil’s *Netherland* (2009), as the commencement of such an undertaking—the strategy of international/transnational fiction (p. 153). He presents the recommendation of the internationality and transnational nature of fiction in rejoinder to Gray’s “model of critical multiculturalism”. Yet *Netherland* has cynical undertones of looming weirdness and fading dreams of the 21st-century. America and the American dream are viewed by the Dutch outsider, Hans, from a foreign perspective, thereby losing his Dutch identity and identification. Though, by and large, the New York city is portrayed as an emblem of hope and prosperity, it remains surrounded by loneliness and isolation. Nevertheless, Jess Walter’s *The Zero* (2006) and Salman Rushdie’s *Shalimar the Clown* (2005) are such exceptions that deal with contentious and polemic politics of terrorism and antiterrorism and its bearing on post-9/11 context contrary to the investigation of Mishra-Gray-Rothberg. Also, they also take on the theme of an identity crisis.

Pankaj Mishra and Richard Gray express their displeasure and sarcasm over the non-fulfilment of any literal or figurative objectives of post-9/11 fiction. Mishra (2007) points out that the American literary authors revert “to the domestic life” and are bent on defining the “cultural otherness” of Islam and the East (p. 6). Richard Gray (2011) points out the failure of 9/11 fiction, as it focuses on “the presence of, and in fact the emphasis on, the preliminary stages of trauma” (p. 23). Analysing Don DeLillo’s *Falling Man*, he critiques that it “adds next to nothing to our understanding of the trauma at the heart of the action. In fact, it evades that trauma” (2011, p. 28) by highlighting personal matters and homely issues rather than “facing the [Islamic] other” (p. 32). In *A Failure of the Imagination: Diagnosing the Post-9/11 Novel: A Response to Richard Gray* (2009), Michael Rothberg supports Richard Gray’s finding and states that: “the fiction of 9/11 demonstrates ...a failure of the imagination...we need a fiction of international relations and extraterritorial citizenship” (p. 153). Pankaj Mishra, Richard Gray and Michael Rothberg share similar views on the post-9/11 fiction in that it has the least to do with 9/11 as an epochal event, but merely an incident that little changed the characters, except narrowing down to domesticity and interpersonal discords.
John Duvall and Robert Marzec (2011) are of the opinion that “Gray and Rothberg are both unwilling to look very closely at what 9/11 fiction sets out to do because they are both sure that they know what 9/11 fiction ought to be doing” (p. 384). What they emphasise is that the traumatic spell is the outcome of domestic upheavals. Moreover, domestic disputes and disruption cause stress and strain, especially when persistent and prolonged. In a post-9/11 novel, such filial-familial distractions are common experiences. Therefore, they result in commotion, collision and conflict. Further, in the same article, Duvall and Marzec (2011) evaluate Mishra-Gray-Rothberg’s review as that “Virginia Woolf’s Mrs. Dalloway and Ernest Hemingway’s The Sun Also Rises are failures for their oblique treatment of the root cause of a historical trauma, since [they]… only imagine the private traumas of war veterans” (p. 384). Analysing historical trauma in the background of World War I has implicit and broader thematic associations and effects, whereas trauma in the backdrop of the post-9/11 socio-political setting has an entirely different connotation. Political engagement and social underpinning need to replace the distressing environment of the event as a result of some viable solution.

The researcher is of the view that hybrid or multiple identities lose their indigenous distinctiveness and might lead to an expansive vacuum, never filled in by an exotic identity. For that matter, the solution best resides in reverting to one’s indigenous roots and moorings, as analysed in the three select diasporic Pakistani novels. Catherine Morley in How Do We Write About This? The Domestic and the Global in the Post-9/11 Novel (2011) writes that “perhaps most troubling is the suggestion that fiction is no more than a political tool, through which writers can understand (and educate readers about) the United States’ place in the world” (p. 721). Martin Randall (2011), another notable critic of the post-9/11 novel, goes a step further and critiques that “not only has a certain kind of realist fiction generally failed to identify and describe the ‘wounds’ left after the attacks but that furthermore other more hybrid forms have helped to reveal the profound difficulties of [doing so]” (p. 3). Thus, taking the cue of the literary critics of post-9/11 fiction, the current research aims at examining and exploring the subject of divided identity amidst ideological and geographical dislocation. Such an endeavour is the dire need of rediscovery by locating one’s split identity, and actualising identity transformation in a patriotically driven milieu.
The comments reflect that it was not fiction, alone, but also, other forms of art that are equally responsible for the insufficiency of depiction and illustration. Martin Randall (2011), exclusively highlights the art forms as: “discursive non-fiction, film/poems, graphic novels, operas and fine art” which are, incapable of empowering 9/11 with the definite and meaningful message (p. 15). Randall (2011) underlines the textual inefficiencies of works by Don DeLillo, Martin Amis, Beigbeder and others. Between “the issue that the event has given rise to” (p. 7); and, the reality of the event “mostly absent from explicit description” (p. 8), lies a fiction, Randall calls it “Literature of Terror” while referring to Don DeLillo and Martin Amis. In the end, he poses the question as to where the post-9/11 fiction moves from here; and supports Christian Versluys and Richard Gray that the solution lies in a principled attempt towards the Other. “There is a sense that such representations are moving away from the ‘sacralising’, ‘mythologising’ and ‘commemorative’ discourses that have dominated how 9/11 has been written and spoken about” (2011, p. 131), moving away from “merely local concerns” (p. 135). So, the inadequacy of depiction and lack of representation (of 9/11) is noticeable in the said fiction. Such representational issue obscures the meaning and message of the subject under analysis.

Martin Randall adopts a mediating and moderate stance in his analyses of the post-9/11 novel, in comparison to Richard Gray and Kristian Versluys, on the one hand, and, Pankaj Mishra, on the other. He, insightfully, critiques Gray-Mishra-Versluys, on the grounds of how they deal with political manipulation, and not on why they support any political outlook. That is where he is different and distinct from his contemporary critics of the 9/11 novel, yet shares the similarity of being shrewdly disapproving that it does not serve the relevant and related purpose of enlightened reconciliation towards the future in peace.

Morley openly indicts the Mishra-Gray-Rothberg’s research on the 9/11 novel as traumatic and domestic. For understanding American stance, she adds, can only be put across and comprehended if disseminated through the novel. Because, over a passage of time, the novel has gained popularity among readers due to its active role in addressing trends and issues of the contemporary age. The narrative space left over by other literary genres for describing and justifying the American position is possible through a political narrative, though this might mar the merit of the novel. From the
ongoing critical discussion, it is evident that 9/11 fiction is disoriented and lacks a solution to the subject in question: indigenisation and transformation, pertinent to Identity.

Post-9/11 fiction partakes to represent and translate the tragic event’s traumatic effects culturally. Mostly, the representational and interpretational strategies employed in the meaning-making process fail to figure out its cause and effect. Kathryn Flett in *The Observer* (2001), states that it: “mocked all power of description?” that dejected the paramount need for incisive analysis (p. 19). As Ulrich Baer (2002) has indicated that “in the first days after the attack, the astounding efforts by the rescue workers found a symbolic echo in the poems…. This spontaneous burgeoning of poetry responded to a need—[for communicative expression]” (p. 2). A conscious and deliberate need for expressing and explaining its fallout in literature did not materialise. Well-known fiction writers like Jay McInerney, Zadie Smith, Ian McEwan and Arundhati Roy expressed their inability to do so, because of the limitations of language. However, Martin Amis, an optimistic voice in the gloom and doom scenario, *Fear and Loathing* (2001), critiqued on the metaphorical description of the acts as: “the Pentagon is a symbol, and the World Trade Center is, or was, a symbol, and an American passenger jet is also a symbol—of indigenous mobility and zest…would also become an unforgettable metaphor” (paras.11-6). Nevertheless, the overall impression left over by fiction is either void or despairing. Consequently, the depiction of such fiction is inadequate for fully understanding the event and its aftereffects.

Margaret Scanlan further critiques meaning-making (of post-9/11 literature) in her book *Plotting Terror: Novelists and Terrorists in Contemporary Fiction* (2001), wherein she argues that related literature focuses the literary writers and the terrorists as “remnants of a romantic belief in the power of marginalised persons to transform history”, with thus far fiction offering “an increasingly pessimistic account of the novel’s social power, a pessimism that some recent novelists extend to the revolutionary impulse itself” (p. 2). Hence, the insufficiency and inadequacy of the novel are evident. By doing so, it deprives the readers to regard for the real concerns and their solutions. Consequently, the reader has to resort to the Reader Response Theory of Literary
Critic ism to seek hope and positive solutions in their search for the meaning of the event.

2.8. The Writers’ Responsibilities and Credibility

The 9/11 novel relinquishes linking the event to some specific historical reality or narration/description of the present-day account, as manifested in the limitations of the writers’ responsibilities. Instead, a multiplicity of vantage points and irreverent storylines have spoiled the substance of the fiction and its implications. An appropriate representation of the core issues is another difficulty that such fiction faces. As a consequence, both content and language are unintelligible and intricate, which baffles the scope and significance of such fiction. Perhaps because of the lack of understanding and proper depiction, the novelists mainly linger on diverse and irrelevant subjects. Consequently, the event, itself, continues to be thought of as obscure and cryptic. Failing to meet the essential character, elements, and features of fiction, these works, generally, do not offer any significant insights into the inner meaning of the event. Likewise, they also fail to define and explain the occasion, linguistically. For that reason, some of the novelists have adopted the strategy of incorporating graphic visuals in novels to cover up the analytical inadequacy therein. While doing away with the narrative convention, the post-9/11 novel lacks convergence on conveying meaning. Perceptibly, the situation gets complicated and confused, even perplexed for literary critics and general readers. The novel is questionable for being a genuine representative of the age, because of adopting alternative non-linguistic strategies for narration.

While reading and reviewing the relevant literature, readers tend to question the writer’s credibility and underlying motives. The writer has one’s own natural human bias to influence the text and to reflect on the situational context, using linguistic and literary devices. Writers and critics like Alex Houen (Terrorism and Modern Literature From Joseph Conrad to Ciaran Carson), Martha Crenshaw (Terrorism in Context. ed.), and Joseba Zulaika and William A. Douglas (Terror and Taboo: The Follies, Fables, and Faces of Terrorism) share a similar interpretation of the subject. The writer’s participation, in their view, is the appropriation of the role of the novel's characters and plot of the narrative.
Nevertheless, a handful of American fiction writers such as Ken Kalfus's *A Disorder Peculiar to the Country* (2006), McInerney’s *The Good Life* (2006), and Claire Messud’s *The Emperor’s Children* (2006) have blatantly dubbed the “other” as the terrorist. In this connection, notable novelists like John Updike (*Terrorist*) and Don DeLillo (*Falling Man*) are no exception. By comparison and contrast, fiction writers outside the U.S. have tackled the Muslim subject’s identity crises. Jacque Derrida (2003) observes that: “we do not know what we are talking about” (as cited in Borradori, p. 86). As a postmodern deconstructivist, Derrida’s remarks are apt in the existing context. The prolific literature in fiction pioneers new avenues of research in every walk of life, to explore the event, futuristically, e.g., as resistance narrative for transforming the characters by understanding the self in response to a discourse which distorts the self.

2.9. **“One America”**

Toni Morrison (2008) propounds the view of the Universalization (theory and practice of making something universal/global in use or distribution, often within a particular field) of America as homogenous America, despite ethnic and racial heterogeneity. Ralph Ellison’s novel *Invisible Man* (1952) and Richard Gray, too, advocate the notion of One America. That is a far cry from Emersonian Transcendentalism (a philosophy that asserts the primacy of the spiritual and transcendental over the material and empirical) expounded in his essay *Self-Reliance* in “Essays: First Series” (1841), and American Individualism, which utilises the “Other”. The continuing argument projects, on the one hand, Toni Morrison’s *Americanism/ Americanisation* (strong affection or support for the United States), and on the other, Ralph Waldo Emerson’s self-discovery for self-actualisation through religious transformation. The former view is worldly-wise and expansionistic, and the latter is reformative and transformative. Comparing *The Reluctant Fundamentalist, Home Boy and Thinner Than Skin* with these contending views, they are in tune with Emersonian Transcendentalism (a philosophy that asserts the primacy of the spiritual and transcendental over the material and empirical), not as a religious precept but as a holistic move to their central source: socio-cultural roots and historical moorings. Thus, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist, Home Boy, and Thinner Than Skin* seem to be inspired by Allama Muhammad Iqbal’s concept of the Self and Self-Realisation: “*Know Thyself*” and “*Trust Thyself*” for evolutionary transformation.
Michael Rothberg in his article, “A Failure of the Imagination: Diagnosing the Post-9/11 Novel: A Response to Richard Gray” (2009) supports engagement and reconciliation of the East and West, unlike Morrison, Gray and Ellison. Settling the racial, cultural and linguistic differences, Morrison, Gray, and Ellison underpin engagement through the oral tradition within America between the racial and linguistic factions. Having considered the case of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Rothberg reinforces the way out from the present plight emerging in the post-9/11 world. That is also the case with *Home Boy* and *Thinner Than Skin*.

### 2.10. *Islamophobia and Identity-divide Post-9/11*

Pakistani fiction in English is compartmentalised into first and second generations: post-colonial/post-independence (after 1947) and post-9/11 fiction. The first generation of novelists deals with themes of independence, early difficulties of nascent Pakistan, settlement of migrants, the subject of estrangement, socio-political crises, gender and racial discriminations, and ethnic disputes. The second generation of novelists is said to have produced fiction in the pre-and post-9/11 scenario. Due to its global significance and Pakistan’s position as the recipient of the hostile consequences, motivated the latter generation of fiction to ‘write back’ to the Euro-American imperialism and cultural colonialism.

Based on the continuing classification of the first and second generation of Euro-American novelists, they cover the situations differently. In the pre-9/11 Euro-American fiction, Muslims are presented as a marginal ethnic group while the post-9/11 fiction portrayed them as fanatics and terrorists. In the latter case, Islam and the Muslims were represented as an impending peril to global peace, especially American inland safety and security. Being a leading intellectual of the U.S. intelligentsia, Noam Chomsky (2002) states that the U.S. media policy and narrative discourse manipulate “the public mind” (p. 13). Chomsky further voices “a slogan that nobody’s to be against, and everybody’s going to be for” (2002, p. 26). The heinous image of Islam and Muslims is stereotyped in Western fiction as a relentless and unvarying enemy of the West. This misperception of Islam and the feeling of irrational animosity led to *Islamophobia*—“The Fear of Islam” (Green, 2015)—a religion that apprehensively projects and propagates panic and dread. That is, the xenophobia towards Muslims (in
the U.S.) led to *Islamophobia* after the 9/11 attacks. *Islamophobia* is an extreme bias against, abhorrence towards, or fright of the Islamic code, or of an ethnic faction identified to be Muslim.

The necessity to hypothesise and restructure Muslim identity is imperative, corresponding to the “times of political crisis (such as 9/11), [in which] ordinary Muslims feel compelled (or, are explicitly asked) to explain what it means to be a Muslim … To publicly state self-identity has become almost a civic duty for Muslims” (Roy, 2004, pp. 23–24). Every Muslim, especially Pakistanis in the current context, gaze beyond and above 9/11—futuristically—for their national identities. In a globalised world of plural and heterogeneous cultures, Pakistani Muslims need to represent their socio-cultural norms and identity for recognition. That is possible only if they have perceived and acquired it—rationally and knowingly. 9/11 being a socio-political change and challenge for Pakistani Muslims’ identity, which the second generation of fiction writers have taken up aptly and dealt with as social responsibility to retort Euro-America.

In this context, Valentina Bartolucci (2012) evaluates approaches in which the concepts “radicalism” and “terrorism” are amalgamated in the post-9/11 milieu, further indicating that terrorism and extremism are “uniquely seen as ‘Islamic terrorism’ [and that] all Muslims come to be casually linked to terrorism” (p. 562). In the preceding discussion, it is the role and responsibility of the novelists to document and represent Islam in its true form and spirit. For that matter, the said novelists struggle to remake reality which is marred over time of the politically electrified 9/11 event. That is why the latter generation of Pakistani novelists gained popularity across the globe as they deal with issues of potential strength and standing while intellectualising and materialising identity consciousness and national allegiance. As the construction of Muslim identity is fueled and propelled by radicalism, but sabotaged and subverted in Euro-American mainstream discourse after 9/11, it has denominated Muslims as relentless, led by their orthodox ideological canon. Accordingly, Arjun Appadurai (2006) contends that Muslims after 9/11 have shifted from a “terrorized minority to a terrifying majority, the Muslim world itself” (p. 111). The novels under review raise the argument against the Western and non-Western intellectual and cultural outlook that indicts Islam, mainly Pakistani Muslims. The conceptual reality of *Islamophobia*
is yet to be defined and interpreted as well, over a decade now; it has misrepresented Islam and its followers in the Western discourse of the term.

In research carried out by the Runnymede Trust (1997), the Islamic Human Rights Commission, IHRC (2002) and the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, EUMC (2007), *Islamophobia* is marked as an anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim tendency and understanding. As Erik Bleich (2011) submits, it wants of intelligibility that refers to different parallel groups, such as racial bigotry, anti-Judaism or dogmatism, and that it is “virtually impossible to identify the causes and consequences of *Islamophobia* with any precision” (p. 1582). Therefore, the concept and its various explanations stand invalid, due to a lack of authenticity and legitimacy. Also, there is a group of like-minded writers who have imperceptibly separated Islam from Muslims, and hold the opinion that it is Muslims, not Islam, who earn spite and public defamation around the world. Sayyid and Vakil (2010) participate in the ongoing discussion and argue that it is not Islam “per se which is the target of discriminatory practices but Muslims, and as such, the use of the term ‘Islamophobia’ prevents legitimate critique of Islamic practices” (p. 13). Endorsing the foregoing comment, Nasar Meer (2008), also writes that: “the increase in personal abuse and everyday racism since 9/11 and the London bombings, in which the perceived ‘Islamic-ness’ of the victims is the central reason for the abuse, regardless of the truth of this presumption (resulting in Sikhs and others with an ‘Arab’ appearance being attacked for ‘looking like Bin Laden’)” implies that ethnic and religious bias are closely interwoven, that the existing practice of legal code and the legislation that permits, otherwise (p. 72). Since Islam is a complete code of life that encourages Muslims to do whatsoever is instructed and taught for their holistic benefit, Islam and Muslims are inseparable phenomena. A true Muslim is the practical role model of Islamic tenets and teachings. Therefore, he is obliged to abidingly follow the principles of Islam for peace and prosperity, across-the-board. He is the harbinger of love, altruism, fellow-feeling, sympathy and empathy, global fraternity and unity, and a beacon light for guidance to the true path. Its deliberate violation entails essential accountability. Such an answerability is to the state, as well as the society, humanity and one’s conscience. However, the Runnymede Report (1997) has trimmed down Muslims to “monist abstraction[s]” using alternate indicators, namely, “Pakistani” and “Asian” nationals (p. 63). The report also combines indivisibly and declares the two, Islam and the Muslims, as part and parcel, concurrently.
Cultural and regional diversity have been looked at and reviewed differently by different scholars. To some, *Islamophobia* is synonymous with *Arabophobia*, to others, it is transcultural and transnational, having no regional, cultural, or national identification, but is a globally permeated phenomenon. Neil Clark (2003) highlights that “Arabophobia has been part of western culture since the Crusades” (para. 2). Since the Crusades were fought against Arab Muslims, the construction and comprehension of “Arabophobia” are more obvious in western socio-political stereotyping of Islam and the Muslims. They forget that Christian Crusaders targeted both Islam and Muslims. Ali A. Mazrui and Alamin M. Mazrui (2001) assert that “Arabophobia is intricately connected with Islamophobia” (p. 159). On the other hand, to the late Samuel P. Huntington, it was the “Clash of Civilizations”, in which the U.S. needs to make a coalition with those who are historically, linguistically, traditionally and ideologically alike. This grouping might assert its supremacy and expansion, when and if, their coalition is threatened. Of course, it was anticipated that the next biggest threat after the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. is Islam, regardless of the region wherein it is believed and practised. Allen’s (2010) remarks of ratifying Huntington’s view toward “the impossibility and implausibility of Islam being ‘European’” suggests that Islam is Islam—be it in the East or the West—and so are its followers (p. 70). Thus, both are detachable and interlinked. A comprehensive explanation has been presented by Tariq Modood (2010), who, “draws upon signs of race, culture and belonging in a way that is by no means reducible to hostility towards a religion alone” (as cited in Sayyid & Vakil, p. 70). In that way, religion cannot be held responsible and blamed for orchestrating and executing terrorism. All religions impart the message of peace and global fraternity.

Religion is a “belief that can be voluntarily renounced”, and an ethnic group as “one’s immutable biology”, makes clear a close connection between faith and “cultural otherness” (2010, p. 16-17). That is, Muslim cultural and ethnic character need not essentially be synopsized as religious distinctiveness, since “people do not choose to be or not to be born into a Muslim family” (2010, p. 82). As a result, *Islamophobia* is tantamount to the “racial discrimination directed at other minorities”, as well (Modood, 2005, p. 82). Consequently, Islam and the Muslims are one and cannot be separated from each other, no matter what ethnicity, geography, or cultural background they belong to. Especially after 9/11, Muslims are thought to be “unresponsive to new
realities and challenges” (Allen, 2010, p. 69). The debate is in response to the concept of the Penal Code in Islam. Thereby, the laid down principles of punishment and the move to Jihadism need to be revised and be brought on par with the contemporary age. They forget that Jihad is ‘just war’ even in the Western ideological and strategic terms. That is to say, the Islamic Penal Code is obsolete and needs to be reformed as necessitated by the trends and issues of the contemporary world. ‘Reductionism’, ‘Dogmatism’ and ‘Essentialism’ are indistinguishably linked with Islam—that is, Islam in ‘essence’ is reductive and redundant—or, more precisely, it is orthodox, intrinsically and innately.

Likewise, Allen (2010) substantiates that “such projections draw particular attention” to the concepts and impressions of “fundamentalism” and “fundamentalists” and their subsequent application “in the media as an inappropriate marker of identification” (p. 70). Such institutionalised abhorrence against Islam and the Muslims shun them from global contact and connection. September 11, 2001, heightened the fear of Islam and revived the historical hostility against Muslims with renewed and recharged intensity. Re-outlining and re-identifying Muslims as a brute and aggressive became the central discourse of Western media information and power politics, adopting and imposing every possible strategy to counter the continued onslaughts of Muslims on Western autonomy. The Euro-American portrayed Islam as the collection of “practices [of violence and abuse] and prejudices”—which the Pakistani fiction writers projected in their works (2010, p. 169). Terrorism became a politico-cultural metaphor for Islam after 9/11, and Muslims were conflated with extremism. In such a case, redefining maligned and marginalised Muslim identity became the need of the hour. Internationally, Pakistani Muslims were believed to be linked with the 9/11 attacks, and deliberate violence against them came into view after that. Although the alleged nineteen terrorists of the 9/11 plot were mostly Arabs, they were alleged to have links with Pakistan (in one way or the other). That also slandered the Pakistani image and identity, inducing Pakistani novelists to counteract, effectively and efficiently. This act of neutralising the precarious situation through fictional narrative became incumbent upon Muslim writers. It was imperative of Pakistani novelists to respond rationally. Since the novelists in this thesis are from the Pakistani diaspora and had faced the maltreatment in the U.S., they spared no opportunity in reawakening and revitalising Pakistani national identity and conceptualising home.
In the ongoing context of Islamophobia and the discourse of terrorism, Irum Sheikh (2004) argues that “since the advent of the Cold War” and later “the US foreign policy towards Israel after 1967,” the Euro-American culture, in vogue, interpret the Arabs and “Muslims as dangerous and terrorists” (pp. 25-26). In the twentieth century, the discourse of Islam’s association with terrorism came to the limelight after the Arab-Israeli armed encounter and precisely “after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war”, as cited below:

Middle Eastern themes started to change with the 1960s. While the tropes of Arabian nights…still prevailed, a new image started to emerge after the establishment of Israel in 1948, and more specifically after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war… the Muslim male as an increasingly violent and barbaric terrorist… the gradual acceptance of Israel and the merging of Israeli and American heroes. (2004, p. 46)

Significantly, Samuel Hartington, Bernard Lewis and Francis Fukuyama pronounce Islam as being a deadly threat to Western freedom, after the fall of Soviet Communism. That leads to the debate that the belligerent and aggressive foreign policies of the Euro-American have characterised Islam as the preacher and propagator of violence and violation. This linguistic labelling and its prolific dissemination, while using tactical strategies and manoeuvring, have denigrated Islam and the Muslims.

Besides, Sheikh’s argument, Fawaz Gerges (2003) supports that Euro-America felt acute dread of Islam in the last quarter of the twentieth century, when the Arabs and Israel met in armed engagement in 1973 “under” its “banner”; more so, with the Islamic Revolution of Iran in February, 1979 (p. 76). Therefore, the Euro-Americans resorted to reconstruct and represent Islam and the Muslims as significant intimidations to their sovereignty and freedom. Motivated by Sheikh and Georges, Akbar S. Ahmed (1991) invites attention to the Western fright of Islam. He connects the phobia to the Western misconstruction and misinterpretation of Islam. He extrapolates that:

Not being able to understand Islam fully and being impatient with it, the West will consider Islam as problematic…. There are signs that some of the free-floating hostility directed against communism over the last decade will move toward Islam. (pp. 230-231)
Islam: its meaning and message, and the holy book of the Muslims, “Al-Quran” have been misunderstood and thus misrepresented, impishly, by the Western fiction writers, as well (including the British Salman Rushdie). Therefore, violence and viciousness, sadism and savagery, cruelty and carnage, are linked with Islamic doctrines and practices. Due to such alleged malpractices, Islam and the Muslims are labelled as dangerous “Other”. Don DeLillo’s Falling Man, John Updike’s Terrorist, Martin Amis’s The Last Days of Muhammad Atta and Lorraine’s Adams’ Harbour, have symbolised and radicalised Muslims as fanatic and ritualistically obsessive. They force others to embrace Islam and adhere to its teachings and practices, without reasonably questioning and challenging the authority figure. No intellectual inquiry for furthering one’s repertoire of knowledge and its due dissemination are allowed within the premises of Islamic Ideology. Such misinformation about and misrepresentation of Islam has led the Euro-American world to believe in its atrocity and massacre.

Jackie Dreyer (2010) argues that “Islamophobia” has “been present in American society since the 1980s, coming into more frequent usage on and after Sept. 11, 2001 [: the perception is of] prejudice against, or an irrational fear of, Islam or Muslims” (para. 1). Similarly, Peter Gottschalk and Gabriel Greenberg (2008) state that the “term ‘Islamophobia’ … makes the antagonism toward Islam and Muslims that is inherent in so much of American mainstream culture” (p. 7). Such “fear” coupled with “antagonism” is “particularly evident in the editorial choices of broadcasters and newspapers [especially after] the September 11 attacks” (2008, p. 7). Likewise, Yunnis Stivachtis (2008) supports the case by saying that 9/11 has potentially intensified the situation from bad to worse and the “events” have caused “a significant degree of sympathy for the U.S. and its citizens in many parts of the world” (p. 25). The U.S. and its nationals are described as innocent and reactive as well for their self-defence against the approaching enemy and the attendant misfortune. The rhetoric of gaining global sympathy and empathy indicates that Euro-America seems to succeed in vindicating their invasion and occupation of regions, place, and countries, wherefrom they feel the so-called potential threat. That, then, is the Western justification of its third-millennium imperialism-cum-colonialism, as manifest in international corporate capitalism, or, more precisely, globalism and globalisation.
As lots of people consider that the 9/11 terrorist attacks underpinned and strengthened Islamophobia in the U.S., Bobby Ghosh (2010) asserts that fear of Islam in America is yet to approach the intense “levels” of Europe’s phobia of Islam and the Muslims. Nevertheless, Ghosh’s (2010) acceptance of hostility against Muslim mosques in America that “this year” alone, “at least six mosque projects across the U.S. have faced bitter opposition”, says it all (p. 17). This animosity against places of Muslim worship was further aggravated when “in Temecula, Calif., a group in July brought dogs to a protest where Muslims were praying, knowing full well that the animals are regarded as unclean to Islam. Moreover, the rage against Muslims is by no means limited to the proposed mosque” (2010, p. 18). Tommy Franks (2010) is of the opinion that misjudgment of Islam and the phobia of the Arabs and Muslims take place since “most Americans believe that most Muslims support terrorists [; therefore,] to be hostile toward Muslims is seen by some Americans as natural, normal and patriotic” (para. 3). Thus, the antagonism against Islam and its followers is ingrained in the minds of Americans, especially those who have no independent thinking and believe the fallacious outpouring of media. Such chauvinism has been depicted by Western literary art, for sure, at which fiction is not an exception.

In the current discussion, Edward Said’s Orientalism goes centuries behind to trace the dichotomy and differences between the East and West, and their outlook on life. To his acclaim, he covers the history of nearly four thousand years and envelops the geographical, sociological, political, ideological, historical and literary backgrounds of both the hemispheres of the world. Also, he investigates and discovers the core issues of representation, stereotyping, the ‘Us’ and ‘them’ discourse, ‘Other’ and ‘Othering’, worldview, power relations, the textual, artistic, and cultural construct of the Orient by the Occident. All the features make the book a canonical text in colonial and postcolonial discourse, for contemporary readers. The book also enables the reader to review the 9/11, Islamophobia, socio-cultural, religio-political and intellectual conflicts between the East and West. Though the book is open-ended and rarely approves any solution to the issues discussed, it suggests viewpoints which the reader may find beneficial for research in Orientalism and Occidentalism, alike.

After 9/11, Muslims are constructed and cast as extremists and anti-freedom fanatics and are said to be gaining popularity and thus becoming a global menace. The pre-9/11
ethnic minority and post-9/11 religion-frenzied Muslims are looked at contemptuously. Muslims named Muhammad, Ahmad, Hammad, Osama, and so on, are said to be sinister. Men are keeping beards and women wearing veils, or even covering their heads with the hijab (Islamic headscarf), are identified with detestation, as they allegedly symbolise and typify terror and trauma. In such case, the semantic labelling of the character and features of Muslims made a critical impact on their gregariousness and sociability. 9/11 being a paradigm for describing and delineating identity, experienced a significant shift. Beliefs and practices became the yardstick for quantifying one’s origin with terrorism and vandalism. The identity-related concerns experienced by an ordinary Pakistani on the roads and streets of New York and other major cities of American are underlined in most (if not all) post 9/11 Pakistani English novels. Alienation and the question of identity are perceptively well-documented by Pakistani fiction writers with varying degrees of concerns. As reflected in post-9/11 novels, Muslims were subject to unwarranted interrogation, detention, persecution, criminal trials and pointless harassing for the event they had no connection with.

The protagonists of the novels under review are victimised without verifying their linkage to 9/11. Changez, as an educated and sensible Pakistani expatriate, faces the doom and gloom scenarios after the event. He witnesses illegal arrests, discrimination against Muslims, forfeiture of their American citizenship, and all that the security agencies could lay hands on, most brutally. The logical drive and emotional urge in the hero impel him to revisit and revise his identity. The process is painstaking, and the reversion is pretty painful, yet his release from the clutches of dual identity makes him a free soul. Chuck, another prey to the same parochial outlook of Islamophobia, feels uneasy and distressed while seeing things changing dramatically and drastically. The changed and charged America against Muslims exasperates him and his other easy-going friends—Jim (Jamshed) and A.C. (Ali Chaudry)—and make them imagine to relocate themselves. Redefining themselves is again a conscientious procedure and progression for the three young men, as they are yet to seek stability in their thoughts and actions. 9/11 was an ordeal they encountered, which was sudden and immediate. It played a substantial role in the transformation of their identities. Nadir Sheikh and Farhana are also identities struck and inwardly unsatisfied with their present position in the U.S. after 9/11. They are frequently reminded of their ripped off country, Pakistan, and its torn apart present position. Both are prompted to explore and
reexamine what is Pakistani in them? Of course, their return to the pristine beauty of the northern tallest mountain ranges and their un tarnished magnificence, make them realise their belonging. Their actual identity is as tall and worthy as the mountain summits of Pakistan. Xenophobia and Islamophobia are at play to make the characters rethink of their identities and, in turn, to eventually return to Pakistan, to its soil and soul, happily ever after.

Retrospection and introspection are reasonably identical in the three novels as their significant characters flashback and beam forth to regain all that is either gone astray or lost—their true identity and consciousness of selfhood, and above all, their native country, Pakistan. That is, their actual strength and forte, and their definite description, as is suggested by Uzma Aslam Khan in the “Brown Man’s Burden”, though the title was changed, later on—yet, the role and responsibility of the non-natives’ accurate depiction and representation remained unchanged.

2.11. Post-9/11 Fiction: The Common Current

What is common in most of this popular post-9/11 fiction is the debate on and discussion of trauma and tragedy, domesticity, panic, anxiety and Islamophobia. Resolving the issue, or even in-depth scrutiny is hardly attempted. Even the critics mentioned have scarcely touched upon the core issue(s) that could lead to some viable solution or resolution. However, the three select novels do so.

Islam and the "East" have not influenced Euro-American self-perceptions. They remain empty abstractions to the self-appointed defenders of Western civilisation, to identify the alien and dangerous “Others”. The three Pakistani diasporic novels try to restore the balance, by projecting Islam and Pakistan as an enlightened alternative, at least for their alienated characters.

To Pankaj Mishra (2007), post-9/11 fiction, especially, early Western fiction, being egocentric and “narcissistic”, has no room for transformation (para.41). Without realising the scope and significance of global currents, cross-currents, and under-currents, the above-said fiction is egoistic and has its themes deeply ingrained in self-seeking arrogance and vanity. Thereby, violating the style and structure, themes and
motifs of fiction. Euro-American exceptionalism (the condition of being different from the norm) and simplicity have been tendering compelling arguments in the post-9/11 fiction. Thus, justifying ways and means to invade the sovereignty of other nations. Sponsoring the possible counter-attacks on the innocent nations and fending off the planned events like 9/11, in future. By and large, fiction did not grow and flourish, in the meantime, and could not communicate the true version of 9/11 and its import for the global readers. That is why 9/11 has been a weird event and an insoluble discord. In this connection, post-9/11 fiction calls upon Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s (1993) postcolonial study that reads as “catachrestically” (pp. 60, 156). That refers to 9/11 as an immensely important event, yet as a referent, it reflects the erratic construction of, and relationship to, overall partisan associations, and not to comment on the long-standing history of global terrorism. Similarly, Rob Nixon (2011) indicates that the mainstream media significantly magnify the terror and obstructs analyses for further research, to arrive at a logical conclusion. That is why, the 9/11 is represented in “slow violence”, which further complicates and obscures the event (2011, p. 2). Consequently, the 9/11 and its repercussions fall into obliviousness and the event bewilders the readers. Confusion overrides, conclusively, and the mystification prevails as ever.

2.12. Characteristic Differences

In this context, Pakistani diasporic literature in English is both distinctly different in its outlook, analysis, and solution. Its stories, style, plot, theme, setting, and characterisation reflect this difference. Pre-9/11 fiction mainly dealt with issues related to the independence in August 1947, nostalgic feelings of home, mass migration, socio-political and economic issues of the nascent country, issues of settlement in new-born Pakistan, and other postcolonial concerns that thwarted the creation of Pakistan. However, the post-9/11 Pakistani diasporic English fiction covers themes and motifs, coming into view, after the event. The foremost examples are: Bina Shah’s *The 786 Cybercafe* (2004), Kamila Shamsie’s *Burnt Shadows* (2009), Khalid Aslam’s *The Wasted Vigil* (2008), Uzma Aslam Khan’s *Trespassing* (2003), Sehba Sarwar’s *Black Wings* (2004), Saad Ashraf’s *The Postmaster* (2004), Sorayya Khan’s *Noor* (2003), Feryal Ali Gouhar’s *No Space for Further Burials* (2007), H. M. Naqvi’s *Home Boy* (2009), Mohsin Hamid’s *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007).
*The Reluctant Fundamentalist, Home Boy, and Thinner Than Skin* are no exception to the preceding since they deal with characters, especially, their protagonists, who transmute throughout the storyline. Comparing with Don DeLillo’s *Falling Man* and Ian McEwan’s *Saturday*, these three Pakistani diasporic novels are the subject of the present dissertation because they tackle the themes of hybridisation and alienation transforming into redemptive indigenisation. Don DeLillo follows Lacanian standpoint of historicizing the present (9/11), while McEwan pursues Foucault’s view of the present (9/11) as an exit. Both *Falling Man* and *Saturday* have pulled out all the stops to evade the menace creeping around, most similar to the notions of the theorists under discussion, that is, Jacque Lacan and Michael Foucault.

What makes the three novels and others by Kiran Desai, David Mitchell and Jeffrey Eugenides, so unique is their intimation of a new existential incoherence. They suggest that by abolishing old boundaries and penetrating the remotest societies on earth, capitalism and technology will have no "elsewhere" left for them. That would expose the human being as ‘self’ to unprecedented risks and temptations. In *The Inheritance of Loss*, Kiran Desai evokes the truth of this new spiritual homelessness, soul-searching for ultimate contentment and fulfilment. In films like *Syriana* (2005), *The Constant Gardener* (2005) and *Babel* (2006), even the Hollywood seems to recognise that the human self, inescapably plural and open-ended, increasingly finds itself in a bewilderingly enlarged and unforgiving arena. In comparison, most of the literary fiction that self-consciously addresses 9/11 still seems underpinned by outdated assumptions of national isolation and self-sufficiency.

### 2.13. Conclusion

Post-9/11 fiction, as analytically examined in the preceding discussion on the subject, has aberrantly invoked themes of domesticity, fear, trauma, jingoism and Islamophobia. That, in turn, diverges the attention of the readers to see and experience the 9/11 event as a defining moment of history, regarding the dynamics of cultural displacement, cultural assimilation, and consequent cultural metamorphosis. Thereby, the said fiction is divested of any credible and conceivable solution (notably, concerning an identity crisis and its attendant issues) to the global readers. This missing link vacuum motivated the present researcher to probe the issue of identity in the three select Pakistani
diasporic novels. The researcher also dwells on the examination and exploration of cultural transformation from cultural hybridity, in the Pak.-U.S. ambience. The current study and critique are distinctly different, because of its clarity of substance and style leading to coherent conclusions.

Contrary to the discourse of digression from post-9/11 fiction, the present position research, however, does not concur with the politically motivated novel, nor does it subscribe to the pathological post-9/11 fiction. Instead, it covers the seething issues of American cultural hegemony, hybridity and post-9/11 emancipation from the socio-cultural supremacy of the American empire. The future lies in reverting to the Pakistani geo-sociological imperative vis-à-vis the Western-American imperial hubris. The present study, on the other hand, brings to light the real concerns which appear in the post-9/11 world, like individual and collective identities, and factors that affect and alter them. In the existing context, socio-cultural, geopolitical and religious factors are the key features that the researcher spotlights, as they significantly guide one’s conflictive identity to transformation. In such a case, the current discourse does not avoid nor evade the core issues of the post-9/11 global concern. It covers a cogent sequence of happenings in the post-9/11 scenario, seeking a way to the plausible solution to the identity crises of the characters in the three novels under analysis. By contrast, the novels critiqued by this thesis, are significant and evocative, because they concentrate on the solution to the resultant problems of identity and pestered personality, instead of distracting the readers from the reality of the momentous event. Their narratives have diligently combined the contending strands of “continuity” and “discontinuity”. The research is patent because it distinctly engages with issues of cultural hybridity followed by cultural transformation, within the parameters of conceptual framework discussed in Chapter 3. Also, the selected novels are distinct and distinguishable from the fiction by their American counterparts, precisely because these (novels) are of and by targeted affectees.

The emergence of the Western—later, also Eastern—modern nation-states, like Pakistan, in the case of the three novels under study, and patriotically motivated nationalism helps in understanding the novels under examination. The narratives determinedly underline complete disengagement from the capitalistic consumerism (preoccupation with and inclination towards theory and practice that increasing
consumption of goods is economically desirable) and eventually choose Pakistan as the re-marker of their identity, once and for all. The research is precisely particular, for it contemplates, unlike the post-9/11 Western fiction, the distorted “self” and the “system” around. The denouement leads to reverting to the indigenous Pakistani identity. This study is exclusivistic because it examines trauma and its consequences, not a solution to the dichotomy of conflictive identities, but as a stumbling block to the recognition of the self and the system around. Seeking one’s roots and moorings for relocating one’s indigenous identity is central to the argument of the current discourse. It can be summed up succinctly regarding Allama Muhammad Iqbal’s following couplet from Bal-i Jibril (‘Gabriel’s Wing’):

Delve into your soul and there seek our life’s buried tracks;
Will you not be mine? Then be not mine, be your own right! (Bal-i Jibril, 1935, 27)

Iqbal’s self is not the errant, deviant and animalistic ego, but the refined spiritualised self as the result of moral-spiritual self-realisation through a return to one’s humane roots and altruistic moorings.
CHAPTER 3

FANON, SAID AND BHABHA’S PERSPECTIVE ON HYBRIDITY VIS-A-VIS THE RESEARCHER’S MODEL OF TRANSFORMATION

3.1. Introduction

This chapter covers the postcolonial theory (featuring cultural hybridity and representation as critical components of postcolonial theory and practice). The primary focus is on the triad of postcolonial theorists and their respective works: Frantz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961); Edward W. Said’s *Orientalism* (1995); and, Homi K. Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture* (1994). Their discursive outlooks and practices on identity and culture are foundationally seminal to the current chapter because they provide ground for the argument to analyse first halves of the three novels under review (see Chapter 4). A total disengagement for transformation is proposed later for seeking and securing cultural indigenisation, specifically, *Pakistanisation* (strong affection or support for Pakistan), in the existing circumstance. These three theorists have evoked essential concepts and neologism in Postcolonial theory, but they have not entirely referred to revivalism and evolutionary transformation following postcolonial conditions. This unresolved socio-cultural cleavage is what the researcher recommends as a solution to the current crisis of identity in hybridisation. Returning to one's cultural roots for tackling one's hybrid self is central to personal crisis management and conflict resolution.

Postcolonialism/postcoloniality/ postcolonial critique is an academic research field, including and introducing methods and practices of scholarly discourses that evaluate, expound, and answer the geosociological heritage of European empire, to the humanoid
effects of invading a country and imposing colonisers for the imperialistic politico-economic manipulation of the indigenous society and its territory. Following postmodernism and poststructuralism, postcolonial discourse examines the principles of knowledge: construction, operation, and dissemination by pursuing the working relationship of socio-political dominance that upholds colonisation and interventionism. It challenges the reprehensible rationalisation of socio-economic, religio-political and cultural imperial expansionism by the coloniser of the colonised. As cultural theory and practice, postcolonialism offers, supports, and elucidates the ideology and its established applications of neocolonialism, with samples extracted from the arts, humanities and the social sciences, philosophy, history, political science, anthropology, sociology and geography. Besides, the guidance is drawn from the cinematic and religious studies; feminism, language and linguistics; and postcolonial theory and literature, of which the immigrant and anti-conquest narratives portray the accounts of colonial suppression of the colonised, on the one hand, and despotism of the coloniser, on the other hand. The domain of study is vast and varied, reporting and replicating, most apparently, every field of human observation, study, and experience, back in the times of colonial regimes. However, in the existing situation, postcolonialism enfolds literary theory and application, hypothesised in the novels under dissertation, with emphasis on the theorists cited in the earlier paragraphs.

Colonial discourse essentially deals with the complex-confused relationship of the coloniser and colonised, with its legacy of numerous lingering issues, conflicts, and crises. Among them, the most important is the premise of identity-hood, the awareness, and consciousness of which complicates the contact and connection between the coloniser and colonised. All aspects of the human personality: physical, psychosocial, spiritual and emotional, are adversely affected as the relationship is inexorably based on bias and binaries. Such socio-cultural colonialism, as the current Western neocolonialism and contemporary imperialism, has ruptured the material and non-material cultural fabric of the colonised. Such historical hybrid indoctrination in linguistic, ideological, social-cultural, educational and literary areas induced thinkers of the postcolonial world to examine their current plight to reflect on viable solutions.

Colonial and postcolonial literary and critical writers from Africa, Asia, and South America have actively participated in contributing to thoughtful literature, analysing
the conditions of the postcolonial era and its people. Among the various concerns, one of the foremost import is identity consciousness-cum-crisis that leads to hybridisation. It is a state of multiple selves, each of which is maladjusted in the nascent multicultural society of decolonisation. Hybridity is a state in which the colonised swings ambivalently between helpless dependence and hapless independence. Like identity, hybridity is also fluid and flowing.

In and after the mid-twentieth century, which is marked by decolonisation from the empire, the issue of identity became more intricate as weaning away from what Rudyard Kipling called the 'White Man's Burden' (1899). Postcolonial nations were confronted with lingering colonial cultural hybridity, according to Homi K. Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture* and *Nations and Narrations*. Edward W. Said’s *Orientalism* in the present context underscores the importance of Othering, stereotyping, representation and the long-standing differences in all spheres of life between the East and West. Frantz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* is an excellent example of the resistance narrative and culture of defiance through national consciousness. These three thinkers capitalise in their theories on the grand/master narratives for driving home the ground reality of the Postcolonial world.

The trinity of Frantz Fanon, Edward W. Said and Homi K. Bhabha participate and contribute in different capacities and measures to the colonial and postcolonial discourses. Fanon favours violent resistance because defiant confrontation to the colonisers is the only certain path to freedom. Said, by dint of stereotypes, assists the reader to understand the long-standing differences between the East and the West. The concepts of ‘Orient’ and ‘Occident’; ‘Superior’ and ‘Inferior’; ‘Us’ and ‘Other’—and Jean-Paul Sartre’s ‘Insider—Outsider’—are not natural but constructed, advertently. Geographical and topographical limits and limitations are self-created and concocted for serving ulterior motives of the coloniser—or the West. Bhabha’s focus on identity issue brings to light that equal cultural participation of the coloniser and the colonised might negotiate the colonial/postcolonial turmoil. By sharing cultural assets, one empowers the other and enables both to understand each other. Each theorist either resists, negotiates, represents or adopts some other strategy to interact with the coloniser for settling the outstanding issues. However, the researcher dwells upon the theory and practice of transformation which is not unearthed by the theorists under examination.
The researcher bases his argument on disentanglement and liberation from Euro-America to patriotically motivated nationalism for seeking and securing Pakistani identity. The three target novels portray psychosocial stress and strain, leading to evolutionary metamorphosis. The trauma inflicted on the characters of the novels is dispelled with time, and they emerge as reborn. Its quintessence pre-exists in the normatively peaceful transformational theory of social change and societal integration (Azam, 2012).

The researcher's theoretical assumptions hold within the parameters of the study. Further research would need to be conducted to make generalised assumptions beyond the present study. Pakistani pre- and post-colonial thought and fiction need to be explored. Methodologically, the current research employs a qualitative research paradigm, which focuses on the interpretive technique for data analysis of the select Pakistani diasporic novels. Ideas, concepts, and notions are analysed (objectively), that develops into the researcher's socio-cultural model of transformation. The epistemological paradigm invoked concentrates on total disengagement and extrication from the American blooming life to Pakistani cultural origin within the given theoretical and methodological parameters.

3.2. Fanon’s Perspective on Identity in The Wretched of the Earth

3.2.1. Introduction

In the present context, uncompromising and radical Frantz Fanon (1925-1961) examines the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised. He motivates skilfully and influences decisively anti-colonial and national liberation movements. Though his approach is varied and diverse, as a psychiatrist, he employs the psychoanalytic method to establish the disruption and destruction wrought by colonialism and colonial empires on the colonised. His stated seminal work was written during and about the Algerian struggle for independence. The introduction to the book by Jean-Paul Sartre unfolds the dangers of colonialism by referring to Fanon’s powerful and scathing indictment of it and its legacy of enduring violence. Aggression becomes the only way out because colonialism was established through it, and now can only be eradicated with it. Fanon (1963) says that “in order to assimilate and experience the
oppressor’s culture, the native has had to leave certain of his intellectual possessions in pawn. These pledges include his adoption of the forms of thought of the colonialist bourgeoisie” (p. 49). Fanon’s keen insight echoes identity conflict that mars the cultural, intellectual and social faculties of the colonised. This coercive and bullying tactic of the coloniser alienates the colonised from their psycho-spiritual roots and socio-cultural moorings and cast them into the state of being nowhere.

*The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) was posthumously published and released. The text inspired several anticolonial liberations and independence movements. The book analyses such subjects and drives, as the function of violence, the role of intellectuals, the responsibility of collaborators, state suppression, and freedom movements. The last chapter, *Colonial War and Mental Disorders*, investigates the mental and emotional outcome of torture and torment in French colonised Algerian. Such violent effects are recorded from both the coloniser and the colonised. Since the accounts included in the text are real-life experiences of suffering and agony, they reflect the enormous magnitude of repression and the urge for freedom. The text is written from the perspective of the colonised, who are described “as if to show the totalitarian character of colonial exploitation, the settler paints the native as a sort of quintessence of evil” (Fanon, 1963, p. 41). The response suggested by Fanon is also as severe and atrocious as the aggressive repression. Without a strongly furious and aggressive rejoinder, real independence cannot be dreamt of, nor can it be acquired.

Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* significantly reveals some uncertain and precarious paths taken by freedom fighters in Latin America. Despite independence acquired by countries in Latin America, they were misruled and maltreated by the national bourgeoisie. Dependency on the global capitalistic free market economy and Western liberal democracy, the locals were still under massive debt and could not progress economically. They thus suffered from the disabling evils of the Western dependency syndrome.

3.2.2. Fanon’s Concept of National and Social Identity

For seeking and securing social and cultural identity, Fanon asks whether the colonised may adopt the lifestyle of the coloniser and the skills they use to overcome and administer people. The process, for sure, would coerce the natives to assimilate and
adopt the coloniser’s norms and values and to replicate the acquired skills for proving their national identity. Such imitation would help in the decolonising process. However, there is the danger that the native elite and so-called ‘intellectuals’, who have acquired Western values and lifeways, would collude to conspire with the colonisers against the national interest. Jean-Paul Sartre says in the preface to The Wretched of the Earth (1963) that:

The European elite undertook to manufacture a native elite. They picked out promising adolescents…branded them…with the principles of Western culture…After a short stay in the mother country, they were sent [back], whitewashed. These walking lies had nothing left to say to their brothers; they only echoed. (p. 7)

Thus, the primary purpose of employing the local intellectuals, prepared by the West, is to facilitate them during and in the post-colonial times. Imitating and assimilating into the Western culture, or to have their new array of standard values, are other two fundamental questions Fanon poses for consideration. However, he rejects the notion of such assimilation and urges the public to violence and insurgency, in a tit-for-tat retaliatory reaction. He argues that “their first encounter was marked by violence and their existence together—was carried on by dint of a great array of bayonets and cannons” (1963, p. 36). Violence, as the counterpart of the Western power to rule, is the only means of resistance and revolt, and not negotiation or mediation through which a nation can obtain socio-cultural and national identity and ultimate independence. The radical measures will overthrow the hegemony of the colonists and dismember their power at the roots. Fanon sees the European cultural movements like the Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment, and Modernity as lame excuses to justify their historical knowledge of the East and the power they exert to overwhelm the colonised. Fanon was an assimilationist in the early years of his active life, but later on, having seen the real face of the colonist, he was disillusioned and turned against the domineering strategies and schemes of the rulers. Thus, the evolution of his attitude and actions made him learn a lot about how to realise and actualise independence from the French empire. For this reason, he joined FLN: The National Liberation Front, the radical wing of activist politics, to support and promote Algerian national liberation.
Radical Fanon asserts that the desire for independence is eternal like the continuing crisis, itself: “it is true, for there is no native who does not dream at least once a day of setting himself in the settler’s place” (1963, p. 39). Decolonisation, alone, never serves the aspirations of the native population. Obtaining complete sovereign independence is the real dream of the Algerian people. “National liberation, national renaissance, the restoration of nationhood to the people, commonwealth: whatever may be the headings used or the new formulas introduced, decolonization is always a violent phenomenon” (1963, p. 35). That is because the natives’ latent potentials are both controlled and manipulated, or go unutilized, in the hands of the colonisers. Later on, they are exploited by the local bourgeoisie. Thereby, decolonisation is an initial step, or, more precisely an unproductive realisation, to gain complete liberation and true freedom from foreign occupation. Therefore, having fulfilled the mission of procuring sovereign independence, the natives can freely and fully exercise their struggle for making their country an indigenous homeland. To Fanon, sovereignty and self-government are the true recognition of one’s national and socio-cultural identity, where the inhabitants can prosper socially, economically and politically, bringing the country at par with international standards of competitiveness.

Intensifying the conditions for sovereign social democracy, Fanon argues that “the native…did not take up arms simply because he was dying of hunger and because he saw his own social forms disintegrating before his eyes,…The settler considered him to be an animal, and treated him as such” (1963, p. 141). Such violent reaction of the natives for seeking self-determination is enduring. Fanon, in the existing situation, stresses that maximum confusion leads to maximum creation. The harder the struggle is, the long-lasting independence would be. Fanon’s notion of the self and of the Sovereign State is founded on an unyielding struggle for uncompromising enduring independence.

At the very outset of The Wretched of the Earth Fanon claims that the issues of decolonisation could only be addressed and resolved with an unrelenting violent rebellion by the public. He argues that the colonial society is dualistic and bipartite, and divided into two unequal halves. “The colonial world is a world divided into compartments” (1963, p. 37). The dichotomy between the good and the evil, the rich and the poor, the white and the black, the coloniser and the colonised, the native and
the foreigners, and the privileged and the unprivileged is constant. The good is steadily sidelined and eroded with collusive political intrigue. The rift created between the indigenous population and the foreigners is widening with time and getting severe. Such asymmetrical division creates agony and anguish that turns into psychological stress, strain and psychosis. Therefore, decolonisation or liberation will eliminate this wretched and inhuman division and establish the social order where “the last shall be first” (1963, p. 2). The colonial self-justification rationale for the division between the West and East is the split of ‘us’ and ‘them’— civilised and uncivilised, respectively. Fanon analyses the rationalisation for subjugating the East (the African continent in the present case) was that: “for colonialism, this vast continent was the haunt of savages, a country riddled with superstitions and fanaticism, destined for contempt, weighed down by the curse of God, a country of cannibals—in short, the Negro’s country” (1963, p. 211). Hence, the African continent fell prey to the white man’s ‘divine scourge’ and was harshly punished for being ignorant. The continent was, thus, left denounced and was reproached for the misdeeds of people who lived therein. So, the Western ‘White Man’s [Civilizational] Burden’ was the responsibility of educating, refining and reforming ‘them’, while playing the role of being well-educated and highly motivated. Conversely, the colonised did not feel at home, instinctively with ‘whites’, that is why colonialism was considered as a “surrogate mother”, that treated her child, harshly and “arrogantly” (1963, p. 211).

Both sides had their reservations and uncertainties. If the outsiders took the plea of civilising and educating the savages, the insiders sensed their craftiness as a measure of depriving them of age-long traditions, tribal value system, and their pristine peace, which they experienced in the lap of nature. The ‘whites’ justified themselves with discharging the role and responsibility of a ‘real mother’, whereas the natives took it for a ‘stepmother’, whose sole task was to restrain them from exercising their natural freedom. Such a hard and challenging time was impossible to bear by the subjugated class and even more difficult to speak of. Therefore, Fanon (1963) asserted that: “colonialism is not a machine capable of thinking, a body endowed with reason. It is naked violence and only gives in when confronted with greater violence” (p. 23). Fanon rejects the notion of formal liberation and autonomy through diplomatic means and a nonviolent process. To Fanon (1963), local agents of Imperialism are unable and incompetent to serve the indigenous masses, stressing that “Gabon is an independent
country, but nothing has changed between Gabon and France, the status quo continues” (p. 28). Thus, to Fanon, complete freedom means emancipation from local agents and concocted politicians of the imperial machinery and colonial apparatus.

Thus, Fanon does not approve of such independence in which the locals are dependent on imported dictations and imposed the will of the former coloniser. That is merely another form of colonialism, all the worst in all its manifestations. Fundamentally, changing over of the political system from the colonial masters to the local bourgeoisie, as new masters, never changes the socio-economic plight of the masses. The inherited political system does not allow the natives to take part in active politics, nor does it permit them to have access to economic prosperity for changing their social lives. The natives are denied their socio-economic and geopolitical rights for progress to prosperity, and they suffer from “hunger”, starvation and extreme atrocities (1963, p. 53). No change except the change of faces is experienced in such handing and taking over of formal independence through negotiation and mediation. All this is carried out without the will and choice of the natives. The aim is to keep them as repressed as they were before decolonisation and to stash away their due civil and legal rights: basic needs and human rights.

The local agents and leaders claim to rise as famous leaders and founders of the nation. Moreover, all the diplomatic settlements will be done by their hands, as the new leaders of a new country, as the masses have also reposed their trust in them. However:

Once a party has achieved national unanimity and has emerged as the sole negotiator, the occupier begins his manoeuvring and delays negotiations as long as possible…to whittle away the party's demands and obtain concessions from the leadership to remove certain "extremist" elements. (1963, p. 73)

In the second phase of decolonisation, the national bourgeoisie underpins the removal of revolutionary iconoclasts, for seeking and securing smooth administration. They reinforce the exclusion of political opponents dubbed insurgents to fulfil their vested interest and evil designs, along with their complicit colonists. They do not risk their own social and economic ease by allowing the alleged “extremist”—the true
nationalist—to be the part of their political system, created and established by Western educational elites. Such manoeuvring of the national bourgeoisie for gaining independent power deprives the masses of their political representation and dissociates them from socio-economic stability while living on their soil.

Now only a ‘surrogate mother’ after decolonisation, a ‘mother country’ witnesses the irrevocability of independence, and, therefore, the excessive exploitation of the best “capital and technicians and encircling the young nation with an apparatus of economic pressure” (1963, p. 54). “As a result, the young independent nation is obliged to keep the economic channels established by the colonial regime” (1963, p.56). The local agents-cum-leaders in their incompetent capacities and inert conditions cannot lead the local population in achieving economic and political prosperity. They depend mainly on the former colonist masters and their bureaucratic accomplices for running the intuitional affairs of the newly born state. The abortive socio-economic and political system further deviates from the aims and objectives of independence. Thus, the colonial control never recedes nor does the foreign hegemony come to an end.

The aspiration to stop depending on the colonial masters guides the newly born state to struggle for establishing a diversified nationalistic and spontaneous capitalism…[for] socio-economic progress and stability…So, an autocrat…might replace the exploitative political system…[preying] on people. (1963, pp. 53, 72)

Fanon points out that the perks and privileges which were formerly availed of by the colonists are now in the hands of the national bourgeoisie, who pretend to act as the benefactors of the masses they claim to represent. As a result, the ruling party turns out to be a “screen between the masses and the leadership” (1963, p. 115), and those who serve as political activists and the opposition, are snubbed and ignored as the “party itself becomes an administration and the militants fall back into line and adopt the hollow title of citizens” (1963, p. 116). To psyche and con the public trust as independent leaders of the country, the national bourgeoisie craftily sideline the loyalists and the radical members of the ruling class. Such political manoeuvring benefits both the colonists and the existing rulers, equally. That also leads to authoritarianism to run the state affairs and meet the objectives of the colonists. Thus,
the only way out is violent insurrection to overthrow all the remnants of the colonial past, to build up a new nation with revolutionaries who genuinely represent the country. The ethnic, linguistic and religious rifts created by the colonists, will be eliminated as the masses take over the charge of the country, for the general public gets unanimously united against all antagonistic moves.

Collectivism characterised by a classless society will be revived and neurotic individualism (possessive pursuit of personal goals: the pursuit of personal happiness and independence rather than collective goals or interests) promoted by colonists will be exterminated. Such social democracy will define the nation’s cultural norms and values, and the Western value system will be rooted out. This new national culture will not be influenced by the colonial bias of racism and racial discrimination. For forging forward, the colonised must forget the stigma of colonial essentialism and exceptionalism, which had paralysed their latent potentials of national integration.

Such new national culture and identity must forge to take together both the ‘lumpenproletariat’ (the farming class) and the ‘industrial proletariat’ (the working class), which is unlike Marxist revolutionary theory that mainly brings together the ‘industrial proletariat’ in a society. To Fanon (1963), the “lumpenproletariat, this cohort of starving men, divorced from tribe and clan, constitutes one of the most spontaneously and radically revolutionary forces of a colonized people” (p. 81). Unlike them, the industrial working class had close contacts with the colonists through the national bourgeoisie, though they were not paid reasonably. Thus, historical accounts of the colonised must be read and reviewed thoroughly to resolve their current predicament. Also, if the landless peasants are ignored in the revolutionary movement its lack of socio-political awareness and realisation will be captured by the colonists and the lumpenproletariat will reject the newly bred administration (Fanon, 1963). The peasant class should not only be equipped with arms to defend themselves but also with sufficient education to meet the trends and issues of the rapidly changing world. Such a well-structured national identity will then have enough to show to the modern world—the world full of challenges and opportunities.

Fanon (1963) argues that “it is the colonist who fabricated and continues to fabricate the colonized subject” and that “decolonization is truly the creation of new men”
because “the ‘thing’ colonized becomes a man through the very process of liberation” (p. 2). Bhabha (1994) expresses “new men” as “the rearticulation, or translation, of elements that are neither the One…nor the Other…but something else besides, which contests the term and territories of both” (p. 28). The rhetoric of the hybrid self-echoes through Fanon, recurrently. The colonisers are powerless; and, thus, voiceless. The subjects to Fanon are constructed and concocted over the time and consumed by the colonists to meet their colonial ulterior motives. Evolving the process of indigenisation, Fanon takes an impossible route to tread on, however, in the end, the indigenous representatives will again interact and exchange with former colonists.

Though it is yet to be defined that on what principles the locals would interconnect with the ex-colonists; nonetheless, it is for sure that no resolution to the issues of colonial subjects is seen and experienced—except regarding the imposition of neocolonialism and indigenous imperialism—both marked by violent revolution. Fanon’s works can be difficult to understand if read in parts. They have to be read and reviewed in their specific context and detail. Again, the imposition of resistance in Fanon is two-fold: one with the white colonisers, and secondly, with the local bourgeoisie. Both are done systematically yet violently. For gaining independence, one needs to be ferocious and aggressive. As Fanon (1963) asserts, “for the native, this violence represents the absolute line of action. A militant is also a man who works” (p. 85). Thus, even armed resistance on the part of the natives is thought of as a legitimate line of action, to secure and strengthen their real independence.

However, after having achieved independence, the indigenous population need to build up an interactive and synergetic relationship with other nations. His theory of nationhood reinforces loyalists to accomplish and sustain it for preserving national culture. He is too idealistic and utopian about obtaining the social identity of a nation. His desires are for people who are pure sons of the soil. He even criticises Marxism (that excludes ‘lumpenproletariat’). For Fanon, each person of the society has to take part and should be taken on board for bringing about true liberation. Thus, if in the first phase the white colonists are removed; surely, in the second phase, the brainwashed native intellectuals will have their turn to be expelled from the revolutionary process, leading to independence.
The process and procedure proposed by Fanon are so staunch, that it is contrary to the concept and mechanism of revolution, per se, and its evolutionary aspects. Evolution is a long drawn process over decades. Revolution is risky in the running out of control, devouring its patrons and protagonists, and exciting counter-revolution.

3.3. Said’s Perspective on Identity Construction and Representation in Orientalism

3.3.1. Introduction
Edward W. Said’s (1935-2003) *Orientalism* is considered to be a pioneering critical work that evaluates and critiques the set of beliefs in postcolonial conditions, studies and research. It is both a geographical and ideological survey of the East and West. Said is one of the first critics in America to respond to the challenge of European structuralist and poststructuralist theory (Lodge & Wood, 2000). Said discarded the Western myth of the superior race to subjugate the inferior non-Western races. He debunks this false notion in his theory, *Orientalism*. “Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident’” (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin (Eds.), 1995, p. 88). Edward Said also points out that *Orientalism* covers three historical eras. Firstly, the 4000-year history of and cultural relations between Europe and Asia. Secondly, the scientific discipline producing specialists in Oriental languages and culture from the early nineteenth century. Thirdly, the long-term images, stereotypes and general ideology about ‘the Orient’ as the ‘Other’ constructed by generations of Western scholars, which produce myths about the laziness, deceit and irrationality of orientals (Selden & Widdowson, 2005, p. 220). For that reason, the book is a holistic analysis (of the East and West) for studying and understanding the longstanding contact between them.

*Orientalism* is a philosophy and system of beliefs and practices that describes the negative perception of the East by the West, as the West asserts itself the superior, while the East as the inferior “other”. In 1995 “Afterword” of his canonical text *Orientalism*, it is presented as a “revolution in the consciousness of women, minorities, and marginal” (p. 438). Motivated by Ella Shohat’s insinuations of postcolonialism, Said relates it with “continuities and discontinuities…on the new modes and forms of the old colonialist practices” and not on a “beyond” (1995, p. 348). This thought and action
provoking suggestion of Said encourage the Orient to be wide-awake, alert and fully functional, to face the trends and issues of postcolonialism and its tactical and strategic onslaught. Of course, the question of postcolonialism and its accompanying concerns are not raised by Said in the 1978 edition of *Orientalism*. Unlike other theorists under discussion, Said, in many ways, inspires and empowers the Orient to culturally represent itself, assertively (see *Culture and Imperialism*) to be at par with the Occident.

Edward W. Said is inspired and motivated by Michael Foucault’s theory of discourse, as he applies it to real social and political struggles. While challenging Western discourse, Said follows the logic of Foucault’s theory: no discourse is fixed for all time; it is both a cause and an effect. It not only wields power but also stimulates resistance and opposition (Selden & Widdowson, 2005). In consonance with Foucault, Said authenticates that power and knowledge are indivisible constituents of the intellectual binary bond, on account of which the Occidentals assert the “Knowledge of the Orient”. The applied power of such cultural erudition sanctioned Europeans to retitle, re-explain, and in that way dominate Oriental peoples, places, and things, into imperial colonies. The power-knowledge binary bond is hypothetically indispensable to locate and comprehend colonialism, in general, and Euro-American colonialism, in particular.

The trio of Said’s *Orientalism* (1978), *The Question of Palestine* (1980) and *Covering Islam* (1982) underlines intellectual discourse pertinent to power, representation and the dichotomisation of the world into the East and West, North, and South. Continuing the discourse of power in *Covering Islam*, he states that the ‘Orient’ needs to be culturally re-represented for greater global interaction and understanding. Through and through, Said’s perception is nonviolent and nonaggressive, stressing timely intercession; and, most of all, based on historical facts and figures. Such an integrated and holistic approach enables the readers to stretch out to the beginning of the cultural and geographical gap and divergence between the East and West, for activating the thesis, antithesis and synthesis, Hegelian dialectic, per se. Other mentioned works in the current paragraph, too, have, more or less, the same say, in the context of global power influence, over centuries, that drives apart and creates a rift in relations between the East and West.
Postcolonial discourse in the contemporary theoretical framework and structure begins with the publication of Edward W. Said’s *Orientalism* (1995). At its very beginning, Said presents the assessment of a French Journalist who conveys the misconceptions of the West and about the East, as the misconstruction developed over a passage of time. Such misunderstanding and misjudgement have adversely affected the orient, educationally, socially and culturally. Said keeps on saying that the pride and prejudice of the West are deeply ingrained in the Western perception. *Orientalism* examines the attitude and viewpoint of the Occident towards the East. It subsequently constructs to structure and restructure the identity of the orient. As a literary critic, Said argues that the Orientalists believe that the identity of the Orient is fixed and stable. It has not changed over the course of time and has remained crude and primitive. That biased view is contrary to the principles of Western social sciences, which believe in continuous change in human behaviour, attitudes, and values, causing social change. Thus, the stark contradiction between Western theory and practice. Edward Said states at the beginning of *Orientalism* that his book is meant to grant freedom to all humans, equally. Such freedom enables all people of the East and West to study each other, objectively, and to understand one another for prosperous and harmonious living.

*Orientalism* covers works of social sciences from around the globe, especially, international relations. History provides a proper understanding of the social sciences and cultures of the world. Said (1995) says that “the text exists in the context” (p. 13). Motivated by Michael Foucault’s ‘discursivity’ and Antonio Gramsci’s ‘cultural hegemony’, and his personal experience, study, and research enabled Said to explore the Eastern cultures and their literature, paving the way towards the development of insightful postcolonial theory. The core focus of *Orientalism* is an incisive analysis of Western imperialistic expansion over time, especially, the nineteenth century. He critiqued Western scholarly texts in all fields of human interest and research about the ‘Orient’—the East, and more purposely and distinctly the ‘Islamic Middle East’. Said reveals how the Western, particularly, British and French, “scholarly works…works of literature, political tracts, journalistic texts, travel books, religious and philological studies” constructed and represented the Orient—through invented impulses, apparently objective depictions, and assertions (1995, p. 23). Jointly, all these schemes and strategies were employed to create a relationship of power and knowledge, establishing power through seemingly objective knowledge about the East, and, in turn,
imposing ‘hegemony’ over the Eastern subjects. Subsequently, the ‘Occident’, through geo-ideological manipulation, obtains the consent of the colonised to be ruled. Therefore, Said (1995) argues that: "the relationship between the Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony, and is accurately indicated in the title of K. M. Panikar's classic *Asia and Western Dominance*” (p. 5). Thus, the “willed imaginative and geographic division made between East and West” (1995, p. 201). The ongoing discussion corroborates that one the hand, the ‘Occident’, through its assumed knowledge of the ‘Orient’, validates its intrusion and occupation of the East; and, on the other hand, insidiously secures the consent of the East to be ruled. To Said, both the dimensions of occupation are sinister and crafty, as the primary objective of the Western domination is to exploit the East, politically and economically. Also, aggressive intervention by the colonial West for the cultural domination of the East enforces the Eurocentrism and Universalism of the Western culture.

Said points out how Anglo-French colonialism gradually yielded to the twentieth century American global hegemonism, which was geopolitical and geostrategic. Its most obvious evidence is the persistent American patronage of Israeli Zionism. By contrast, the U.S. has projected the *Shariah*—Islamic jurisprudence, as decadently dated and violent. The Western media are employed to malign Islam and the Muslims, portraying Islam and its followers as the dangerous ‘Other’. The Western powers not only ignore the Muslim world’s pitiable plight and sufferings, but they also cause and aggravate them. The Orientalists have homogenised, especially, through their media discourse, the Muslim world and presented the Muslims as brutes and tyrants. *Orientalism* appeared at a critical time of the twentieth century when Western-American imperialism was globalising itself militantly. Therefore, the book became the focus of instant attention, debate, and success. Textual studies in all disciplines have made it easier for the Westerners to construct, define and substantiate the identity of the East. It is an identity that can easily be engineered and handled for justifying their propensity to govern the orient. Such stereotyping has worsened the situation by aggravating the divide. According to Said (1995), “there are Westerners, and there are Orientals. The former dominate; the latter must be dominated” (p. 36). Identifying and situating the East and West through such a lopsided and disproportionate viewpoint disables the East and disempowers it to help itself and rise on its own feet. The identity
crisis of the invented East was, thus, crystallised by the Western expansionism (a policy of expanding a country’s economy or territory), materialism (focus on possessions: devotion to material wealth and possessions at the expense of intellectual or spiritual values) and neurotic individualism (obsessive pursuit of personal goals: the pursuit of personal happiness and independence rather than collective goals or interests).

Said (1995) testifies that: "Orientalism coincides exactly with the period of unparalleled European expansion; from 1815 to 1914 European direct colonial dominion expanded from about 35 percent of the earth’s surface to about 85 percent of it" (p. 41). The statistics of European expansion establish the fact that the Easterns were ousted from and dispossessed of their land, resultantly, their lives were at stake. Everything which belonged to them became vulnerable to the Western authority and dominion. Their identity was maligned and was reconstructed; so was their history, geography, and culture. Contemporaneously, the Western geographical occupation may have lessened, but their ideological bearing has deepened. Currently, it is WMDs (Weapons of Mass Destruction) proxy and direct wars, and terrorism in the 21st-century, even after the 9/11/2001 American traumatising tragedy.

3.3.2. A Shift from Binarism to Cultural Synthesis in Orientalism

Orientalism has revolutionised the postcolonial theory, and to initiate a pioneering discourse on the Western outlook about the creation and representation of the East. It has covered successfully, diverse sources, to expose the Western cultural and intellectual snobbery of its superiority complex. It is a study in contrasts of the binary opposites of the West versus the East. It is complete and comprehensive enough to touch all aspects of life: Occidental and Oriental. Socio-cultural, scientific, intellectual as well as racial contrasts are juxtaposed to justify Western imperialism. Western progress is claimedly the result of its superiority, vis-a-vis Oriental stagnation, even regression, for being, decadent and dated; even regarding core values, main-major mores, lifeways, habits and behaviour patterns, as reflected linguistically in literature. The Eastern folk is rejected as passive and lazy, uncouth, ill-mannered and effeminate, as contrasted with Western manly chauvinism. Western expansionist hegemonism motivates the odious comparison, geopolitically, geostrategically and regarding the political economy. It is also ideological.
The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it [the Other] is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and old colonies...the orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience. (Said, 1995, p. 2)

The geographical proximity and adjacent location of Europe to the Afro-Asian Orient were exploited ruthlessly. The colonial and post-colonial history is an eye-opening witness to that. Nationalism, ethnicity, gender, race and other well-known themes and theses were already well-developed in colonial and postcolonial analyses. Credit goes to Edward Said’s *Orientalism* introducing the new ‘internationally counter-hegemonic’ paradigm. Drawing upon Foucault’s discourse analysis and Gramsci’s cultural hegemony, Said opts for Mahmud Mamdani’s ‘Cultural Talk’, which is a relatively new perspective in the postcolonial discourse. He underscores the need for knowledge and higher understanding to outreach the global postcolonial challenges and their corresponding solutions. Here he refers to the institutionalisation of Western cultural norms and values that determine their position to subjugate the East or the non-Western world. Talking about advanced cultures, Said (1995) says that “at least the more advanced cultures have rarely offered the individual anything but imperialism, racism, and ethnocentrism for dealing with “other” (p. 204). That, in turn, belittles and underplays the overall image and impression of the colonised.

Said questions the Western hegemonic intentions and actions, triggered by their institutional progress, while investigating their expansionism and control of the non-Western lands. Western attitude and world-view are shaped by its established educational, economic, military, literary, and similar institutions. “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” (1995, p. 46). Representation plays a pivotal role in the construction of the Western global eminence. That is why, Said accentuates the role of re-representation of the East by the non-Western world, in *Covering Islam*, enabling the Orient to compete in the global struggle for strength and progress.

*Orientalism* is a pioneering landmark exposure of Western imperialism. Said presents all the facts about Western imperialism positively and candidly, enabling the readers to
see things on their own and arrive at an upfront review. It is also a powerful plea for
the basic needs and human rights of the East. Above all, it is a sovereign futuristic
manifesto for sustainable survival and success in a peaceful future. That is a recipe for
seeking and securing indigenous identity for Self-Realisation. Since, today’s world is
dominated by Science and Technology, the information age and political economy; the
East needs to acquire these to catch up with the times and global progress. Thereby, 
Orientalism invites the Orient to adopt and adapt Occidental advancements in the field
of Science and Technology, mainly, and, in other fields of human interest and research,
in general. For that matter, the book entails socio-cultural fusion for the said purpose

Despite all this, Said (1995) is of the view that “my project has been to describe a
particular system of ideas, not by any means to displace the system with a new one” (p.
325). Thus, he does not recommend any logical and empirical analysis, consequently.
In the “Afterward” to the 1995 edition of Orientalism, Said categorically states that
there is nothing critically anti-Occident in his book. For, he argues that he is doing his
best to counter “the book’s alleged anti-Westernism” (1995, p. 330). However, the
entire text focuses on the Binary Opposition between the West and East, to the latter’s
domination. He says in the “Afterward” that the text is a “kind of testimonial to subaltern status—the wretched of the earth talking back—than as a multicultural
critique of power using knowledge to advance itself” (1995, p. 336). That is quite
unconvincing, and the case is otherwise. He is also sceptical and hopeless in his stance
about the Third World countries when he says that “gone are the Non-Aligned
movement and the charismatic leaders who undertook decolonization and independence” (1995, p. 348). Thus, the said stance invites and invokes cultural fusion
for harmonious living against indigenisation.

Nevertheless, “Orientalism can only be read as a defense of Islam” (pp. 322-323). For
that reason, he is criticised by Bertrand Lewis and Samuel Huntington in subsequent
years. Orientalism is written in the backdrop of the Arab world, which mainly
represents and advocates Palestine, and Islam and the Muslims, in general. For that
matter, Islamic Ummah and the Muslim world necessitate Islam as their identity and
destiny. To Said, identification with Islam and its tenets is the only option and choice for Muslim *Ummah* to preserve their identity.

### 3.4. Homi K. Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture*: Theory of Cultural Hybridity and “The Third Space of Enunciation”

#### 3.4.1. Introduction

Homi K. Bhabha (1949-) questions polarisation of the world into the self and the other. Bhabha is a distinguished postcolonial theorist for his innovative and ground-breaking approaches to the study of postcolonialism and poststructuralism. He develops some quintessential concepts like the stereotype, difference, ambivalence, mimicry, hybridity and unhomeliness, in his critical works. These fundamental conceptions and notions are worked out from the perspective of the colonised, validated by Bhabha’s experience as one, to handle situations during the colonial and post-colonial regimes and conditions. These concepts become contrivances for the colonised to resist and survive in ever-changing and hostile surroundings. To him, colonialism is not a historical reality locked in the past, but fluid and flowing reality wherein its histories impact the present. In his texts, the colonised do not seem to be passive recipients or subjects on whom the act of colonialism is performed, but subjects who actively resist and thus emerge as an active agency. It is not only the coloniser who is transformed by the process of colonisation but the coloniser, as well, who makes necessary adjustments in the negotiation.

Bhabha’s seminal work, *The Location of Culture* (1994) is a collection of essays, in which he questions and undermines the typical compartmentalisation of the world into the ‘self’ and the ‘other’; which is reminiscent of Jean-Paul Sartre. This approach pushes him to think of cultures as ‘hybrid’, as all cultures interact with one another in an on-going process of ‘hybridisation’. In reality, they are, historically, interactive and, at times, even networkingly synergetic. The book develops various concepts and applies them to the colonial and postcolonial context, in written text, photography, and cinema. Bhabha’s approach to reading and interpreting are also fluid, as his principles change according to the context. His text lacks finality, certitude, and conclusiveness. That may well be under the influence of the ‘Reader Response Theory’ of Literary Criticism—or its reflection.
Homi. K. Bhabha’s province of specialisation and expertise is his ‘experience of social marginality’. In the psychoanalytical domain, he seems to have been inspired and motivated by Jacque Derrida, Jacque Lacan, Michael Foucault and Melanie Klein for the investigation of the colonial dialogue and discourse. On the other hand, he evokes and transforms the Bakhtinian concept of ‘hybridity’, as Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin ‘hybridity’ undermines and threatens the unambiguous form of power. For Bhabha, the response to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’ is, Yes, he can speak! Creating the ‘Third Space of enunciation’, he enables the colonised to represent themselves, which facilitate strengthening ‘hybridity’ for both the coloniser and the colonised. In the context of cultural representation, he comes closer to other postcolonial theorists like Edward W. Said, in constructing one of his own ‘theory of colonial discourse’. Thus, not only are cultures interactive, their thinkers and creative artists also influence each other.

Bhabha states that cultural and literary theory is not an exclusive Western construction. They entail a hybrid mix of cultural and political concepts from both poles of the world. In “The Commitment to Theory” at the beginning of The Location of Culture, he proposes that theory and politics are concomitant and indivisible and that political moves and shifts reposition and relocate the conceptual framework and understanding. He attempts to set up a “committed theoretical perspective” (1994, p. 21) justifying and explaining postcolonial positions and conditions while staying away from “the politics of polarities”, that repudiate cultural hybridity and historical fluctuations (1994, p. 39). “Sly Civility”, “Signs Taken for Wonders”, and “Articulating the Archaic” conspicuously establish and assert at length about the agency, implying that culture’s “in-between” might be engaged in ways and means that bring to light controversies and disputations within the narratives that claim Western history as a role model. Thus, these three mentioned titles best explain the complicated and inseparable relationship between the coloniser and the colonised, while revealing their interactions and interchanges through historical perspectives and allusions.

According to Toni Morrison in Toni Morrison: Conversations (2008), Homi Bhabha is one of those individuals who hold the forefront of literary and cultural theory. He is a prominent figure in postcolonial discourse and is inspired by European poststructuralists such as Jacque Derrida, Jacque Lacan and Michael Foucault. Nation
and Narration (1990) and The Location of Culture (1994) reflect his theory of postcolonialism. Bhabha, as diasporic like Edward Said and Gayatri Spivak, has promoted postcolonial theory by introducing new concepts such as Hybridity, Mimicry and the Other, to it. His role and input to postcoloniality are notable and significant.

3.4.2. Homi K. Bhabha’s Oeuvre: An Overview

In Nation and Narration (1990), he opposes cultural homogeneity of the colonised world, proposed and promoted by the empire through its grand narrative for justifying and establishing their domination, world over. He points to the ambivalence of the colonialists and their overbearing control and command. In the Location of Culture (1994), he presents as related concepts as ‘hybridity’, ‘mimicry’, ‘liminality’, ‘interstice’, ‘ambivalence’, ‘the uncanny’, ‘the nation’, and the ‘otherness’. He applies to them Derrida’s semiotic analysis, Foucault’s discursivity, and Lacanian and Fanon’s psychoanalysis for focusing cultural productivity, which introduces ambivalence as the diversification and dynamics of ideas, attitudes, belief systems, social/societal norms, cultural values, and worldviews. In the colonial discourse of stereotyping, Ambivalence is pivotal, according to Bhabha (1994):

Racist stereotypical discourse, in its colonial moment, inscribes a form on governmentality that is informed by a productive splitting in its constitution of knowledge and exercise of power… [by] its practices [of] ideologies that are prejudicial, discriminatory, vestigial, archaic, ‘mythical’. (p. 83)

The concepts under discussion have noticeably been reviewed in the context of historical, cultural and literary settings, and reflect that colonial expansion has always inflicted aggression, coercion, persecution, and uncertainty. However, the dense and intricate contact and connection yielded a rich culture as well, thereby creating conditions most suitable for the coloniser and the colonised, mainly, to participate in cultural interaction for acquainting with and understanding each other. Bhabha’s perception is more participatory and experiential and based on mutual understanding of the coloniser and the colonised. Political resistance on the part of the colonised in Bhabha’s view is more of an equal and counterpart component for sharing their cultural pattern to co-opt “the third space of enunciation” for mutual acceptance of the coloniser
and colonised. To Bhabha, these concepts are strategies to resist the urban bourgeoisie in a contact zone for enabling and ennobling the colonised to co-exist with the coloniser. By exchanging and exercising their indigenous cultural mores, the colonised may ensure and secure their position, alongside appropriating the foreign culture. Such cultural hybridity helps in understanding cross-cultural contact and relations. Bhabha’s views are a reflection of the British Indian history and colonial experience.

Bhabha investigates the complexities and denseness of the world while probing the successive onsets of colonialism and neo-colonialism, and engagements of cultural contentions and counter-globalisation. He does not propose radical and rebellious intervention like other postcolonial theorists. Instead, he offers theoretical jargon for studying colonial and postcolonial literary and critical texts, alike. Also, he brings to the forefront, the fear of the West when it struggles to prove its identity in the presence of its ‘doubles’—the East. Thus, his argument suggests that Western civilizational superiority cannot be accepted when put adjacent to other civilisations of the world. To him, the East and West could better identify and explain their respective cultural identities if they intermingle and negotiate with each other, reciprocally and equally. To Bhabha, this contact of the coloniser and colonised is an asset to both the parties: to promote which, he advocates the language of peace for mutual coexistence.

While applying poststructuralist/deconstructivist strategy to the literary and critical oeuvre, he offers the term ‘difference’, which is more of a cultural affirmation on the part of the colonised to drive out the signature of colonial superiority. The fact that they are different does not justify supercilious superiority by either. However, the gap created and apprehension developed while assessing the reality of the colonised in the eyes of the coloniser and the impression of the colonised uncovers and embarks on a colonial discourse, which the colonised might take advantage of for the self-assertion of their cultural identity. In so doing, the colonised could define the parameters of their cultural identity and communal interests, which will help them in understanding their world as ‘different’ and ‘other’, and how it is bullied and jeopardised by the colonialists and their coercive designs.
3.4.3. Postcolonialism and Cultural Hybridity: An Overview

The theory of hybridity implies the amalgamation or interspersing of the total cultural system of thought and actions, symbols, character and practices of the coloniser and the colonised cultures. Bhabha affirms that cultural interactive fusion and acclimatisation, cross-cultural adoption and adaptation can be viewed as beneficial, amplifying and constructive. Further, he states that the perception of hybridity helps in knocking down the barriers between the cultures and shuns the concept of superiority on the part of either of the cultures. Hybridity is a sort of mediation and cooperation between the socio-cultural and geopolitical settings of cultures and endows new identity to both the coloniser and the colonised. Robert C. Young (1995) is of the opinion that: “a hybrid is technically a cross between two different species and that therefore the term hybridization evokes both the botanical notion of interspecies grafting and the ‘vocabulary of the Victorian extreme right’ which regarded different races as different species” (p. 10). Thus, hybridity is cross-cultural fertilisation in the human species that is productive, ingenious and useful. Contextualising hybridity in the cultural lexicon, it is more creative and constructive, as well as caters to the necessities of both cultures, without the imposition of the essentialism of cultures on each other. To Bhabha, cultural hybridity facilitates in understanding geographical and ideological borderlines.

Ania Loomba, in Colonialism/Postcolonialism (1998), comments on Bhabha’s ‘hybridity’:

It is Homi Bhabha’s usage of the concept of hybridity that has been the most influential and controversial within recent postcolonial studies. Bhabha goes back to Fanon to suggest that liminality and hybridity are necessary attributes of the colonial condition. (p. 148)

Hybridity cannot go unchallenged as an utterly creative concept. It would be over-optimistic to conclude that Hybridity can, in reality, be both negative and positive. The Anglo-Indian psyche in British India provides an interesting case study. It could also cause alienation. The famous black American singer-dancer got himself decoloured at a colossal cost to his psyche and life, ultimately.
Terry Collits’ *Postcolonial Conrad: Paradoxes of Empire* (2005) questions whether the depiction of “*Black Skin, White Masks,* implies some notion of violated authenticity?” (p. 91). Collits observes Fanon’s usage of ‘skin’ not just as a mask or a connotation of communal implication, but also as a borderline between the self and the system. Skin is a subtle partition between the colonised and the coloniser that differentiates between the two. However, for Bhabha, the reality and representation of skin invoke ambivalence that features the forte of the colonial interaction. It enables the colonised to denote themselves enthusiastically. Also, such assimilation of cultures qualifies the coloniser to prove one’s presence. With the existence of the colonised, the colonial authority cannot be properly known nor admitted. That is, thus, really a case of ‘Binary Opposites’. Colour is an identifying reality, which needs to be accepted in good grace and the pride of authentic humility. The colour ‘White’ is, itself, a hybrid of the seven colours of the rainbow!

In his essay, *Of Mimicry and Man* (1994), Bhabha indicates that even “the Bible—bearing both the standard of the cross and the standard of empire finds itself strangely dismembered” (p. 131). Besides the hybridised Bible, he even points out such hybridity in Zoroastrianism, the creed he, himself, belongs to as a South Asian Parsi. However, to him, such cultural blend is always useful and instrumental while rethinking of constructive identity. According to Bhabha, hybridity alludes to the “‘foreignness’, ‘mixedness’, ‘impurity’” of cultures, and states that no culture is genuinely pure and pristine (1994, p. 97). Assimilation or ‘mixedness’, is the true identity of a culture, since every culture is in the continuous process of contact with other culture(s), thereby, enriching each other in some way or the other. For that reason, hybridisation is a continuing evolution and progression.

David Huddart (2006) refers to the concepts of liminality and hybridity, as used in Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture*, concerning time and space/place, in the following words:

However, when he refers to the location of culture, this location is not metaphorical, as opposed to literal. Instead, the location is both spatial and temporal…one assumption that Bhabha’s work undermines is the
idea that people living in different spaces…are living at different stages of ‘progress’. (p. 5)

Bhabha invites the readers’ attention to the ‘borderline conditions’ and ‘in-betweenness’ for rethinking and redefining the new identity. He states that liminality or the merging point between cultures is responsible for translating and interpreting the new, original and unique hybrid identity, which is robustly effective. Liminality also absorbs the gist and import of cultures to give innovative meaning to the newly constructed identity. The creation of such new identities is imminent and essential in postcolonial conditions, as new cultures quite frequently interact, communicate, and team up, for understanding their shared environment. Bhabha declines Frantz Fanon’s notion of violent resistance and encourages the colonised to mimic the coloniser. That harkens back to the Greek concept of drama as ‘mime’ that involves ‘mimicry’. Drama may be an imitation of life, but cultural mimicry is counter to cultural creativity, which is, originally innovative, if not inventive (Azam, 1999). As such, ‘hybrid cultures’ are, at best, secondary to ‘creative cultures’. The exercise of such mimicry behaviour undermines the colonial authority and accentuates the autonomy of both the ruler and the ruled. Together, they form a favourable environment to independently live in and positively influence each other, in many ways. Mimicry certainly works in the case of the comprador’s cultural alienation, who become the agents and instruments of colonialists. Hybridity in the current discourse, being an essential part of postcolonialism, Ella Habiba Sohat (1992) comments on it as follows: “as a descriptive catchall term, ‘hybridity’ per se fails to discriminate between the diverse modalities of hybridity, forced assimilation, internalized self-rejection, political cooptation, social conformism, cultural mimicry, and creative transcendence” (p.110). Therefore, underneath the comprehensive theory and practice of hybridity, it has diverse roles, functions, and modalities to tempt and, in turn, employs the emigrant into the state machinery of the coloniser. In such case, the face and façade of syncreticity do not comply with each other and mars the concept of hybridity that Bhabha suggests.

The above balances the picture, in a note of caution, if not warning, altogether. Bhabha unfolds options and choices for creating a global culture, while using the term ‘hybridity’, as pointed out by Christopher Bracken (1999) in the following quote: “in The Location of Culture, Bhabha sites repetition as a mode of resistance to today’s
neocolonialism, particularly the recolonization of migrants within the contemporary Western metropolis” (p. 506). Hybridity in the case of the emigre diaspora is a class by itself. Every emigre individual, family, and culture tend to the challenge of adjustment with its self-sustaining response. The host culture could undoubtedly benefit from interaction with the guest or migrant culture. However, global culture is a matter of interactive confluence creating peaceful coexistence rather than a hybrid merger of the ‘centre’ and the ‘periphery’.

Western postcolonial discourse and “central” culture seem incomplete and incompetent without the participation of the “peripheral” culture of the diaspora. Merging of the two paves the way for a hybrid international culture that effectively communicates and conveys the roles and responsibilities of the respective cultures in a contact zone. Referring to the spatio-temporal significance of hybridisation, Bhabha affirms adaptable identity in a multicultural society, contrary to the views of Fanon and Said. Living in the contemporary age, Bhabha underscores the unavoidable nexus of postcolonialism and modernity and proposes the postcolonial outlook on modernity. To him, modernity has overpowered and suppressed the colonial roots. Thus, a renewed inquiry and exploration is indispensable to reveal the said suppression. Bhabha’s “project foregrounds modernity’s complex hybridity” (1994, p. 6). For that matter, modernity necessitates inevitable hybridisation and syncretisation. In ‘Signs Taken for Wonders’, Bhabha offers an insistent and persistent theoretical outline for examining native inquiry and the British imperial prerogative corresponding to syncretism of power and discourse. Hybridisation, in the present context, explains the outcome of fusion of the centre and the periphery.

Bhabha seems to be carried away by his romantic notion of Hybridity to breed his type of global culture. Essential adaptability and social change, apart, modernity is a dicey term. Is it just Westernisation—or inclusive international progress in peace? Every nation and society has its own definition of it—and rightly so ‘globalism’ and ‘globalisation’ are the devious terms constructed by the West to cover up 21st-century Western imperialism. Global cultural pluralism is the best alternative in the current cultural hodgepodge.
3.4.4. Homi K. Bhabha and Cultural Hybridity

Homi K. Bhabha’s primarily and principally speaks of cultural hybridity corresponding to historical, psychoanalytic and literary standpoints and overtones. To him, all cultures have undergone variations over a passage of time and space/place. Hence, no culture is original and pure. Instead all are a hybrid construct of values corresponding to spatio-temporal fluctuations. During the process of hybridisation, mimicry and sly civility are activated, which continue the process to create new identities. Thus, Bhabha rejects the notion of fixity of cultures and their respective unvarying identities. His ‘*Signs Taken for Wonders*’, explicitly states his concept of transmutation and metamorphosis of cultures as: “Hybridity is a problematic of colonial representation and individuation that reverses the effects of colonialist disavowal, so that [the] Other’s ‘denied’ knowledge enters upon the dominant discourse and estranges the basis of its authority, its rule of recognition” (1994, p. 114). Bhabha’s affirms that cultures are not to be considered more or less pure, nor to be taken regarding numerical preponderance, instead their dilution stabilises their positions. Cultural intermingling is ‘not the source of conflict’; nevertheless it is ‘the effect of discriminatory practices’. Cultures are also not the outcome of the Hegelian dialectic of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. Historically, cultures necessitated multifaceted and multi-layered demands for hybridisation. The process is not a commonplace clichéd chronological progression, but a complex activity of dates and events. That is why, adaptability regarding assimilation, acclimatisation, adjustment, and readjustment is always in progress. Cultures in contact, complement and supplement each other, for recognition and improvement. Alternatively, the ‘Self’ is known in the presence of the ‘Other’, and vice versa. Bhabha discourses to stress the need of equal cultural rights. That is how minority cultures can thrive and be recognised after blending with the majority cultures.

“Hybridity” refers to one of the residual effects of colonial rule, specifically the process by which colonial subjects will adopt aspects of a colonising nation’s culture into their own. Thus, hybridity “represents the ambivalent ‘turn’ of the discriminated subject to the terrifying, exorbitant object of paranoid classification” (1994, p. 162). Its very existence, then, undermines the coloniser’s authority by unravelling the coloniser/colonised: *civilised/barbaric, sacred/profane*, etc., a binary opposition which colonial rule attempts to establish. Neither a mixture of pre-existing entities nor a mutation of a colonised people’s lost cultural heritage, the hybridising process, through the colonised
subject’s mimicry of authoritative colonial discourse, creates a wholly new identity, thereby destabilising the assumed authority of the colonisers. The mimic will repeat, but can never recreate, and once the colonisers see aspects of their culture taken on by the “others”, the privileged culture’s hitherto unquestioned status as the “universal” viewpoint is revealed as a construct, a mere “conditionality of colonial discourse” (1994, p. 163). Such “conditionality of colonial discourse” best serve the purpose and intent of the colonial masters.

Bhabha seems to overstretch his case, hoping to convince the naïve gullible reader—but not the ever-alert and incisively analytical critic. In the final analysis, Bhabha’s theory remains utopian. In this sense, mimicry and hybridity ensure that colonial power will begin to deconstruct itself the very moment it exerts itself. Just as in Judith Butler’s (1990) account of gender, the transvestites destabilizes the “reality” of gender by revealing that its reality is achieved only through performance, so does the hybrid’s mimicry reveal that colonial power has no recourse to an essential identity but is itself a performance, another form of mimicry. Mimicry is a response to such stereotyping by which the colonised adapt to the coloniser’s culture. They take pride in the copying of exaggerated language, culture, manners, and ideas. “Colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 86).

That colonial discourse wants the colonised to be like the coloniser, but as they are not identical, and absolute identicalness is impossible, so colonising theories cannot be justified. Therefore, Humanism and the Enlightenment projects have limits and limitations to them. Bhabha extends the same to the writer: “the desire to emerge as “authentic” through mimicry—through a process of writing and repetition—is the final irony or partial representation” (1994, p. 88). Mimicry constantly challenges the identity and discourse of the colonised. Mimicry itself is a strategy against stereotype. “Colonial mimicry is a desire for a reformed, recognizable Other” (1994, p. 86). Thus, the cultural “Other—the Outsider” experiences ease of access to colonial legacy and complacent at being adjacent to colonial masters, to imitate them effectively.

Robert J. C. Young includes Bhabha as one of the ‘Holi Trinity’ of postcolonialism, together with Edward W. Said and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Bhabha claims that
cultural hybridity is the outcome of different modes and characteristics of colonisation that causes cultural confrontations, alterations and exchanges. To affirm and maintain the colonial authority, to construct submissive Anglicized subordinates and followers, “the traces of what is disavowed is not repressed but repeated as something different—a mutation, a hybrid” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 111). Such hybrid residue rejects the notion of suppressing or sorting out the resident or native cultures and the misconception of cultural aloofness or originality. His objective is to revisit and “to rename the postmodern from the position of the postcolonial” while revising unwavering cultural identities (1994, p. 175). As redefining identity, he also keeps in consideration equal and unrelenting coverage of gender, race, community, and nationality, in the global scenario. Bhabha grants equal importance to various connections and forms in the construction of cultural identity, not preferring one element over the other.

Homi Bhabha (1994) states that the main feature of colonial culture is its hybridity or double consciousness—its “in-betweenness”. He, therefore, advocates the hybridisation of cultures and is “a mediating figure between activists and academics”. Further, W. J. T. Mitchell says of Bhabha that "his work is so powerful because he can negotiate and interpret both positions to both sides—this is why his work speaks to people from all kinds of situations and backgrounds" (Mitchell, W. J. T., personal communication, February 16, 1995). Long before the publication of The Location Culture (1994), Bhabha had already exerted innovative influences on the themes of hybrid identity and other related issues, as mentioned above. To him, mixed identity underlines and reinforces readiness to harmony and synchronicity for mutual coexistence and shared strength in a multicultural society.

Bhabha believes in the reiterative continuity and fluidity of critical discourse. To him, the process of rational assessment is an ongoing progression, instead of holding onto to some fixed and programmed standpoint. That is why Bhabha lacks certainty and finality. He implies that “the boundary and location of the event of theoretical critique which does not contain the truth” (1994, p. 22). He refers to critical thinking and discourse as a continuing course of action, rather than a predetermined system of set principles. He believes in the “transformational value of change” (1994, p. 41). Therefore, he disapproves and negates any preconceived procedure, and argues for while-reading assessment and opinion-making, since the encoded evaluation might mar
the ground reality and distracts one’s position. The same is true of analysing postcolonial discourse, as the dialectic and conflictive method of reasoning divert and confuse the process. Here comes the term ‘deferral’ that maximises the ability to grasp Bhabha’s conception of dialectical theory and thought.

Futuristically speaking, life is continuous change, including social change, as reflected in the various theories of history and social change. Transformational change is a peaceful change from the grassroots, upwards and outwards. According to Allama Muhammad Iqbal’s *Bang-e-Dra* (‘The Call of the Marching Bell’):

Quiescence is difficult in the Universe;
Only change is permanent in the Universe. (*Bang-e-Dra*, 1924, 94)

Frantz Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks* theory of looking things in their respective historical and psychosocial perspectives, inspires Bhabha’s reading of postcolonial literary and critical texts. Bhabha derives broad-spectrum and dynamic answers to colonial and postcolonial questions by revisiting and rereading Fanon’s works, which have centrally been significant to Bhabha’s conceptual construction, e.g., Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture*, an assortment of essays introducing innovative theory and practice, explaining the concepts of “Self” and “Other” with a new approach that challenges and erodes its old version. Herein, Bhabha promotes an underlying readjustment approach to cultural study in the Euro-America. It tries to avoid abstractions, in favour of the “performative” and “enunciatory present”. Following the Saidian viewpoint, Bhabha observes the source of the Western outlook in stereotyping of other cultures as historically crude, irrational, lazy and uncivilised, and West as the civilised and enlightened ‘Centre’: the Peripheral and Metropolitan cultures. To Bhabha, cultures can best be understood by eliminating the ‘Binary Opposites’.

Bhabha says that “Hybridity” and “linguistic multivocality” are strong enough to modify and realign the definition and explanation of politico-colonial discourse. Cultural complexity, density, and ambivalence are central to the Bhabhasque notion of cultural productivity and transformation. *The Location of Culture* is not only typified by endorsing “colonial ambivalence” and “cultural hybridity”, but also by employing figures of speech such as mimesis, irony and parody, to demonstrate inter-and-cross-
cultural contact in the imperial context. Being a poststructuralist, he sees the leading colonial readings that assume to educate and civilise the colonised are faulty and full of lacunas and gaps. That is why, the encounter of the coloniser and the colonised is difficult and precarious, as the colonised identifies the coloniser as violent and vicious. To Bhabha, “from such a colonial encounter between the white presence and its black semblance, there emerges the question of the ambivalence of mimicry as a problematic of colonial subjection” (1994, p.90). Therefore, the “mimic man” who lives in the critical space/place flanked by cultures, is the “effect of flawed colonial mimesis in which to be Anglicized is emphatically not to be English” (1994, p. 125). “Occupying also the precarious ‘area between mimicry and mockery’, the mimic man is, therefore, iconic both of the enforcement of the colonial authority and its ‘strategic failure’” (Selden, R., Widdowson, P., & Brooker, P., 2005, p. 237). For this reason, the ‘Self’ (the colonised) can see, identify and project itself in the presence of the ‘Other’ (the coloniser) through mimicry (especially linguistic), and can adequately contribute in a culturally merged ambience. Thereby, such mixedness of cultures and their combined participatory input can certainly enrich their fused togetherness. Such reciprocal exchange of cultural canon builds up an innovative, diversified and productive conditions for conducive cohabitation, and can surely poise the ‘center’ and the ‘margin’, correspondingly.

Since Bhabha collects influences and inspirations from theorists (of eminence) while entertaining his interest in ‘experience of social marginality’, and to promote his conceptual structure of ‘cultural hybridity’; he also seeks guidance in the Bakhtinian concept of hybridisation. Bhabha sees hybridity not only as an experience of articulating about the (illusion and reality) of coloniser’s presence but also upholds the voice of the colonised and their respective cultural framework. Such representation (or Bhabha’s notion of resistance) of cultural ‘difference’ encourages and maintains hybridisation, together with the promotion of the culture of the colonised. Such ‘Third Space of Enunciation’ reassures common cultural elements, constructively and beneficially. Also, such a stance and state enables the colonised to invest, rationalise and discern their cultural logos and ethos, fashioning a hybrid character and disposition, transformationally. To Bhabha, the ‘transformational value of change’—or ‘cultural hybridity’, is more mediative, reconciliatory, communicative and interpretational.
While analysing colonial discourse, Bhabha draws on the notion of *Difference* deriving from Jacque Derrida’s *Positions* (1972), which employs ‘cultural text or system of meaning’ (Ashcraft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H., 1995, p. 207). He considers the necessity of the performative aspect of cultural enunciation, the practice of which offers growth and improvement as a propellant in the postcolonial discussion. Such an exercise identifies the ‘problem of cultural interaction that emerges at the significatory boundaries of cultures, where meanings and values are (mis)read or signs are misappropriated (Bhabha, 1994, p. 50). Such cultural articulation is essential for understanding and empowering the cultural tenets of the colonised.

Homi K. Bhabha has been critiqued earlier throughout this section. He sharply criticises the traditional Western stereotyping of the East, and the definitive binarism wrought out by the Western intelligentsia for justifying their colonial intrusion and authority. However, his essays are discernibly rambling and disjointed. They lack conclusiveness and certainty. He prefers the lyrical style, the content covering contrast and comparison of historical accounts, literary critique, and psychoanalytical parallels. His essays are a jumbled assortment of famous quotes, cultural neologism, and theoretical concepts which are presented complexly. In a nutshell, he is dilatory rather than discursive to express himself. Cultural hybridity and hybridisation, the continuing process of hybridity, in the postcolonial diaspora are the hallmark of his seminal work, *The Location of Culture*. They are more aptly applicable to the diasporic condition and situation. He believes that cultures meet, correlate and intermingle, and transmute for generating an ever-evolving new identity. Above all, he seems to complicate deliberately, and as for him while communicating (the nature of the complexity of cultures), they are complicated and polygonal. However, the function of theory is to clarify complexity, not to turn it into confusion worst confounded.

### 3.5. The Researcher’s Critical Model: Disengagement and Transformation: A Cultural Paradigm Shift

*The Wretched of the Earth, Orientalism* and *The Location of Culture*, wax and wane to tackle cultural metamorphosis and, as a result, negotiate socio-cultural identity and historical roots. Contrary, to the said theoretical works, the researcher’s cultural paradigm shift invoked is the core focus of the present thesis. The researcher’s
standpoint prompts extrication from the socio-cultural grasp of America and causes ultimate transformation, irreversibly. Although the novels under examination seek to strive for cultural transformation, they unanimously arrive at a single conclusion of interaction, collaboration and representation. Nonetheless, the researcher’s proposition and premise disagree with the stances of the theorists under reference. This new paradigm shift in the present code and context of cultural transformation examines the three select Pakistani English novels while underlining cultural hybridity in the post-9/11 backdrop. That further leads through an evolutionary transformation to indigenisation—Pakistanisation (strong affection or support for Pakistan) from Americanization (strong affection or support for the United States). The approach is creatively new and innovative, and the perspective and perception are national and nationalistic. The three novels, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, *Home Boy* and *Thinner Than Skin*, have not been examined simultaneously by the use of the model of evolutionary transformation, previously. The transformational approach, thus, triggers off an urge for reverting to Pakistani socio-cultural identity and historic core. Thereby, this innovative theoretical approach invoked (to analyse the novels) is groundbreaking for future research as well.

### 3.6. Conclusion

Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth*, Said’s *Orientalism* and Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture* have exponentially influenced the postcolonial theory and practice. Yet, they lack resolution, a viable conclusion. Fanon insists on extreme resistance and counter-culture of violence for gaining independence. Said has unequivocally contended the dual polarities of the East and West. Bhabha believes in the assimilation of cultures for creating a hybrid community and identity. These three thinkers have theorised about the issue of identity through various lenses, coming up with different approaches and positions. Fanon is idealistic and revolutionary. Bhabha centralises cultural heterogeneity. Said seeks representative identity. The issues of indigenisation and nativisation remain undiscussed. Conversely, the researcher accentuates the need and importance of a cultural paradigm shift that transforms the theoretical framework to apply to practical and real-life applications: from Hybridisation to Indigenisation, as portrayed in the three select Pakistani diasporic English novels.
CHAPTER 4

HYBRIDITY IN THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST, HOME BOY AND THINNER THAN SKIN

4.1. Introduction
Hybridity inherently implies fusion, assortment, and admixture. Fundamentally deriving its roots in Biology, hybridity has been subsequently influencing cultural and linguistic theories in the nineteenth century. The contemporary age has witnessed its all-embracing influence in several academic and research subjects and has gained popularity in pop culture. In turn, the discourse of hybridity envelops discursivity of colonial and postcolonial theories, racism and anti-racism, transnationalism and multiculturalism, and themes of identity, identification, and globalisation through cross-cultural contact, interaction, and amalgamation. To this effect, its sense, meaning, and applications have seeped into social, political, religious, cultural, linguistic and literary disciplines. That is, hybridity has threefold significant connotations: biological, ethnic and cultural. While biological hybridity is directly Darwinian, and ethnic hybridity smacks of Social Darwinism. They are not the subject of this thesis. Cultural hybridity is the primary focus of the current chapter about its definition, delimitation, and application to the three novels.

Hybridity is a cross-cultural contact, engendering a spatio-temporal interface between two cultures, consequently creating a ‘third space’, which helps negotiate and reconciles the identities of the colonised and coloniser, native and non-native, dominated and dominant. Such an ideally, (but not necessarily always) productive and shared cultural fusion is mostly “a kind of superior cultural intelligence owing to the advantage of in-betweeness, the straddling of two cultures and the consequent ability
to negotiate the difference (Hoogvelt, 1997, p. 158). Peter Burke’s *Cultural Hybridity* (2009) underpins the need and importance of cultural hybridity in the contemporary age and suggests the same for the future of the globalised world, created by the fusion of cultures. Like Bhabha, he reinforces the equal and justified participation of the colonised or the dominated culture. Each culture brings in a metallic array of conceptual and material components like the ‘Variety of Object’, ‘Variety of Terminology’, ‘Variety of Situations’, ‘Variety of Responses’, and ‘Variety of Outcome’ along with it and such elements multiply the strength of a newly born and bred culture.

Hybridity tends to arise in the colonial/postcolonial context where the coloniser aims to modify and readjust the identity of the marginal ‘other’, contriving inside an adaptable cultural fabric. Nonetheless, the attempt is unavailing and thus creating a somewhat substitutive yet recognisable identification, called hybridity. Cultural hybridity or ‘symbiosis’ of cultures is prospectively capable of consenting the “creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zones produced by colonization” (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 1998, p. 20). It is identified as fluid and flowing because it opposes “the belief in invariable and fixed properties which define the ‘whatness’ of a given entity” (Fuss, 1991, p. xi). “Third space of Enunciation” or a “contact zone” invariably invites the ‘Other’ for pushing him to a compound locale of cultural fusion and confrontation. A compound zone connects diverse features of varied cultures that enable and invokes the espousal of “translation between cultures” (Pratt, 1992, p. 6) thereby causing “borderline affects and identifications” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 167). Hybrid identity in a cross-cultural contact zone reveals and filters positive as well as “productive instability”. The likely option and choice, as Homi K. Bhabha (1994) examines, possibly maybe “exotic multiculturalism” which incorporates cultural fragments participating in the making of a nonconforming hybrid identity (p. 211).

Participating in the above discussion, Jonathan Rutherford (1990) comments that the ‘symbiosis’ of cultures or ‘Third Space’ is the core of hybridity, typically “unrepresentable of itself” (p. 211). The hybrid zone has potentials and opportunities for growth and challenges for subsistence. This cultural synthesis through translation and negotiation facilitates the Other to demonstrate one’s potential presence and to deter possible discords. As such, to Jürgen Habermas (2002), “reacting to the homogenizing pressure of material world culture, new constellations often emerge
which do not so much level out existing cultural differences as to create new multiplicities of hybridized forms” (p. 75). In such case, hybridity is imminent in the emerging globalised world and thus affecting the global cultures. Also, hybridity is “a social reality with historical specificity” (Prabhu, 2007, p. 2). It, too, “questions about the ways in which contemporary thinking has broken absolutely with the radicalized formulations of the past” (Young, 1995, p. 6). Therefore, while aligning with hybridity, cultures tend to disaffiliate with their past and merge with the present global needs, to be interactive, synergetic and productive. Significantly, to Stuart Hall (2007), this gradual course is: “unsettling, recombination, hybridization and ‘cut and mix’ arising out of ‘diaspora experience’” (as cited in Prabhu, p. 9). In the present context, “Diasporization”, the term coined by Stuart Hall, is somewhat closer in meaning and significance to Edouard Glissant’s use of Creolization, an essential feature of cultural hybridity.

Because of the critical judgements from as varied disciplines as literary and cultural theory, philosophy, political discourse, and people to people interaction, hybridity has influenced the postcolonial theory and its interpretation. Cultural hybridity has mostly appeared as a “colonial concept [that] served certain interests, which were central to the colonial enterprise” (Prabhu, 2007, p. xii). Anjali Prabhu (2007) pinpoints a “tendency to fall into a discourse of victimhood and/or of narrow ethnicities” (p. 14). In so doing, the discourse of cultural hybridity might fall back on the argument of racial studies, as suggested by Robert Young. Jonathan Rutherford (1990) is of the opinion that “all forms of culture are continually in the process of hybridity” (p. 211). Therefore, the postcolonial era and cultures have profoundly impacted the postcolonial literature of the world, especially of and in Latin America, Asia and Africa, which suffered from hubristic colonialism.

Subsequently, postcolonial literary writings are invariably inspired and shaped by the thought of hybridity. For that matter, postcolonial literary texts are “a hybrid, a dynamic mixture of literary and cultural forms, genres, styles, languages, motifs, tropes and so forth” (Rutherford, 1990, p. xiv). Such literatures have unfolded new and innovative prospects to register and convey varied forms of identity, like hyphenated identity, multiple identities, schismatic identity, and so on. The subject of the Other is central to the theses of critical and literary texts that subsume cultural heterogeneity and cultural
difference, diversity and hybridity because the theory and practice of “otherness” is recurrently reflected in such literatures. As a consequence, cultural homogeneity and linguistic polarity are critically revisited, reviewed and rewritten for the contemporary readership (Grobman, 2007).

On the other hand, Anil Gupta (1995) cross-examines that: “how does one conceptualise impure, hybrid, incommensurable modes of thinking and being, without filtering them of their messiness?” (p. 6). The contending views about cultural hybridity augment its potentiality and, hence invites conceivable solution to it. Cultural synergy, experiential interaction and symbiotic contact, reflected in literary texts, reinforces its substance and style, manner and matter, and its meaning and message. Thus, epistemological, ontological and methodological parameters of cultural hybridity resonated in literature, counters the colonial cultural hegemony and its literary off-springs. As a result, postcolonial literature is a “symbol-forming and subject-constituting, interpellative practices” (Rutherford (Eds.), 1990, p. 210). For that reason, literature produced in postcolonial world characterises hybridity (as literary theme and motif) to strengthen its global import.

As inspired by Bakhtinian linguistic hybridity, Bhabha advocates the role of language as a carrier for creating a new identity, concept of nationhood, communal and cultural ramifications, perceptive of the Other, and the inclusiveness of postcolonial literature. Since language is the critical component of literary writing for a global readership, the English language has provided many postcolonial critical and literary texts. According to Stuart Hall (2003), cultural identity “belongs to the future as much as to the past”; thus, in turn, it “undergoes constant transformation” (p. 236). The critique opts for linguistic hybridity that plays a paramount role in producing postcolonial literature for the interest and purpose of global readers. Such literature (produced in the English language) suffices the need and importance of postcolonial trends and issues.

9/11 fiction broadly demonstrates cultural hybridity and counters the fixed notion of ethno-racial identity and Pakistani diasporic fiction is no exception in epitomising and celebrating cultural mixedness of the characters in the 9/11 fiction. The current chapter examines the three selected novels for this thesis about cultural hybridity. It attempts to analyse the reconstituted ethno-racial otherness in the protagonists of the novels in the
pre-and-post-9/11 situation. Hamid, Naqvi and Khan’s significant characters strive to “pass” in the American plural culture, but they are “unmasked” in their corresponding storylines, as their “Muslimness” is opened up in the post-9/11 world. Hence, hybridity and double consciousness in the narratives under discussion has enabled the said protagonists in their respective capacities to be the part of the New World. The novelists as reflected in the novels have participated enthusiastically in Western acculturation, displaying the assimilationist tendency before consequent cultural transformation, in the wake of the 9/11. Substantial portions of the three novels, while following the footprints of Fanon, Said and Bhabha, opt-in cross-cultural contact and exchange, and transnational/transcultural synergy. “Cultural diversity and cultural difference” are seen and experienced as a means to override cultural exoticism and are sources of personal growth and development. Diasporic experiences of central characters in the plots portray Bhabha’s notion of hybridity (Bhabha, 1994).

Bhabha’s “Third Space of Enunciation” supports the contribution of the novels in the capacity to create a new transcultural environment that accommodates the “centre” and the “periphery”. In the present context, the Pakistani diasporic characters and the Americans live together in a harmonious and agreeable community before 9/11 happens. Cultural diversity, cultural difference and stereotyping bring about two principal and critical premises that are cyclical and repetitive in postcolonial theory, that is, hybridity and mimicry. Being evolutionary, they are also spiral.

As inspired by Jacque Lacan’s construction of identity, Bhabha states that the “Other” can only be identified and understood in the presence of “Self”. The diasporic Pakistani migrants in the novels not only demonstrate and substantiate their “Being” in exotic American culture, but they also intend to acquaint the readers with the American “insiders”. This notion of explaining hybridity goes above and beyond the polarity of identity construction and politics of dominant culture. It attempts to create a balance through cultural reciprocity and countering the concept of dominant and the dominated cultures. As such, motivated by Jacque Derrida’s concept of hybrid identity, Stuart Hall (1994) categorises diasporic split identity into two main types: identity as Being, that suggests a connotation of harmony, unison and cohesion, and, identity as Becoming, which is the process and proof of differentiation and recognition, as distinct and distinguishable from “insiders”, which indicates disjointedness in one’s identity.
construction and development. In the process, the “outsiders” opt for fusing with exotic culture and mingling with its people to be acknowledged and accepted by the “insiders”.

While applying the postcolonial theory to the current thesis, the three novels subsume and reflect both types of identities. Their main characters impart dichotomous identities which sway between “Being” and “Becoming”. Displaced from the Pakistani cultural identity, and tempted by the American rich culture, the protagonists in the novels tend to immerse in a new society that offers them freedom of thought and expression, economic opportunities, and above all, seeing their dreams come true. That is why cultural hybridisation and socio-economic conflation into the neo-imperialistic system and society is imminent and impending. They re-enact postcolonialism as the continuation of the colonial hierarchy in which the relationship of the coloniser and colonised remains unaffected. The change is most visible in their geographical displacement. The characters get merged in the American colonial society by conditioning mimicry and get adapted to the behavioural pattern, lifestyle, and worldview of the new masters in the old colonial attire. The enveloping environment is multicultural and multinational to enable them to live and grow in the exotic surrounding while being camouflaged in a hybrid guise.

Hence, to sum up, this chapter focuses on the discourse of the following theorists, spotlighting cultural hybridity in the novels under debate:

- Frantz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961);
- Edward W. Said’s *Orientalism* (1995); and,
- Homi K. Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture* (1994).

In the current chapter, the novels under discussion are argued as narratives of cultural hybridity. The present thesis analyses the relation between colonised and the coloniser in the light of the theories of the three thinkers, and highlights identity crisis, cultural difference, and the concept of “Othering”. All these essentials and premises befit and benefit the current argument. The three novels crisscross the three theorists regarding personality conflict and self-doubt. However, the interaction and communication take place in the Motherland and not in the ‘native’ land, which is more excruciating than
what the theorists suggest in the case of the relation between the coloniser and the colonised. All the three anti-Orientalist and anti-conquest tales start off with dichotomous identities and split viewpoints resulting in the realisation of self-discovery and self-awareness. The characters flashback and beam forth in self-search. The process is cumbersome and tedious, rife with physical and psychosocial impediments, yet mirrored with hope to regain all that is lost—the cultural, national and ethnic identity.

4.2. Cultural Synergy in Mohsin Hamid’s The Reluctant Fundamentalist

4.2.1. The Reluctant Fundamentalist: An Overview

The Reluctant Fundamentalist accosts the subject of identity predicament in the post-9/11 scenario. Changez, a protagonist of the novel, oscillates between hybridity and transformation after the 9/11 strikes in the U.S. at the time when he is on his professional trip to Manila. The young promising and prosperous employee of the Underwood Sampson transmutes in the wake of 9/11 and returns to his native essence. After graduating from Princeton and having seen and experienced the lucrative lifestyle of America, he turns out to be anti-American and anti-Imperial due to how the outsiders in the U.S. are maltreated, especially the Muslims. As a result, Changez firmly endeavours for indigenisation and identification with Pakistan. He is reluctant to live by the sensate secular and capitalistic fundamentalism of the U.S. and formulates propositions in preparation for homecoming/returning. This chapter deals with Changez’s, the narrator’s, dramatic monologue of the American dream and reality while focusing on his conflated identity before the 9/11.

event (pp. 17, 172, 312). Throughout its narrative, the novel explores the development of the hero Changez’s rapport with America and its fluctuating and varying subtleties explicitly. The novel describes Changez’s thriving affiliation with the American dream while graduating from Princeton to his promising job in a renowned finance company. However, later in the novel things changed after 9/11, ending in his disappointment with and disparagement of the American dream and its reality. The drastic change is in total contrast to the beginning of the novel, which reflects the hero’s assimilationist leaning and cultural synergy.

The novel received global attention and appreciation because of its vital imperative about an identity crisis and its subsequent implications. It concentrates on pre-and-post-9/11 America and focuses on the life of a protagonist who was tragically affected by the incident and its aftereffects. The novel’s hero presents the portrait of a Pakistani who envisages a prosperous and stable American future, but his unreciprocated love and the 9/11 terrorist attacks motivated him to reconsider his hybrid identity. The novel employs the traditional literary technique of the dramatic monologue with a tacit yet dynamic persona.

The novel earned several prizes and awards, including the Asian American Literary Award and was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize. James Lasdun (2007) comments about it as the voice of the hero who speaks of the dichotomy between the East and West:

The novel is his monologue: is a quietly told, cleverly constructed fable of infatuation and disenchantment with America, set on the treacherous faultiness of current east/west relations, and finely tuned to the ironies of mutual—but especially American prejudice and misrepresentation.

(para.2)

Hamid’s life itself is full of fluctuations, which manifestly reflects in his fiction work. As a migrant, he travelled to and was educated in the U.S. and Europe to secure a stable socio-economic future; however, the 9/11 drastically changed everything. The terrorist attacks shattered his dreams of settling in the U.S., as he was maltreated along with other Muslims and Pakistanis. To his great dismay and disappointment, he was
disillusioned about the American dream and its immediate realisation. Immediately, after 9/11 the U.S. initiated unceasing and ever-escalating humiliating insult upon injury on Pakistanis, which traumatised their anger and despair, distraction and anguish.

The current chapter covers Hamid’s life before the American tragedy, with glimpses of the transitional period of his life. Hamid’s higher education and his promising job as an accounts consultant at the Mckinsey & Company offered a vision of success and hope. He had rarely thought of returning to Pakistan, his homeland. Besides, his love affair with an American woman and acclimatisation to the American lifestyle suited his temperament and passion for a booming life. Cultural hybridity in Hamid’s life was so imbued in him that he would seldom think of leaving the posh American society. The present chapter highlights the first half of Hamid’s life, as reflected in Changez, the novel’s protagonist. It deals with cultural hybridity and societal synergy in the U. S. and the subsequent changeover.

4.2.2. Pre and Post-9/11 Certainty Versus Ambivalence

Changez, the narrator and the protagonist of the novel, is acquainted with the audience while talking to a foreigner, ‘the Outsider’, at a cafeteria in Lahore, Pakistan. By then, Changez has transformed into an archetypal fundamental Muslim and a patriotic Pakistani. That startles the foreigner, who is later on introduced as an American. Inspired by Albert Camus’s The Fall (1957), Juan-Bautista in The Reluctant Fundamentalist, alludes to Jean-Baptiste Clamence, a self-confessed “judge penitent”, who narrates his dramatic monologue to a stranger, of his fall and failure from prosperity to adversity. Mohsin Hamid admits The Fall as a paradigm for The Reluctant Fundamentalist, mainly in its form and style. While comparing the two protagonists, Hamid redresses and compensates for Changez’s life, which he had opted for and settled on. Though, Changez describes himself as “a lover of America”, and offers his willing hospitality to the American (Hamid, 2007, p.1). However, his real intention remains ambiguous, as he continues with his oddly long narration of his life-span in America and explains the series of happenings that urged him back to his country. Here the predatory description and violent imagery of Changez leaves the reader speculative about who will be the victor and who the vanquished, at the end of the story (Sooke, 2007). Hereupon, the readers have the choice to decode the conversation going on between the two, which Hamid (2011) explains as a “version of what happens in the
book, and the book in turn moves and shifts and reflects in response to the individual inclinations and worldviews of the readers” (2011, para.13). The narrative is capable of creating empathy for the diasporic audience toward the “process of identification” through various vistas while challenging the slender Western outlook (Hartnell, 2010, p. 337). In effect, the preceding is a cue to the curious reader to employ the ‘Reader Response Theory’, to interpret the novel for understanding.

4.2.3. Changez’s Private and Public Saga

Changez begins his dramatic monologue by narrating his arrival in America when he was in his late teens. His first contact with Princeton for education meant much to him because he fantasised his dream to be coming true—the dream of economic stability and social cohesion. “This is a dream come true. Princeton inspired in me the feeling that my life was a film in which I was the star and everything was possible” (Hamid, 2007, p. 3). The feeling and experience was of being different; and, most probably superior to other students, as a step forward from being ordinary.

I was, I must admit, overly generous in my initial assumptions about the standard of the student body….the non-Americans among us tended on average to do better than the Americans, and in my case I reached my senior year without having received a single B. (2007, pp. 3-4)

Changez’s inflated self-image: his self-reliance and self-admiration even propel him to self-possession, for he considers himself to be exceptionally outstanding in comparison to his peers. This self-image verges on pride in being capable of settling in the American society forever. He states that “every fall, Princeton raised her skirt for the corporate recruiters who came onto campus and…showed some skin, of course—young, eloquent, and clever…I knew in my senior year that I was something special…” (2007, p. 5). Changez is further encouraged and reassured of his talent when he, after graduating, gets a job at the Underwood Samson, a well-reputed organisation, as a finance consultant and analyst. As his dreams are coming true, he feels simultaneously content and assertive in that: “the sky was a brilliant blue, so different from the orange, dusty sky above us today, and I felt something well up inside me, a sense of pride so strong that it made me lift my head and yell” (2007, p. 16). That enables him to utilise his potentials and skills at their best, to seek and secure economic strength and social
integration in America’s pluralist society. Gaining recognition and stabilising his socio-economic status was his ultimate goal, which he wanted to acquire with his qualification, competence and expertise.

After his short stint in Greece, Changez returns to his work at the Underwood Samson. He took pride in the professional appreciation of his colleagues and superiors; and in his substantial income. Commitment and dedication to his work, his impressive innate courtesy and civility, and fraternising with the American peers and friends earned him great success. The initial sense of cultural “otherness” seemingly disappeared with such personal and professional success. Thus, his socialisation, acculturation and academic excellence were assets leading to his stable future. Changez “stood out from the pack” because “he was aware of an advantage conferred upon [him] by [his] foreignness, and [he] tried to utilize it as much as [he] could” (2007, p. 47). As fortune favours him, he feels like “a veritable James Bond—only younger, darker, and possibly better paid” (2007, p. 64). In effect, he is absorbed in an environment that reflects foreignness and exoticism. His “cultural hybridity” and syncreticity help to boost his booming future.

Changez’s private life is also quite successful after he starts working at the Underwood Samson. He has the opportunity for an official visit to Greece, along with his colleagues, which he finds helpful. Primarily, he is selected to assist his friends as he “was well-liked as an exotic acquaintance by some of the others” (2007, p. 19). There he comes across a “stunningly regal” girl—Erica. Right away, Changez feels drawn to her, because of her enticing beauty. Changez’s “magnanimous silence”, pleasant disposition and overwhelming personality triggers a love affair. This irresistible attraction added to his love for America and living there.

At times, the reader is reluctant to rely on Changez’s monologue through Hamid, who relates a realistic account (and not just overstating or bragging) and, hence attempting to convince the readers through his clever dramatic techniques. As Changez tries his best to appear impressive, charming and well-off, he tends to create the impression of manipulation: that everything is being engineered and unnatural. That is why Changez’s unpredictability echoes throughout the novel.
4.3. Self-Resolute Relations

4.3.1. Personal-Political Nexus Iconized and Symbolized

The narrative popularises the postcolonial conceptual framework while underlining the related concepts like migration, appropriation, mimicry, stereotyping, ambivalence, liminality, difference, national culture, neoimperialism and hybridity, in the midst of the waning geographical frontiers. The storyline reflects the Saidian (1995) perspective of “mutual siege [that] links imperializer with the imperialized”—the West and East—America and Pakistan—in the pre-9/11 world (pp. 194-195). Despite documenting the long-standing animosity between the East and West, largely incited by the West, (particularly, in Orientalism) Said (1995) advocates, “intellectually, ideologically, and politically” motivated discernment about each other (p. 326). For that matter, he deems it befitting for the “other” to appropriate the Western cultural norms, ideological principles, and political pattern. That is documented in Ngugi Wa Thiongo’s The River Between (1965) and Tayeb Salih’s Season of Migration to the North (1969)—an antithesis of Joseph Conrad’s Heart of Darkness (1899). It is an archetypal colonial expedition to Congo (Africa)—the Third World Space. These novels unravel the colonial discourse to retranslate the clichéd and fixed identities of the respective characters through a postcolonial examination. The narratives by Ngugi and Salih resemble Mohsin Hamid’s novel, as it initially occupies a liminal space in Western society. However, later in the novel, the protagonist dissents with the insular oriental outlook of the imperialist. Contrary to the concept of fixed identities stereotyped by the Orientalists, earlier section of the novel, attempts to negotiate the identity for the “[accommodation and] assimilation with dignity” in global American culture where the protagonist strives to settle for an improved socio-economic future (Brennan, 1997, p. 40). For that reason, Changez reveals that he became “immediately a New Yorker” (Hamid, 2007, p. 33). His love of America, particularly, New York, attracts Changez, despite the socio-cultural confines and political restraints, in the pre-9/11 world. He was so reliant on his attachment with America that: “nothing troubled [him]; [he] was a young New Yorker with the city at [his] feet” (2007, p. 43). That ensures his professional future and promises a fulfilling life in the metropolis.

Even though Changez lives in a metropolitan city that stands for global fascination, he firmly adheres to his affiliation with Pakistan. ‘Foreignness’ here is constructive and
helpful to him in the pre-9/11 metropolis: as “an advantage conferred upon [him] by [his] foreignness [that he] tried to utilize as much as [he] could” (2007, p. 42). His strong attachment to Pakistan is seen in two different places in the narrative, which is vital to the development of the story. Firstly, it is noticed when he singles out Erica, who is an upper-middle-class Manhattan girl, as his choice for a visit. He appears in the typical Pakistani Kurta on their first meeting, which makes him “unusual”. Secondly, when he feigns to be “hungry” before Jim, his interviewer for a Wall Street job and reveals his “Third World” exoticness with pride and confidence. Although it is known to Jim that he boasts of a better socio-economic position in Pakistan, he aspires to secure a reputed status in the global north. The assertion of his eccentricities in his Pakistaniness helps him on to a prestigious position in the metropolitan New York.

Changez’s self-perception was deep-rooted in his societal socialisation and family upbringing, of which he was always proud. Even in his homeland, he defines himself as an offspring of “a family of great wealth” (2007, p. 11). That was even though his family could not bear the burden of his educational expenditures and, for that purpose, he applied for a scholarship for admission to the Princeton. However, he explains that “status, as in any traditional, class-conscious society, declines more slowly than wealth” (2007, p.11). Changez describes his family background, which is “not so different from that of the old European aristocracy in the nineteenth century, confronted by the ascendance of the bourgeoisie” (2007, p. 11). Ostensibly, he takes pride in Pakistan’s history, culture, and traditional values, presenting them on par with the Western society. He rather considers his cultural heritage as older than the West. He compares Princeton’s buildings of the Victorian era with those of Lahore as the “ancient capital of the Punjab, home to nearly as many people as New York, layered like a sedimentary plain with the accreted history of invaders from the Aryans to the Mongols to the British” (2007, p. 8). That shows his love for the historical legacy of Pakistan that he boasts of. Thus, overall, his words and deeds display his indigenous cultural superiority and his status-conscious disposition, which are not blurred by time.

Similarly, Changez calls himself the “reluctant fundamentalist”—an expression which inseparably implies Islam and the Muslims in the neoliberal Western terminology. He drinks liquor quite habitually, talking about the difficulty of its availability in Pakistan. Also, he relates the drinking of liquor to notable Pakistani and Indian literary writers,
saying that “in our poetry and folklore, intoxication occupies a recurring role as a facilitator of love and spiritual enlightenment” (2007, p. 54). Another example is his sporting a beard, not as an inspiration of Islam but to indicate his antipathy and bitterness to the American Islamophobia. Changez forgets that the beard is also a Western social media and movie fad.

A substantial portion of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* talks of Changez’s interaction with Erica and their dramatic and romantic relationship, which waxed and waned with time. Changez’s passionate obsession with her, symbolises his fervent American dream as its living reality, for he repeatedly visualises its ultimate consummation in marriage. His nexus with Erica unlocks the doors to “an insider’s world—the chic heart of the city—to which [Changez] would otherwise have had no access” (2007, p. 56). Thus, emotion is Changez’s key to his free entrance, expressed as under:

> I was presumptuous enough to think that this was how my life was *meant* to be, that it had in some way been inevitable that I should end up rubbing shoulders with the truly wealthy in such exalted settings.
> (2007, p. 85)

In the beginning, their relationship goes pleasantly for Changez, as he imagines himself to be at the pinnacle of every possible success. The socio-economic status at the Underwood Sampson and his relations with Erica are the twin exponential accomplishments that he is pleased with and proud of, and both are directly proportional to each other: the rise of one would motivate the other and vice versa. Thus, Changez is so obsessed with the temptations of the American dream that it becomes inseparable from his existence. In Hamid’s (2007) words, Changez states that political and personal rapport are inseparable in the novel, as each influences the other, especially when it comes to some critically certain intersections (Hamid, “The Reluctant Fundamentalist”).

The story of Changez narrates the intermingling of Pakistani and American cultures, which is reassured through his dramatic monologue and corresponding actions. He presents the Pakistani culture to be as modern as the American culture by referring to Pakistani girls at the National College of Arts, Lahore, who wear T-shirts and jeans,
thus projecting Pakistan as a progressive and forward-looking country, sharing similar views and values with the U.S. (Hamid, 2007). In fact, Pakistani society takes pride in following the American lifestyle and being impressed by it. Such cultural imitation and appropriation make Pakistan a close ally of the U.S. and its people. Both are presented as liberal and broad-minded, sharing an identical understanding of global affairs. Thus, paradoxically, true Islam and authentic Muslimness are missing in the narrative of Changez—mainly before the 9/11 life in the U.S. However, this Islamic identity features surface in the post-9/11 world.

4.3.2. The Symbolism of Names

Allegorical and symbolic suggestiveness is yet another characteristic of the novel. Such allusive representations are quite noticeable in the names of the dominant characters of the novel: Erica, symbolically stands for American magnificence, beauty and brilliance, and “American Nationalism [as a] compelling exploration of the narrative of American innocence” (Hartnell, 2010, p. 346). Likewise, Changez according to some critics, symbolises ‘change’ (Elia, 2012, p. 69; Moore-Gilbert, 2012, p. 193). This ‘change’, both, internal and external, is unnerving for Changez and the U.S. The “gnawing feeling of never quite fitting in” presents an ambivalent and dubious Changez, whom neither loathes nor adores America, and is suspended between the status quo and the present state (Cilano, 2009, p. 203). That creates a “deterritorialized identity”, which is at odds with and incompatible with the liminal space he is living in (Moore-Gilbert, 2012, p. 193). Therefore, as “an insider and outsider…he embodies the postcolonial condition of a world citizen who has to come to terms with his ambivalence and in-betweenness” (Elia, 2012, p. 59). While on the one hand, he is irresistibly attracted to be employed in a well-esteemed valuation firm, on the other, his first contact with Jim’s intrusive manner of speaking is, what he thought to be indiscreet and exasperating.

About the interpretation of the symbology of the name ‘Changez’, Hamid disagrees and contends that the name stands for a medieval Mongolian warrior, Changez Khan. Changez refers to Changez Khan’s indigenous “tribal” identity and patriotism, and not necessarily Changez Khan’s animosity towards the Muslims and Islam. Thus it would be a peculiar name for a conservative Muslim (Repino & Hamid, 2013). However, the protagonist, Changez is (in his capacity) a competent combatant in a globally acclaimed valuation firm who by dint of his expertise and enthusiasm strives to earn popularity
and financial gain both for himself and his company. Thus, Changez is a symbolic icon of a continued tussle with the neo-imperialism of Euro-America to prove his indigenous identity—the realisation of which was much felt after 9/11. However, the pre-9/11 Changez is the emblem of American sophistication, which vitally signifies immersion in American culture, education, language and professionalism. His academic excellence in the Harvard Business School and his dream job at the Underwood Samson were all that he craved for. The gradual development of his personality encouraged and ensured his absorption in a culture where he was received, initially, as a Muslim “Other”—the “ Outsider”. His American conviction found firm ground when he fell in love with Erica, as assonance with America.

All these characteristics and achievements made Changez an entirely different person, who was set on concealing his Pakistani identity and who presented himself as an American: “on that day, I didn’t think of myself as a Pakistani, but as an Underwood Samson trainee, and my firm’s impressive offices made me proud” (Hamid, 2007, p. 38). Referring to the day of his selection at a prestigious valuation company, Changez feels so proud of his professional brilliance and desires that he could tell his family right then about the distinction he had earned. His conceit and narcissism swelled further when he was reminded of the company’s competence by his bragster boss that: “we’re a meritocracy…. We believe in being the best…[and you being the exclusive among the top-quality]” (2007, p. 39). Such professional projection induced him to be called as a “New Yorker”. Changez’s assimilation in and simulation of the posh American culture hybridised his personality into a new being, who is detached and isolated from his origin, at least temporarily.

Changez’s parallel is found in Sri Ram of R. K. Narayan’s Waiting for the Mahatama (1955). In the present context, “effects of cultural displacement” and resistance of the “Other” drive the characters to hybrid identities and urge them to imitate the coloniser—the West (Bertens, 2013, p. 200). Both the protagonists hail from the South Asian subcontinent and are enamoured by the whiteness of Western women. For that matter, both are mesmerised and captivated by the “white culture, white beauty, and white whiteness” (Fanon, 1952, pp. 45, 88). Symbolically, whiteness, in all its forms and manifestations, stands for Western civilisation, which the “Other” yearns to grasp and own for honour, dignity and economic success. In the Sacred Symbolism of
(almost) all creeds, the colour ‘White’ symbolises purity, piety, chastity, and simplicity and—not cultural superiority and arrogance. Putting on the coloniser’s cultural guise, at the risk of losing one’s own identity, is the only means of survival and growth in the Western corporate system and materialistic society. To Homi K. Bhabha (1994) “pure identity only is possible through the death of complex interviewing of history” (p. 5). That is quite quizzical to interpret. He further states that the issue of “Otherness”, is not only grappled with in relation of one nation to other, but each nation within itself is split up into varied cultural components and societal diversification (1994, p. 148). Bhabha’s argument highlights the need for dehistoricizing the cultural values and stresses cultural interaction and collaboration, regardless of historical and cultural roots. Thus, such an encounter of cultures within one geographical location or contact zone is a resourceful advantage, and, in turn, contributes to the growth and strength of hybridity. Gayatri Spivak (1999), too, while endorsing Bhabha’s concept, points out that “cultural language is today dominated by space rather than time” (p. 313). However, ignoring history is easier said than done.

Changez, in the current context, best qualifies for gaining a secure niche in the Western society, as he accepts, mimics and adopts the American lifestyle. Reciprocally, American culture also accepts and assimilates Changez, without considering his geo-historical background, which he is proud of and brags, now and then. Lauren Benton and John Muth (2000) are of the opinion that any non-European who challenges the Western morals, stereotyped as supreme and superior is called a brute and barbarian; and if an ally of the West does the same, he is labelled as smart, talented and quick to adapt to the Western norms. Thus, by espousing and engaging in the American communal pattern of the neo-imperial master, it promptly admits and accepts Changez. As Changez mimics and appropriates “Americanism”, he is entitled to and granted certain socio-economic perks and privileges for a sustainable future. What Changez gives and gains—and loses—in his Americanisation—is at best, debatable. Similarly, “Erica”, who stands for “America”, symbolises the volatile and fragile relationship between the East and West—corresponding to the pre and post-9/11 America (Hartnell, 2010, p. 337; Lasdun, 2007, p. 2; Moore-Gilbert, 2012, p. 192). Before 9/11, she “attracted people to her; she had a presence, an uncommon magnetism…a lioness: strong, sleek, and invariably, surrounded by her pride…at a degree of remove from those around her” (Hamid, 2007, p. 22). This assortment of attractiveness and
unfriendliness arises from America’s faith in “its inviolability and…the manifest rightness of its cause” (Gray, 2011, p. 11). 9/11 crafted a “crack inside her” (Hamid, 2007, p. 59), as she was “disappearing into a powerful nostalgia” (2007, p. 113). The parallel between the relations of Erica and Changez and the 9/11 historical crossroads turns out to be ominous when Changez begins to sense that “America, too, was increasingly giving itself to a dangerous nostalgia at that time” (2007, pp. 114-5).

Most Orientalists critique that Erica’s craving for Chris (Erica’s former boyfriend) is comparable to America’s nostalgia for a prelapsarian age before 9/11. However, the comparison gets confounded when Erica allegedly commits suicide, probably suggesting that the New World is losing connection with its past glory and power. Chris is a symbol of American imperialism and domination, being an emblem of power and control. Chris, stands for Christianity as well as Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of America in 1492 A.D., as implied by Richard Gray (2011) in the following words:

This is a novel set in and about a liminal world, a proliferating chain of borders, where characters and cultures cross and recross the landscape, dissolving and reconfiguring…past and present, Muslim and American, East and West. The verbal slippages, such as Erica/(Am)erica, Changez/ changes and Chris/ Christopher Columbus are a vital part of this. (p. 62)

Therefore, this triangular symbolic and entwined relationship moves up and down as the story gradually progresses. Pun on the names of characters, itself, is of significant import, as it locates and reconstructs the identities of the main characters while referring to and invoking the history. Whatever the reason might be in choosing names having such geo-historical connotations, the fact remains apparent that they have a profound and significant impact on the identities of the central characters. Identities are derived most probably and most consciously from ancient bygone roots, to invite the attention of the readers and the critics alike to make clear what their history denotes about the said essential characters. Also, names are influential on the personality traits of the protagonists, which, in turn, is reflected in one’s actions. Thus, each name is compatible with the person, affecting one’s behaviour and its results.
4.3.3. Memorabilia and Nostalgia in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*

Changez is so fascinated by and engaged in his ultimate passion for the U.S. that, despite his love advances to Erica being turned down, he never renounces imitating the American society. The more he is rebuffed in his fleeting “love affair”, the more his hybridity gets stronger and deep-rooted. Also, in his extreme desperation, he pretends to be Chris to tackle the predicament of his unsuccessful assimilation into the American society and system. In doing so, he desires to be known as a member of the American neo-colonial consumeristic society, even at the expense of his Pakistani identity. In becoming Chris, he even shakes off his eccentricity and originality and deliberately wears a guise of an insider. That makes him acceptable to Erica, at least—momentarily. However, what is more, important here is that Changez is welcomed in his new fake identity, but only at the stake of his real identity. This provisional acceptance by Erica puts him temporarily in a state of immense excitement and elation (Hamid, 2007). At this juncture, he feels mixed emotional states of being both an insider and an outsider because he had lost one identity and yet did not truly gain another. Also, he “had diminished” his integrity and scruples and “was humiliated by the continuing dominance” (2007, p. 106). The recurrent appearance of and the gradual growth in the relationship between Erica and Changez never ripen to maturity, both physically and psychologically. Despite her compassion and kindness, Erica continues to be inaccessible to the esoteric and isolated Changez: “out of reach, lost in thoughts unsaid” (2007, p. 25). Hence, unification of Erica and Changez seems a far cry and an unfulfilled dream.

Changez is entirely imbued in the American society and his love for Erica, which assures him falsely of being part of the New World; his dilemma is that he cannot be like Chris, a former boyfriend of Erica. Chris, even after his death, stays poignantly in Erica’s memory, thereby influencing her identity. She wears Chris’ pullover as a token of their love for each other. She continues to regard Changez to be an outsider. James Lasdun thinks that her reminiscences of and longing for Chris signify the “nation’s fraught relationship with its moment of European discovery and conquest, while the narrator himself stands for the country’s consequent inability to [welcome and] accept, uh, Changez [–the change]” (2007, p. 2). Manifestly, Erica adores cultural affinity to her homeland by honouring her love for Chris. Even though Changez acquired a secure
and stable socio-economic position in New York, Erica’s family believed him to be non-American who belonged to a former colony (Hamid, 2007). The hope of and desire for gaining Erica’s love and apprehension of losing it are the twin natural parallel factors which always come into play, pestering Changez’s emotional and psychological stability. Changez is aware of the fact that Erica cannot live without the nostalgic memory of Chris while being resiliently infatuated with him. This dichotomy makes things for him equally uncertain and unpredictable. Innately, Erica’s identity is unchangeably stable, for she has vowed to live by the memory of Chris. By contrast, Changez’s identity is wavering and unsteady, as he is yet to decide about his self and the exotic system around him. Like an emotional roller coaster, Changez is still optimistic about his American dream by his qualifications. Oscillating between his original Pakistani indigenous identity and desperate love for America, Changez becomes the “Reluctant Fundamentalist”. However, during his initial period, he is irresistibly attracted to the worldliness of America. That is quite obvious from his failed attempt to win the love of Erica (Hamid, 2007). Having constituted a parallel between Erica and America, Moore-Gilbert (2012) believes Changez’s façade to please Erica indicates America’s desire to transform “the new immigrant Other into a version of the same” (p. 192). The outcome is unlikely, as argued by Zizek (2002) on the subject of the claimed liberalism in the American pluralistic society because it would need to experience “the Other deprived of its Otherness” (p. 11). Therefore, Changez’s attempt to please Erica (metaphorically America) is a long way off.

4.3.4. Personal-Political Node in The Reluctant Fundamentalist

The Reluctant Fundamentalist illustrates the personal and political relationships of the U.S. and Pakistan, at least within the context of 9/11, as an age of neocolonialism and neo-imperialism. Ever since British decolonisation and the independence of Pakistan in 1947, its people have been impacted by the politico-economic rise of the U.S. Resultantly, the cross-cultural contact and exchange of thought and action, behavioural patterns, worldviews, and people-to-people relationships greatly influenced the individual and collective identities, especially of Pakistanis, as they look to the U.S. as a country of better economic opportunities. However, the interaction between the two countries has been volatile and checkered over time for several reasons.
Contextualising the novel in the present setting of Pak.-U.S. relationship, Changez’s precarious romantic affair with Erica—metaphorically stands for Pakistan’s complexly uncertain relations with the U.S. The love-link between the two seems to blossom only when Changez disguises himself as Chris but that again, is a fleeting pleasure. However, Changez feels distraught and troubled by adopting an alien pseudo-identity of which he testifies that “by taking on the persona of another, I had diminished myself with my own eyes; perhaps I was humiliated by the continuing dominance, in the strange romantic triangle of which I found myself a part, of my dead rival” (Hamid, 2007, p. 121). Such embarrassment and denigration of Changez aggravates the relationship between the two—allegorically between the U.S. and Pakistan. At the personal as well as political levels, such as semi-acceptance but ultimate dismissal, disillusions Changez entirely with his American dream, disengaging from all that is related to American identity and identification.

Secondly, Changez’s professional downfall from economic magnificence is another symbolic representation of the rift between the two ally countries. Such uncertainty of friendship has also at times given rise to tension and unease. The interlocutor speaks with the American in the novel: “you prefer that seat, with your back so close to the wall? Very well, you will benefit less from the intermittent breeze, which, when it does blow, makes these warm afternoons more pleasant. And will you not remove your jacket?” (2007, p. 2). That demonstrates how uncomfortable the American citizen is in Pakistan and how insecure he feels in the bustling city of Lahore. This aloofness increases as the novel progresses and the impression of ill-feeling escalates after the 9/11 strikes. Emma Duncan’s *Breaking the Curfew* (1989) also alludes to the same conflictive ties of the Pak.-U.S. friendship in the wake of Zia-ul-Haq’s murder, the war in neighbouring Afghanistan, and the booming business of drugs in the region.

### 4.4. Collocation of the East and West: Pakistan and America

*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* begins with a dramatic monologue by Changez in the busy city of Lahore, Pakistan, as a “crossroad” between “a Muslim stronghold and an agency of American power”—whose listener is a foreigner, “the American” (Gray, 2011, p. 59). Changez recognises the foreigner as an American when he addresses him: “it was your *bearing* that allowed me to identify you, and I do not mean it as an
insult…but merely as an observation” (Hamid, 2007, p. 2). Although the intentions of the American are yet to be known, it is presumed in the novel that he is either a tourist who coincidentally met Changez at the cafeteria or had been spying on him. That is why, the narrator says of the interlocutor that “I noticed that you were looking for something; more than looking, in fact, you seemed to be on a mission” (2007, p. 1). By far, this reinforces Changez’s position and his vantage point.

Hamid’s objective is to deconstruct the narrative to isolate the American from his homeland and to represent him “beyond the boundaries of the nation-state, both for America and others”, in an imperilled condition beyond the frontiers of his country (Rothberg, 2009, p. 158). In doing so, the two may converse on an equal footing. Changez has the edge, being on his home soil, to assert his identity. Also, coming across an American and narrating to him his story also reflects Changez’s attachment to and affection for his American past. Thereby, Changez’s American dream surfaces (achingly) when he meets the American character that, too, evokes his reminiscent past. The American character seems to be a passive listener in the conversation. However, his reaction is reflected in Changez’s monologue and the listener’s facial expressions. Changez speaks in an odd tone, fusing token courtesy coupled with seething resentment and exasperation. Such simulation in oral communication and ostentatious behaviour of Changez denote the looming impact on his personality, regardless of his social and educational background.

Fury, faith and “mutual suspicion” between the divergent poles of Islam and the West, the underdeveloped, or (euphemistically) developing world and the U.S., the dominated and the dominant are so commingled in Changez’s demeanour that his voice gets slurried and the conversation he puts across becomes a metanarrative rather than a sane speech (Elia, 2012, p. 67; Hartnell, 2010, p. 337). Hamid describes the situation as: “people often get literalist about these things…. Basically what’s happening here is that you’ve walked into a darkened theatre and there’s one actor on the stage taking you through the play” (Singh & Hamid, 2007). The juxtaposition of Changez and America is a conscious dramatic device by which the foreigner is made to listen silently to the voice of a Pakistani. Changez’s soliloquy turned speech reminds one of Edward Said’s (1994) concept of resistance when he refers to space/place “as a part of a general movement of resistance” (p. 212). Hence, displacement of the American from his native
country to Pakistan and making him listen to Changez’s speech is seemingly another success of the narrator.

In the current setting, Changez dominates the scene. Thereby, the readers can see how the foreigner is tightly tied to his chair, listening to Pakistan’s rant about the situation arising in the wake of 9/11 attacks. As a symbolic representation of Pakistan, Changez categorically stresses that fanaticism and fatalism have nothing to do with religion. And thus, Pakistanis are unjustly accused of terrorism and fundamentalism: “you should not imagine that we Pakistanis are all potential terrorists, just as we should not imagine that you Americans are all undercover assassins” (Hamid, 2007, p. 183). By implication, Changez also attempts to convince the American about how Pakistanis have been overshadowed, silenced and unheard of. That is only because of the inferior status imposed on the colonised, who have been silenced. However determinedly they may try to be heard, the American corporate media continue to drum biasedly against them.

Thus, the intended meaning and message to the West or Euro-America is to decry their domineering attitude and overbearing authority towards the Islamic East. However, Changez’s voice signals the mixed up feelings of his lost love, fury, and fright; yet driving home the notion of Pakistani nationalism and patriotism. That is indicative of the lingering nostalgia of his hybrid identity. Changez’s “shut up and listen” strategy casts doubts about his authenticity and the trustworthiness of his narrative, particularly his love-tale about Erica. Of course, a novel being primarily fictional is a kind of ‘concoction’, but fiction is generally based on the reality of life, into subjective stances and autobiographical elements.

Changez insistently accentuates his deep love for America and Erica with little evidence. Ann Marlowe (2007) critiques that Hamid’s anti-American sentiments were fictionalised in his novel. She adds that Mohsin Hamid in his talk shows, interviews and articles had articulated his indignant remarks about America, and had portrayed it differently than what he says in The Reluctant Fundamentalist through Changez to an unfamiliar American in Lahore. Her comment on the novel is: “anti-American agitprop clumsily masquerading as a work of art. People who are buying RF are sending their money to someone who is aggressively anti-American” (2007, para.3). Hamid challenges this criticism, retorting that Changez’s reflections do not necessarily mirror
in him. Further confounding the situation, the author propounds that the American in the novel can be looked at from a different perspective. Marina Budhos (2007) has indicated that *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is an “intentional misnomer”, as the protagonist is “not a reluctant fundamentalist but a reluctant anti-American” (para.9). Changez oscillates between and swings around split identities.

Some critics may consider Hamid as an emissary of intercultural and interreligious harmony for his neutral views and impartial understanding. That can be considered in the light of his clarification that “part of the reason people abroad resent the United States is something Americans can do very little about envy…but there is another major reason for anti-Americanism: the accreted residue of many years of U.S. foreign policies” (Hamid, 2007, paras-7 & 8). In Changez’s situation, such sentiments are experienced by him in his engagement with America. There is also his mounting consciousness of his involvement in the American scheme of global manipulation and control. The conflict between Changez’s love for America and his antagonism to the American globalistic dream motivates his personal growth and development. In the novel, Changez continues to express his hybrid feelings about his arrival and stay in America:

That was another world from Pakistan; supporting my feet were the achievements of the most technologically advanced civilization our species had ever known. Often during my stay in your country, such comparisons …made me resentful. Four thousand years ago, we…had cities that were laid out on grids and boasted underground sewers, while the ancestors of those who would invade and colonize America were illiterate barbarians. Now our cities were largely unplanned, unsanitary affairs, and America had universities with individual endowment greater than our national budget for education. To be reminded of this vast disparity was, for me, to be ashamed. (Hamid, 2007, p. 34)

Comparing and contrasting the fusion of the past and present to the American listener, Changez attempts to interlink his disillusionment with the political impasse; indicating that the collapse of his romantic affair led to his hostile xenophobia about the U.S. Thus, his idiosyncrasies and preoccupations about America are generalised and publicised
while narrating history, geography, ideology, politics, civilisation and contemporary issues.

The foreigner, however, gets suspicious that Changez is hiding the reality, because of his stammering in narrating what impacted his life in the U.S. Changez’s monologue unfolds information in bits and pieces but scarcely touches upon the American pulse. The more he asserts himself, the less he becomes reliable in the eyes of the foreigner. Changez says that “I can assure you that everything I have told you thus far happened, for all intents and purposes, more or less as I have described” (2007, p. 135). Likewise, in another place in the novel, Changez attempts to convince the American of his credibility in the following words: “but your expression, sir, tells me that you think something is amiss. Did this conversation really happen, you ask?... I am not in the habit of inventing untruths!” (2007, p. 173). Such self-defensive rationalisation by Changez creates doubts about his credibility and suspicion between the two. As the narrative progresses, the reader observes a mounting distrust between Changez and the American, which further raises questions about Changez’s truth. Changez, too, realises the shifty and sceptical situation, feeling that the initial trustworthy rapport between them had dissolved. By the end of the book, this is confirmed as under:

> It seems to me that you have ceased to listen to my chatter; perhaps you are convinced that I am an inveterate liar... It seems an obvious thing to say, but you should not imagine that we Pakistanis are all potential terrorists, just as we should not imagine that you Americans are all undercover assassins. (2007, pp. 208-209)

Changez encourages and assures the foreigner that he is not in danger and that none around him intends any harm to him. It is yet to be discovered whether either of these two protagonists survives by the end of the novel. Hamid leaves to the reader to decipher the ending of the novel and decide what turn it takes regarding the post-9/11 world. “I was certainly working towards an ambiguous ending, one which reflects the reader’s own view of the world back at him or her” (Harcourt & Hamid, 2007, para. 10). Hence, it is left to the readers to arrive at a convincing conclusion (about the destiny of the characters mentioned).
The novel is set in the post-9/11 scenario, so it brings to light the two contending views and visions: the Eastern Muslim outlook of Changez and the Euro-American perception on the 9/11 catastrophe and its aftereffects of the West, especially America. The views are incompatible and antagonistic in their perceptions of the post-9/11 East and West. The magnitude of the event and intensity of the attacks are mind-boggling and eye-opening. They inspire and foster thought and action to relocate and redefine the need and importance of indigenous identity and its timely determinate adoption. Integration and disintegration of cultural hybridity widen the rift between the East and West, sensitising and prompting people to indigenisation. These are steadily entwined in the novel with oscillating private and public experiences. Changez and the American are the two principal characters who delineate the fretfulness and unease of post-9/11 life, and its continuing perceptible anxiety to the present day. Dislodging the American from his origin and placing him in Pakistan is a successful attempt of the author through Changez to enable the readers to understand the East especially Pakistan. Changez explains Pakistan’s rich cultural legacy and historical heritage to an idiosyncratic Western visitor in an attempt to neutralise Western parochialism about the Muslim East.

4.5. Summation: Revisiting Indigenous Identity

At the Manila airport, while on a business trip after the 9/11 attacks, the devastating ignominy and shame begin when he is shocked by humiliating insult and verbal abuse. He had to face such disgrace because he was an Asian Muslim—people who were alleged to be the attackers on the twin towers, and such an affront caused him to collapse, physically, emotionally and psychologically. His American dream was dashed to the ground and smashed into smithereens, which he was unable to recreate. He felt like being suspended in mid-air. He thought about America and Erica that they were “encountering one another at a funeral” (Hamid, 2007, p. 91). In Erica’s case, Changez is considered as her psychological double, at her will and disposal. She initiates and decides about the destiny and destination of Changez without consulting him. Such a solo flight of Erica—metaphorically of America, makes Changez a silent spectator and a helpless lover—ironically, like his American passive listener. The weakness of Changez makes Erica more powerful and independent than ever. The cleavage created between Changez and America, like every relation, makes him rethink, introspectively
as well as retrospectively. Such action-oriented thought urged him on to seek indigenisation in Pakistan. The geographical distance between America and Pakistan is another symbolic reference to their ideological distance and difference.

The conclusion of their relationship is incredibly enigmatic. Erica’s nervous breakdown causes her hospitalisation for treatment, but the nature of her mental state remains undiagnosed. Later on, her clothes were found on the edge of a rock, when she had mysteriously disappeared from the hospital. It was suspected that she had committed suicide, but her dead body was never recovered. After that, Changez struggles to bury his poignant past, discarding his relation with all that was part of his sentimental past, indicating that “I was an incoherent and emotional madman, flying off into rages and sinking into depressions…. Affronts were everywhere; the rhetoric emerging from your country [America]” (2007, p. 190). While breaking away his relation with Am(Erica), Changez reproaches himself for making a strong affiliation with the country and its people that betrayed him, finally. That, too, collapsed his American dream and its subsequent reality.

Preoccupation and engagement with Am(Erica) had been the elemental cause of Changez’s ‘rise and fall’. In this context, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* significantly resonates with Peter Carey’s *His Illegal Self* (2008). The novel’s central characters fumble and stumble, despite having access to the civil rights of American citizenship, and find themselves detached from the sense of entitlement to American nationality. That is typified in the case of Changez. He feels unprotected, despite his protected living in the American pluralistic society and system.

In the given theoretical framework, to analyse identity and characters, personal and political parameters are unavoidable. Exclusively, identity is guided and patterned by political moves and shifts in the given conditions. Likewise, the relationship of Changez and Erica is more like a connection of the body and soul, destined to part, ultimately, to return to the soul’s source. Symbolically, that also applies to the Pak.-American relations rooted in their respective origins—their innately abiding national ideology and interest.
4.6. Cultural Eclecticism in H.M. Naqvi’s Home Boy

4.6.1. Home Boy: An Overview

Home Boy, another post-9/11 immigrant novel, shares same themes with The Reluctant Fundamentalist. It is an exhilarating and exciting account of love and loss, a clandestine, as well as exceptional introspection on America and the concept of collective and communal identity. Since the novel is written in the backdrop of 9/11, Naqvi calls it “the great global dialectic” in conditions of forfeiting true identity and retrospection of the past. In many ways, through the tale of its central character Chuck (Shehzad), Naqvi’s debut narrative Home Boy is a discovery of baffling, often exasperating dualities that indicates indictingly the American society and the migrant’s experience. Apparently, it is the hilarious and easy-going story of three friends: Chuck (Shehzad), AC (Ali Chaudry) and Jimbo (Jamshed), who are transiently settled in the U.S. Their noms de plumes and acclimatisation to posh American lifestyle are a portrayal of their hybridisation, or so to say, Bhabha’s cultural ‘in-betweeness’.

Cara N. Cilano (2013) remarks that “Chuck’s litany of ‘Others’ sets up a historical trajectory right from the start, insisting on a pattern in American domestic relations that pre-dates 9/11” (p. 201). Over time, personal freedom and individuality are at risk when the 9/11 event happens. People of different nationalities, especially Arab Muslims, are put to torture in solitary confinement for their alleged association with the terrorists of the 9/11 destruction.

Cara N. Cilano (2013) comments on The Reluctant Fundamentalist and Home Boy along with few other such Pakistani diasporic novels as: “these novels unsettle conventional migrant tropes by stressing its brutality… “war on terror[ism]” (p. 11). While on the one hand, 9/11 invites the ‘war on terror’ militant mission; on the other hand, it also revisits and redefines individual and national identities, which become imminent after 9/11. Thus, post-9/11 is another postcolonial era that historicises the past.

Home Boy, Naqvi’s debut novel was published in 2009 that almost instantly earned substantial marketability and literary success. Joseph Salvatore, in The New York Times (2009), remarked about the book that:
Naqvi’s smart and sorrowful debut is at once an immigrant narrative, bildungsroman and New York City novel, with a dash of the picaresque…. After 9/11, everything changes…. Finally, they decide action is called for: “There was something heroic in persisting, carrying on.”…“Home Boy” is a remarkably engaging novel that delights as it disturbs. (para.1)

Personally and socially engaged and immersed in contemporary American culture, the three central characters in the book are charmed by the New World and take pride to be part of it. Their immense elation is equally reciprocated by the American high culture that makes them settlers in New York, the bustling commercial city that they had never dreamt of and lived in. As for the novel’s thematic implication and import, Home Boy enfolds broad tropes related to the 9/11/2001 event like hybridity and identity crisis, themes of “Otherness” and “Muslimness”, self-estrangement and alienation, and material on phases of immigrant experiences. Although, much is left to the reader to decipher, as inconclusiveness permeates the novel. However, it drives home a definitive meaning and message in its crumbling echo. Each character is significant in a sense because it contributes to and influences the plot, differently and pivotally. Jimbo (Jamshed), as he is born and bred in America, is comfortable with everything around him, AC (Ali Chaudry) faces the disparate fretfulness which he has to struggle with, whereas Chuck (Shehzad) confronts the quest for identity and search for self.

4.6.2. Personal-Professional Narrative of the American Dream: Pre-9/11

Like Changez, Chuck (Shehzad) and the other main characters in Home Boy came to the U.S. as socio-cultural and ethno-racial “others” for educational and economic purposes, and to gain privileged social status in the country of opportunities. For the pursuit of these goals, the protagonist had to adjust to an exotic environment and conform to the American society, and that required him to put on the lens of American popular culture from which to see the world. Although the new identity he aspired for and acquired causes internal discomfort and dislodging at a later stage in the novel. The clash of dual identity leads Chuck to the unrelenting indignation of the U.S. and its intuitions. However, at the very outset of the narrative, the characters engage in a hybrid space before the 9/11. “Metrostanis” (Naqvi, 2009, pp. 14, 99) is the word Chuck uses
for his friends and himself, which means “to fuse this and that and the here and there into coherence” (Masroor & Naqvi, 2010). Suggestive both of the ‘metro’ and ‘metropolitan’, the word also means a bond linking people from across the different cultures and communities, as Naqvi (2009) puts it, like “glue keeping civilization together” (p. 26). Thus, metropolitan New York occupies a liminal geographical space and imaginative borderline, where people from around the world carry the baggage of their cultural norms and values, customs, behaviour patterns and respective lifestyles. Such cultural mixedness facilitates immigrants to get acquainted with life’s novelties to adopt them. The suffix ‘nis’ is an indigenisation like ‘Pakistanis’. “Metrostanis” accords with Gautam Malkani’s Londonstani (2006) referring to the hybrid community of London, hailing from different countries and communities. In Home Boy, Chuck, the first person narrator, who is originally from Karachi, Pakistan, came to America in mid-twenties, seeking economic prosperity. To him: “the pursuit of happiness is material” while living in the metropolis (Naqvi, 2009, p. 35). He left Pakistan for America for education in English/American literature, but later he switches to study banking and business. After completing his education, he started working in a bank on the Wall Street. But before long, he was dismissed from the job due to the economic recession. At this stage, he joins other immigrants, and together they look like “peas in a pod…denizens of the Third World turned economic refugees…by fate, by historical caprice” (2009, p. 16). Yet Chuck (Shehzad), A. C. (Ali Chaudry) and Jimbo (Jamshed), like Changez, think of themselves as clinging to a “third space” or a hybrid zone (Moore-Gilbert, 2012, p. 194). They believe, while conversing with one another, that they “have their fingers on the pulse of the great global dialectic”, and consider themselves to be lucky to be in America (Naqvi, 2009, p. 1). After continual twists and turns in the storyline, the characters remain confidently expectant of a bright future. Being so immersed or lost in the American society, they consider the precariousness of their situation as fleeting. Thus, their overwhelming presence keeps the plot going, vividly and vibrantly.

Like Changez, Chuck’s love relation with Amna, Jimbo’s sister, and Jimbo’s love relation with Duck are, again, soaring success in their private lives. That also encourages them to secure the meeting of the East and West through the tentative wedlock of the two couples. Conducive personal and professional pursuits lead the central characters to fuse with the New World and to comply with its abiding
sophistication. Besides, Jimbo’s family elders, living in America since the early 1980s, reassure their promising future in the country of multicultural and multinational backgrounds. So, several reasons allow them to be optimistic about their future in the U.S. and of its all-inclusive auspicious nature.

Chuck is introduced like other Muslim characters in the post-9/11 literature and presented as fanatical and extremist. Overall, the image of Muslims is overgeneralised and grotesquely brute even though Muslims in America come from different socio-cultural backgrounds and different value systems. They can be categorised into three distinct sections: South Asians, Arabs and Afro-Americans, which are further divisible into different geographical and diverse ideological backgrounds. In the existing context, Chuck and his companions belong to the first category, specifically, Pakistan. They seldom commented on Islam and Muslims before the 9/11 attacks. The study shows about South Asian Muslims, that: “while Arabic speakers often dominate as imams, or clerics, in mosques and educational settings, South Asians have a higher socio-economic profile and are arguably more privileged in American society” (Leonard, 2002, p. 2293). The characters confirm this in their portrayal in the first half of the novel before the 9/11 strikes, or more specifically, before their metamorphosis.

4.7. Reciprocal Self-Conviction

4.7.1. Pak.-U.S. Political Ties Epitomised in Socio-Personal Relations

Political ties between Pakistan and America echo in the socio-personal relations of the characters and their attachment with the U.S. In Home Boy, Chuck declares explicitly that: “you could, as Mini Auntie told me once, spend ten years in Britain and not feel British, but after spending ten months in New York, you were a New Yorker, an original settler” (Naqvi, 2009, p. 19). That enables Chuck to be like an American-born national, as he asserts that “you felt you were no different from anybody else” (2009, p. 20). The need and importance of cultural hybridity hold much more weight than racial and ethnic differences, in an accommodating metropolis. New York being the heart of opportunities and bright prospects, has magnetised Chuck and his friends. Chuck boasts that the “turn of the century had been epic”, while in the Tribeca pub scene “populated by the local Scandinavian scenesters and sundry expatriates as well as socialites, arrivistes, homosexuals, metrosexuals, and a smattering of has-been and wannabe
Tantalizing New York had been a beckoning dreamland for people from around the world seeking a bright future that would rarely fade. Moreover, metropolitanism and cosmopolitanism become inseparably coalesced in a manner that Chuck and his friends imagine America to be their real home.

Pakistaniness in the novel performs an equally important role for the three characters even though they are unwaveringly trapped by the American contemporary popular culture of rock and roll. Mostly, cultural eclecticism serves as an indicator of having their “fingers on the pulse of the great global dialectic” (2009, p. 1). Articulation of the Pakistani identity serves Frederick Jameson’s (1991) perception of “neo-ethnicity”, wherein the ethnic background is visualised as “a yuppie phenomenon” about trendy fads and fashions (p. 341). Therefore, Chuck’s “hookah” and “Pakistani carpet” speak for “integral accoutrements of urbanity” at the same time as “a new generation of native rockers” are listened to, with “Nusrat” as a witness to the self-proclaimed “renaissance men” (Naqvi, 2009, p. 1). Employing the Pakistani identity as a feature of their “mostly self-invented and self-made” identification become strikingly impressive in the metropolis’ party event when pointed out by a wealthy Manhattan jetsetter as “the famous Pakistanis!” She says so about the “Metrostanis” in her “swank corner apartment overlooking West Broadway” (2009, p. 23). Hence, in the present diasporic Pakistani novel, the characters introduce the Pakistani identity, which gladly contributes to the richness of the New York City and adds charm to the glamorous social fabric of American life.

On the contrary, the Muslimness of the protagonists is not revealed explicitly until the 9/11 happens. Also, Pakistani liberal and tolerant outlook on global affairs and cultural heterogeneity help to adapt them to American society. New York has accepted them because of their unbiased disposition and Westernised freethinking. Chuck jeeringly remarks about the Holy Quran, the sacred scripture of the Muslims, taunting:

Like most Muslims, I read the Koran once circa age ten and, like some, had combed through it afterward. There were issues in the Holy Book that were indisputable, like eating pork, but the directives concerning liquor could easily be interpreted either way. You should not, for instance, pray when hammered. (2009, p. 68)
Likewise, following 9/11, Ali Chaudry (A.C.) denies a television broadcast that says Muslims “are not the enemy of America [and the like, Islam’s] teachings are good and peaceful”, by commenting that “it’s violent, [pletive] religion, as violent as say, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, whatever. Man’s been killing and maiming in the name of God since the dawn of time” (2009, p. 122). At both places, the characters are unwilling to be identified as Muslims. Preferably, they project a secular identity that is typical of their hybrid-beings in a cosmopolitan backdrop. The novel revamps relations on geosociological terms and conditions, and not on the religious ground since religious associations lead to clash and contradiction in a cosmopolitan space.

Contrary to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the U.S., pre-9/11 situation allows people of all racial and ethnic groups to settle in America. That is unlike the “passing” in American society and adjustment of the Mulatto (of black and white ancestry) and the Mestizo (of European and Native American ancestry) whose racial backgrounds were slandered and subjected to character assassination. These ethnically besmeared fictional characters were thought of as inferior racial “others’ and were treated inhospitably in the then White-dominated American society. Thus, historicising hybridity in American society has two distinct phases: first, the pre-independence war period (before 1783), in which America had the least assimilationist tendency; and second, the post-war period (after 1945), that is characterised by cosmopolitanism, in which the “plural demography” became a socioeconomic and geopolitical capital for raising America.

Similarly, in Home Boy, Chuck acts out sanguinely and is happy with his stay in America, before 9/11. His experience of America and the Americans is highly encouraging and optimistic in comparison to other Western countries. He imagines that the founders of Pakistan came into contact with the United States as “hospitable, if not always hospitable” (Naqvi, 2009, p. 19). Thus, cosmopolitan New York offered itself as a liminal space and a pluralistic community for cultural hybridisation. Chuck and A.C hold contending views about New York when the latter curses the terrorists for their caustic acts in the city. Chuck vindicates the poignant memories of the metropolis. Curiously, the analyses are left to the reader to visualise and decide the congenial environment provided by New York.
It is the people of America who attract more grippingly than the geographical space itself. Thus, relations bind people rather than locations. Even though Chuck and his friends face humiliation, some Americans also help them. Chuck is set free by Gritty, the investigation officer, who takes the risk of losing his job to declare that the charges levied against him are fake. Similarly, Jimbo is helped out and finally released by Duck’s father, Drake. Also, Drake helps A.C. when the latter is charged with terrorism, again because the charge is false. For socio-cultural synchronisation between Pakistan and America, that is, symbolically between the East and West, the marriage of the Pakistani Muslim immigrant Jimbo and the American national Duck is assumed. That is indicative of the wedlock between the East and West, or the North and South. Jimbo’s father, Old Man Khan, who migrated to America years ago, remains a conventional Pathan. Therefore, Jamshed is a little reserved to share his feelings of love for Duck and tentative marriage. Chuck and Amna, Jamshed’s sister, is another couple whose possible marriage qualifies the friendly relationship between Pakistan and America. Despite Old Man Khan’s conservatism and reservations, he holds great respect for and admiration of Duck, which foretells the prospective marriage between Jim and Duck. While summing up such a warm acquaintance and alliance, Chuck anticipates that a “Pathan and Anglo-Saxon, Muslim and Episcopalian, immigrant and son of the soil” may explore a way forward to concomitance.

Towards the end in the Home Boy, the bond of mutual understanding is highlighted with an attempt to settle the dissension created between Pakistan and the U.S. American newspapers captioned the obituary of Mohammad Shah, “a Pakistani Gatsby” who lost his life in the 9/11 incident (2009, p. 27). In the meantime, Chuck attempts to counter the misapprehensions and fallacies about the 9/11 strikes and their association with Muslims. In fact, he tries to highlight the fact that the strikes were carried out by terrorists who have no religion but are merely bent upon striking terror in the hearts of innocent people. Also, he invites the attention of people around him that Muslims themselves fell prey to the tragedy and its aftermath.

The caption is informing the obituary of the deceased, Mohammad Shah, was titled as “NO FRIEND OF FUNDAMENTALISM” (2009, p. 213). As reported by Michael Leonard, a co-worker of Mr. Shah, who testified that he (Shah) was like an average Muslim immigrant who came to America in pursuit of education and socio-economic
prosperity and nothing else. He had achieved considerable success and got adjusted in the American society. Similarly, Chuck also decrying the notion that “Muslims are fundamentalists” (2009, p. 213) and states that Mr. Shah, a representative of the Pakistani Muslim community, hoped for a settlement in the U.S.

The Marxist critic, Timothy Brennan (1997), thinks that Home Boy overgeneralizes the relationship between the American national identity and “its famous, highly celebrated mixedness of population, which has created a repertoire of troping and a reason for being [authoritative]” (p. 9). Brennan argues that cultural hybridity is characterised by American-led objective(s) of assimilating cultures from across the globe, and creates cosmopolitan hegemony.

In this perspective, Homi K. Bhabha’s The Location of Culture (1994) and Roger Bromley’s Narratives For A New Belonging: Diasporic Cultural Fictions (2000) share almost similar viewpoints about transcultural existence in a transnational space, which rings out in Home Boy. According to Bhabha and Hall, such “double sense of identity” that is embedded in the diasporic characters like Chuck, A.C. and Jimbo dilute national identities, and “may be rendered existentially and analytically redundant” in the globalised world (Bromley, 2000, p. 9). From this stance, Home Boy heralds a new globalised fiction that embodies “a narrative of a possibly new belonging” (Bromley, 2000, p. 107). “The third space” vindicates fiction above fixed national compartmentalisation and geographical frontiers (Bhabha, 1994).

Also, such fiction is the representation of plural hybrid demography, which is beyond geopolitical, socio-economic and cultural constraints and binaries. Thus, such an ambivalent migrant society questions the concept of overgeneralized fusion and discourse of essentialized racism and ethnonationalism. Instead, it valorises and privileges the merging space towards amelioration. Characters in the Home Boy resonate with such participatory, experiential and contributory access to the culturally diverse society of the U.S.

In the current context, Roger Bromley goes a step forward than Homi K. Bhabha by globalising the notion of hybridity in literature and broadening the concept of cultural hybridity promoted by Stuart Hall. However, he overlooks the delegation of the power
structure in “the third space”. The novel initially follows Bhabha and Bromley, and later on switches to Brennan’s taxonomy of Americanisation (strong affection or support for the United States). Subliminally, the changeover is complicit with the American national identity and promotion of the American national ethos. Therefore, the protagonists inadvertently follow the “new ‘cosmopolitanism’” (Gilroy, 2005, pp. 287, 288). Such cultural amalgamation contributes to the promotion and richness of socio-cultural homogeneity of America. Also, such cultural synthesis serves American-led globalisation.

Werner Sollors’ *Neither Black Nor White* and Sterling A. Brown’s *Negro in American Fiction* (1997) note the cultural hybridity in the American racial and historical setting, contrary to Bhabha, Bromley and Brennen’s theories of hybridisation, which seems like a narrower exchange of cultural syncreticity in a racially divided America. Sollors’ deals with the black character, mulatto (of mixed white and black ancestry), in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century’s American fiction through the veil of whiteness. They are presented as an “ultimate marginal man” in an ethno-racially split American society, though having “passed” through it successfully (Sollors, 1997, p. 241). Nonetheless, Sterling (1969) objects to the presentation of the said characters, as he finds it emotionally appealing to the white audience, which he argues to be an antislavery fictional character with whom the white American can sympathise. He states that “the real Gamut of Negro life and character” in Sollors’ portrayal of tragic characters are missing and the socio-political semblances of serfdom are either omitted or lost to be noted down (1969, p. 46).

Thus, *Home Boy* voluntarily partakes in occupying the public hybrid space in the New World, while following the theoretical tenets of critical thinkers mentioned above. Such diasporic and syncretic experiences of living in a host society enable them to attune to the American system and society. The protagonists gladly and readily stalk Salman Rushdie’s *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000), where the conflated music album “Quakershaker” produced by the two Indian music celebrities, Vina and Ormus, explains the album as:

> America which by losing certitude has newly opened itself to the external world responds to the un-American sounds Ormus adds to his
tracks: the sexiness of Cuban horns, the mind-bending patterns of the Brazilian drums, the Chilean woodwinds moaning like the winds of oppression, the African male voice choruses like tree’s swaying in freedom’s breeze, the grand old ladies of Algerian music with their yearning squawks and ululations, the holy passion of the Pakistani qawwals. (p. 379)

The varieties of musical symphonies from around the globe are stashed away from their sources and reconstructed for the “young Americans, in search of new frontiers” to take advantage of (2000, p. 379). The album is not simply a mosaic of musical composition but a quintessence of life that the immigrants go through, to “pass” via the American-led global culture. The composition, production, and dissemination of the album are carried out not in a neutral or an egalitarian space, but in America, which represents the epicentre of the global North. Thus, cultural hybridity is a more multi-layered and multifaceted phenomenon than what Salman Rushdie’s In Good Faith (1991) echoes in as simple terms as “Mélange, hotchpotch, a bit of this and a bit of that” (p. 394). Consequentially, it engenders another culture, that is, to several cultural theorists, constructive and productive. Leading characters in Home Boy too, ensue the same impulse and inclination to be hybridised in American society and social order regarding reshaping their internal (ideas, values and cultures) and external (hairstyle, behaviour and clothes) identities.

4.8. Juxtaposing the Pak.-U.S.: East-West Milieu

The narrative under discussion also pursues Fanon, Said and Bhabha’s assessment of the subalterns’ voice, who can raise their voice to speak for themselves. The current resistance narrative breaks away with the parochial Orientalist discourse of fixed identities and subdued voices of the dominated class. In the existing situation, the colonised becomes an active participant and dynamic agent of endurance and resistance. Edward Said (1994) is of the view that such narratives turn out to be the means for the weighed down subjects who “use to assert their own identity and the experience of their history” (p. xii). By so doing, they substantiate and subscribe to the colonial machinery and imperial apparatus, constructively.
The novel begins with a topical opening that repels the memoire of Orientalism, which fixed the discourse of forced history that tagged the characters with static identities and turning them into “Japs, Jews, Niggers” (Naqvi, 2009, p. 1). For that reason, misrepresented and twisted identities of the East are erased from the Oriental discourse of history, and the perception is relegated on which the distinction was made up between the East and West. At this juncture, the author is quick to support how Chuck and his companions, having seen through the “postcolonial canon”, promptly feel like conveying the reinterpretation of history (2009, p. 1). It is history that shapes the current trends and issues in opposition to the rhetoric of terror that restates “the colonial in the postcolonial world”, which is why the characters confront the challenges of the stereotypical maltreatment, typecasting and displacement as is usually portrayed in an immigrant tale (Boehmer & Morton, 2010, p. 6). The novel engages with characters from around the world, mainly from South Asia, the Caribbean region, and the African continent.

For this reason, the story forms an immigrant podium for a better understanding of the culturally diverse world. In the vast array of cultural multiplicity, Chuck, A.C., and Jimbo represent the Pakistani identity and pass through the same hardships as others did. Unlike The Reluctant Fundamentalist, in Home Boy, the locale is New York. However, the characters narrate the same tale told by Changez in Lahore. In some way or the other, all the characters are dropouts from their respective institutions, yet they are vocal enough to silence the American audience, except for a few. Their immigrant experiences are so verbose and vibrant that rarely anyone else’s profile in the novel makes such an impact amidst the bustling New York, the icon of neoliberalism and neo-imperialism.

4.9. Cultural Syncreticity in Uzma Aslam Khan’s Thinner Than Skin

4.9.1. Thinner Than Skin: An Overview

Thinner Than Skin is a long narrative poem in prose and a saga of identity conflict and transformation, which echoes 9/11 and its repercussions. The storyline fluctuates between the skyscrapers of New York and the heaven-kissing mountains of the North of Pakistan. Although there are themes of love, espionage, and fairy-tales, the novel’s core theme is of returning to one’s true identity, which is more powerful and compelling
than the others. The feeling of unbelonging permeates every character of this novel, seeking refuge in one’s homeland. Nadir, the protagonist, is a photographer of California’s deserts. His photography is rarely liked in San Francisco, as to them, and other Americans, it reflects gloom and agony of war-torn Pakistan (Khan, 2012). That saddens him, and his return to Pakistan is spurred by the wish of German-Pakistani Farhana, Nadir’s beloved, who is willing to visit Pakistan for studying glaciers, as an expert. Moreover, she also “long[s] for a country”, as she is born-and-bred in the U.S., but has not seen her father’s country (Khan, 2012, p. 38). Irfan, Nadir’s childhood friend well-acquainted with northern Pakistan and Wes, Farhana’s friend and colleague, accompany them on their trip to the Kaghan Valley, which is north of Pakistan. Depicting the physical, emotional and mental unrest in the country of freedom—America—Nadir, and Farhana faces the challenge of identity and recognition to be accepted in a heterogeneous and plural community. Unlike other 9/11 Pakistani diasporic novels, its background is set in the remote north of Pakistan, covered with snow-clad lofty mountains and vast greener pastures.

*Thinner Than Skin* is deficient to be read, reviewed and understood in its entirety without consulting 9/11 strikes and the increased tension caused by *Islamophobia* and geosociological threats to Pakistan’s frontiers with Russia, China, India, Afghanistan, Iran and Central Asia. Also, the continuous drone attacks on the area intensify the situation. Even so, inhabitants of the region are optimistic enough to seek and secure peace in the near foreseeable future. Similarly, this novel epitomises a cultural, political and economic struggle for regaining true Pakistani identity. The theme echoes and reaffirms in other 9/11 Pakistani diasporic and non-diasporic English fiction.

The novel narrates the tale of Nadir Sheikh, a Pakistani photographer looking for a job in San Francisco, America, the way Changez, Chuck, and their friends did. Incidentally, he comes across Farhana, a Pakistani girl interested in glaciology, and who was keen to visit northern Pakistan and snow-clad lofty mountains of the Kaghan Valley. In response to Nadir’s passion for landscape photography, the American Stock-Photo Bureau informs him that it “might be interested in [him], but not [his] landscapes” (Khan, 2012, p. 11). He is reminded of Pakistan’s topography and advised to photograph that instead of American landscapes. While applying for the next job, he prepares some family pictures of cultural possessions from the past. However, he is told
that the “photographs lack authenticity [for there are no] beggars or anything that resembles [Pakistani] culture” (Khan, 2012, p. 12). He is repeatedly prompted that his primary job is to portray the horror and misery of Pakistan, not the wild nature and beauty of the West. Also, his interface with different agencies shows that how he and his country are maligned through a Euro-American parochial lens after the 9/11 strikes. He had tried his best to adjust in American society, before the 9/11 event, by seeking and securing a good fortune. So, the first half of the narrative about Nadir mainly dwells on the urge for cultural fusion in the American society, even at the cost of sacrificing his cultural heritage.

The American concept of promoting diversity and multiculturalism, both within its shores and globally, has always been met with mixed reactions. The assimilationist and monocultural approach towards Americanising every other culture borrows heavily from the notion of high culture that defined the European cultures four centuries back (Bhabha, 1994). America being an immigrant country has cultural diversity even within its borders to the point of blurring the exact meaning of American culture. Thinner Than Skin is a study in stark contrasts that takes into account Pakistani Muslim immigrants in America. It contrasts what would be referred to as American culture, and how Americans perceived Pakistani immigrants and to a considerable extent, Muslim immigrants before and after the 9/11 attacks. It also contrasts the human experience in diversity and how differences become pale when taken in the context of the novel.

The pre-9/11 experiences of immigrants across the globe were of the fulfilment of their social and economic aspirations in developed societies which were open to giving skilled immigrants opportunities to hone their skills. Limiting their number depended on the availability of social service provisions as the determining factor. The post-9/11 picture is remarkably different, with stigmatisation and stereotyping affecting intercultural relations while alienating communities. The resultant distrust in Western societies, especially regarding Pakistani immigrants and their Muslim brothers, has hampered cultural hybridity.

**4.9.2. Pakistanis in America before 9/11**

Before 9/11, it was not an arduous task for Pakistanis to immigrate abroad. The adventurous in the community immigrated and freely related with the local hosts, as
was shown by the mixed parentage of Farhana in *Thinner Than Skin*. To Americans, all Pakistanis looked alike: “they look alike…[y]ou mean the same dark hair, dark eyes, and tall frame?” (Khan, 2012, p. 94). Therefore, they were thought of and taken as analogous regardless of their ethnic differences. That too, led to the monochromatic perception about Pakistanis, thereby positively impacting their interaction with the global community living in the U.S. As a result, all Pakistanis were warmly welcomed without any cue of suspicion about their character.

Globalisation has prompted many members of predominantly Muslim communities to immigrate to countries with diverse religious affiliations and tolerant of religious beliefs. Immigrants enter the U.S., carrying memories of a troubled relationship with it due to a variety of factors. Among them is the belief that the American society disturbs their way of life. Immigrant Muslims are known for crossing borders to the Western world without cultural adjustment. Their relationship with the Western world is characterised by classical Orientalism, which is defined conceptually as the Western biased restructuring of and dominating the Orient. In the current context, immigrants from the Middle East and Asia experience a similar prejudiced propensity to dominate. In the Colonial Period, Western dominance was established through the notion which Edward Said deplored in his book, *Orientalism* (1995) that: “subject races did not have it in them to know what was good for them” (p. 45). It was all about changing the whole system because the colonisers did not like what was being practised, and the subjects did not know of a better system. While the strategy of Western countries has changed after the end of colonisation, necessitated by the increased global focus on trade and development, the Western world still lacks parity and clarity when dealing with the Middle East, Africa and the Orientals (Khan, 2007). The unevenness of the continuing Neo-Colonial relationship between the Pakistani and other Muslim immigrants and the United States means that the immigrants from the East face a complex and selectively screened and layered entry into the United States.

When Pakistani immigrants enter the United States, the hosts fail to remember and realise the troubled ‘Diaspora’ relations that their predecessors have faced in similar journeys (Cooks, 2001). The colonial histories of South Asia, North Africa, Middle East and South East Asia reflect the nature of troubled interaction with those that are referred to as oppressors or colonialists. When immigrant Muslims are finally allowed
to immigrate to the United States, hardly any citizen can tell the history of one's struggles with colonisation and the influence of the Islamic faith. The hosts can also not understand the nature of regimes that the immigrants have been in and how the lack of amenities influences their view of governance (Hochschild, 2001). In the newly immigrant nation, they are conveniently labelled as Others, thereby making their struggle with identity even more daunting. Settling in the new country, immigrants realise that the Others label goes beyond everyday interaction (Martineau, Dinnerstein & Reimers, 1976). Television shows, the cinema, and the literary world profile persons of Arab descent by equating them in relation to sleeper cells, terror attacks and other racially related aggressive references.

Schools, shopping malls, and public places are just a representation of the microcosm of society. The negative image of the immigrant Muslim community permeates all of these socio-cultural institutions, beyond comprehension. The educational curricula do not reflect the increased American diversity, failing to meet the expectations and needs of the immigrants’ cultural backgrounds. In some Christian missionary schools, church attendance is reportedly mandatory. In the education system, identity or cultural affiliation is secondary to the desire to standardise and harmonise, and scant attention is paid to the cultural and social identities of the learners in the education system and its environment. The population experiences much judgemental misunderstanding of how people look, communicate, dress, interact and where they come from. Pakistani immigrants are no exception to this (Sirin & Fine, 2008). All are scanned and screened, even censured, for their cultural code: their dress, language, and behaviour. Other immigrant communities face multiple identity issues on account of their way of interaction and their outsider status within the country. The journey to growing up is truly tough while attending educational institutions. Being steeped in their cultural values and distinct ways makes their quest for identity suspect, and their social status more daunting. The identity of Pakistani and larger Muslim Americans has been affected by multicultural, transnational and geopolitical landscapes. However, the challenge of cultural diversity has paved the way for Nadir, Farhana and others to settle in a multiethnic and multiracial society of the U.S. while trading the comprehensive benefits to both sides of the cultural divide between the ‘Outsider Other’ and the ‘Insider.’
4.9.3. Transnational and Post-Colonial Influences

The influences of the people of other nations on the lives of Pakistani nationals are seen in the influences on the villages of the North of Pakistan. There is a tendency in every nation to have some attachment to bordering nations that have influenced them in history and formed their future. In *Thinner Than Skin*, the influences differ with people like Farhana, who identifies herself with Pakistan, while northern tribes still carry the influences of the Silk Road, and are attracted to China but with patriotic loyalty to Pakistan. Currently, the CPEC (China Pakistan Economic Corridor) is revitalising this historical legacy.

Human beings today live under the post-colonial influences, as their countries struggle to globally assert their national identity without any influences of the past colonial hangover. Frantz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* reverberates with the intensity of the human struggle that colonised nations had to go through to decolonise their minds (Fanon, Sartre & Farrington, 1965). What impacts the “othering” of other nations is the colonial mentality and the challenges that countries faced in the quest for self-determination. The stature of the United States to the Muslims, Africans and Orientals will always be tied to the history of the Western civilisation and its drive for dominance. The natural and human resources of African, Asian and Arab nations were exploited to build Western dynasties, as well as to establish a culture of dependence that many countries are yet to shake off (Charsley, 2012).

Elements of colonisation by Western countries included the scourge of slavery, assimilation, divide and rule policy and distortion of how history is taught, which made peaceful neighbours suspicious of each other. The colonised were referred to as savages who needed to be civilised by colonisation, imposed westernised education and conversion to Christianity. When the colonisers could not establish dominance through conventional means, Fanon stressed that violence became a tool to subjugate. Cultural hybridity becomes harder between the colonised and the coloniser because the former’s social fabric is broken and “it is clear that what divides this world is first and foremost what species, what race one belongs to” (Fanon, 1963, p. 5). In such case, cultural fusion becomes gruelling and, hence the coloniser had to adopt the strategies of odious manipulation and illegitimate ruling without the consent of the colonised.
Many countries gained their independence after the Second World War because of the colossal costs of the war, which devastated the colonisers’ economies. Thus, they could not continue to hold on to the colonies when the metropolitan populations at home had been decimated. The end of occupation does not, however, mean that colonisation has ceased altogether. In fact, its new-fangled form, Neo-Colonialism continues to damage the human capital and cultural identity of Third/Muslim world even in the 21st-century. Thus, currently, the whole world is experiencing the throes of the third-millennium new imperialism, particularly the Muslim Middle East. The post-colonial history bears witness to the cultural divisions that arose from artificially redrawn geographical boundaries while welding together communities with little in common.

The “Othering” of immigrant Muslim communities in America meant that before the attacks of 9/11, Muslims lived as primarily ignored people who did not have an impact on the American way of life. They were yet to be subjected to the post-9/11 stereotypes, which have escalated with every new terrorist attack anywhere in the world. The threat of domestic terrorism before the 9/11 attacks was inconceivable to the American public and no segment of the society was mainly regarded as a threat to the others (Jamal & Naber, 2008). Islam was only one of the many religions allowed to be practised in America, and there was no stigma related to practising the religion. That is the reason why Nadir, Farhana and other Pakistani and South Asian Muslims lived harmoniously in America. Till then, their cultural otherness was utilised by them as an asset, but their quest for Pakistani identity remained a core motivator. This subject will be discussed in Chapter five.

4.9.4. Migration to and Integration in America: Pre-9/11

The presence of South Asian inhabitants in America can be traced back to the mid-19th century when mainly Punjabi immigrants settled in California. Their interaction with the American public and recognition as Americans was halted when they were barred from acquiring American citizenship in the Immigration Act of 1917, followed by the Supreme Court ruling of 1923. The majority of the earliest immigrants were single men, and the anti-miscegenation laws prevented them from marrying white women. Although California barred such marriages, however, the young South Asian immigrants could legally wed in Arizona. The suspect nature of interaction with white women made marriages rare with the whites. The ruling defined them as aliens that
were ineligible to be granted citizenship since they were not white. The only available path to citizenship that was open to them after the ruling was marrying those who were recognised as citizens. The Punjabi men married Americans of Mexican heritage and settled in El Centro, California. The path to citizenship was opened by the Luce-Celler Bill of 1946 that allowed the South Asians to own property, become citizens and invite their fellow citizens to immigrate to the USA under national quotas. A trickle of persons of South Asian origin started after the 1947 Indo-Pak. Independence, in 1948, mainly composed of professionals and students. Within the two decades that followed, there was an identifiable population in the USA of persons of Pakistani origin, who were distinct from the other South Asians. The trickle would become a deluge when the passage of the Immigration and Naturalization Act was passed in 1965, ushering in a significant number of Pakistani immigrants into America. The number of Pakistanis who immigrated to the USA under the act shot to twenty thousand per year and was sustained for some years. Other Asian nations were experiencing the same trend where professionals who were opting for the increasing opportunities in the USA. Students who emigrated for education opted not to return to their home countries.

Uzma Aslam Khan observes in *Thinner Than Skin* that the search for a better standard of living resulted in the birth of Farhana to Bavarian and Pakistani parents. More than anything else, it also illustrates that various temporal states are only human constructs since human beings share the same experiences beneath the skin. With all the cultural diversity, human beings are still intimately similar, as manifest in human nature: its instincts and emotions, mind and thought, spirit and soul. Looking with the perception of sameness and influx of Pakistanis into America, Nadir too is drawn in by the American dream—the hub of cultural multiplicity and a catalyst for finding better prospects. Hence, the overall conditions (including a pledge of demographic plurality) were so promising for the characters that they had no other option except to embrace and assimilate in the American system and society.

Before the 9/11 attacks, America was the nexus for global diversity, with all communities feeling a sense of belonging to the future and joining hands to chase the American dream. It had the distinction of being a nation where cultural hybrids could pursue their aspirations without fear of any biased judgment of their characters. In *Thinner Than Skin*, Nadir displays a desire to fit into the society, even as he feels that
it is not working in a way he could culturally accept. His relationship with Farhana leaves him torn between two feelings, one of assimilation to gain acceptance and another to push back and follow the right channels. The manner in which they relate contrasts with Pakistan, where culture would not relate to a ‘no-strings-attached’ liaison. The issue that bothered him most, however, is the manner in which the roles had been reversed; Farhana seemed to have everything planned out, and he has to tag along religiously. “It was all too conscious, too rehearsed. Hadn't she planned it all—the visit to her father, the walk home, the seemingly innocent question about northern Pakistan, the news, the news, and now this? ” (Khan, 2012, p. 58). Farhana, on the one hand, is excelling in the freedom that the West offers, compared to what she would be raised in if she were to be in Pakistan. The freedom to decide what she wanted with her life would not be there, she would not earn freely to shape her destiny, and her interaction would not be done as freely. She had assimilated with the West to the point that she did not wait for a man to decide what was most important for her. Also, her specialisation and expertise in glaciology, a subject to which she would not be able to study let alone work in if she was in Pakistan, reflects the impression that she has been independently brought up and educated.

Nadir, on the other hand, is vexed by the fact that moving to the West does not necessarily translate into getting better jobs. He believes the fact that his role in the West is only as a wedding photographer—a job that is available in Pakistan. He, however, has to assimilate with the expectations of America, since to succeed he had to fit into the American way of life. His success in photography would come if he showed Americans what they wanted to see, and not necessarily what existed in real life. “The pub allowed me to advertise my skills as a wedding photographer, for which I was developing a reasonable reputation. The irony of it” (Khan, 2012, p. 48). His interest in taking shots of club weddings and deserts of California reveals the fact that he is trying his luck in the land of dreams and longs for settling permanently in the U.S. Although time and again he is reminded of shooting the landscapes of Pakistan which he accepts, he rarely tried actually to do so. For him painting America would result in perching on the American soil. Thus, American acclimatisation was not only the craving of high culture but the key to an immediate success to a stable future for the novel’s characters. As was dreamt of by them, they were quite successful in integrating with the American varied and thriving life.
4.9.5. **American Vision Reflected in Personal-cum-Professional Lives**

What brings diverse people together from different backgrounds, social spheres, cultural and religious backgrounds is the pursuit of the American dream. It creates the hope that better standards of living are attainable. Immigrants are looking for freer environments where their political views would not make them be misjudged as enemies of the state, espouse the values that America stands for. Others are lured to the American shores by the premise that their economic positions would improve their status in society (Stout, 2008).

The American dream is held on the assumption that all a person needs to do is to work hard and be smart; to work one’s way up and achieve what one desires in life. It means the pursuit of human nature’s objective as well as individual personal vocations. Human nature is the common connection between human beings who share the body and soul composition. The pursuit of material needs, includes sustainable subsistence, education, healthcare and recreation needs. Human beings also have spiritual needs that define their hopes and aspirations on earth. Finding happiness and fulfilment beyond financial positions in life is a global goal of human beings. Some immigrants do not get consumed in the pursuit of financial rewards, but find fulfilment by living frugally and working their way up. The subjective dimension regards what makes every individual different from another. No matter what the level of education, origin, race, class or mental abilities, every person has unique abilities that define one’s talents and specific skills. The insecurities or idiosyncrasies that define individual experiences represent the personal vocations that are peculiar to each (Khaleque, Malik & Rohner, 2015). Hence, the American dream is a balanced blend of subjective and objective goals that each immigrant aspires and strives for, to live harmoniously in a demographically plural society.

Considering these reasons for migrating to the U.S., Nadir, Farhana, their friends and family elders primarily drifted into America for personal and socio-economic goals. The pursuit of the American dream in *Thinner Than Skin* follows both the subjective and objective dimensions of human nature and life. Major characters in the narrative are confronted with the challenge of changing these dimensions to conform to the expectations of the new environment by dropping most of what they represented so that their transformation to persons with the ability to thrive in America is completed.
Holding on to cultural, religious, gender and sociocultural positions delay the integration into the broader American society, thereby making it hard to access various jobs in the communities. All Pakistani immigrants do not necessarily embrace and pursue the American dream as shown by the 27th September 2014 protest outside the United Nations General Assembly when the Pakistani Prime Minister, Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, addressed the Assembly. Despite the American mid-term elections, the interest of Pakistani-Americans was more in the domestic issues of Pakistan (Khaleque, Malik & Rohner, 2015). It showed that even as they are in America pursuing their dreams, their attention is focused outside the American sphere of life. Estimates have placed the number of Pakistani-Americans living in the United States at half a million. Pakistani-Americans are a relatively new immigrant community with many of them being first or second generation Americans. Thus, the negotiated identities of Nadir, Farhana, and their Pakistani immigrant friends still influence their involvement in the American way of life by fully immersing themselves in the host community’s ways of life and aspiring to influence Pakistani politics.

4.9.6. **Self-Conviction in Private-cum-Public Relations**

The vast number of Pakistani-Americans immigrating to the United States from the 1970s to today can be explained by family relations present in the Pakistani communities (White, Biddlecom & Guo, 1993). The first immigrants to the United States were professionals who took a chance to explore better opportunities in the American society that valued their expertise. After the first immigrants had been settled, they brought in their relatives through family preference programmes. The latter immigrants were not necessarily professionals but were brought in to fill the void of family relationships which immigration to the United States creates. The size of the Pakistani-American population is among the fastest growing among the immigrant communities. From around 30,000 people in 1980, the American census data of 2010 approximates that there are 453,000 persons of Pakistani origin. It is imperative to note that the American census does not factor in those who were born in the host country. An independent study by the Pakistan Embassy in the United States has put the figure at approximately 700,000. That is a significant increase in the last three decades.

There a vast number of Pakistani-Americans are part of the second generation Muslim communities of Pakistani origin, who naturally do not have the same level of
attachment to Pakistan as their parents. This specific segment of the population has to navigate through identity issues while looking for ways of seamless integration with the American public by influencing the social and political conditions necessary for the attainment of the American dream. Part of the strategy to establish relations with the American community to enhance their chances of success has involved investing in the attainment of higher education (Kaltenthaler & Miller, 2015). There is a higher number of first and second generation Pakistani-Americans earning undergraduate degrees than the overall sample from the American population. Going through the education system is one way of integrating with the host community socially, culturally and politically.

In the case of Nadir and Farhana, one comes to know that Farhan’s parents came to America as professionals. Her father being a Pakistani national, who travelled to the U.S. among the first generation of immigrants. So, Farhana was born and bred, like Jimbo in Home Boy, in America where viable opportunities surround her for permanently settling. However, Nadir, like Changez in The Reluctant Fundamentalist, was “voyaging in[to]” America as a second-generation immigrant, first for education, and later on to initiate a professional career (Said, 1994, p. 211). Thus, their appearance and stay in the U.S. reflect the original accommodating nature of America that effectively invites people from around the globe for a bright future. While tied up by robust personal and professional relations, both Farhana and Nadir are well adjusted to the American society, which rarely allows them to think of parting with the host country.

4.10. Private-Political Locus

While institutionalised racism and discrimination are absent in the American context, there exists racial divide within the American public. The immigrant population has to navigate multiple identities to achieve the American dream. The Pakistani-American communities find themselves in the middle of the personal and political nexus, while the host community disregards their input in the society with fellow Asian immigrants, thus displaying a high degree of misunderstanding of the values that they represent (Ong et al., 1996). Their double consciousness of trying to fit into the American cultural context while retaining their Pakistani identity is similar to the African-American experience of double consciousness as narrated by W.E.B Dubois in his book The Souls
of the Black Folk (2008). Dubois tried to explain that double consciousness arises when a segment of a population is oppressed but refuses to be objectified, stereotyped and devalued. The Pakistani-Americans have had to fight persistently the stereotypes which have symbolised their very existence with the terrorist narrative, especially after the 9/11 terror attacks in America (Hoffman, 2007).

Before the 9/11 tragic event, Pakistanis and by extension, Muslims in America had led ordinary lives where every community was regarded as an equal in their pursuance of the American dream. Communities interacted socially, culturally, socioeconomically and religiously without any demographic group alienating the other, based on stereotypes. First and second-generation Pakistani-Americans have grown up believing that America was their land of opportunity, and where class divides are only part of history but not part of the future (Wilson, 2001). Any deviation from the life lived in the cultural and social context, has made young Pakistanis specifically, a centre of scrutiny that they have not encountered during their formative years (Sirin & Fine, 2008). Immigrant communities always have social identity issues in the host country, but rarely are they elements of derision from the media, politicians, and the wider public, as the Muslim communities have faced since being associated with terrorism and extremism. Immigrants from poorer countries are conscious that they are disadvantaged in voicing their concerns. That reminds one of Bhabha’s analysis, who observed in The Location of Culture (1994), that “it is legitimate to represent the relations of exploitation and domination in the discursive division between the First and Third World, the North and the South” (pp. 29-30). Pakistanis have been raised in the political nexus of the Eastern, Western and Arab cross-roads, where they have yet to find their identity. Uzma Aslam Khan's (2012) observes in Thinner Than Skin that identity is only a social construct, as human beings have the same life ambitions, goals, and achievements. Thus, each character in the novel has the privilege to have access to the public amenities granted by the U.S.; they avail themselves of choice to freely express and execute their objective and subjective goals.

Political relations between Pakistan and America are also reflected in personal relations. Before 9/11, they are favourable. However, they get worsened after the 9/11 foray, leading to embitter the people-to-people relationships of both countries. After the exacerbated 9/11 political world, especially the Muslim immigrants feel unsecured and,
hence their trust is marred by the U.S. state policies and practices against them. In such case, politically motivated post-9/11 conditions distort both individual and collective relations among the affectees of the event.

4.10.1. The Pak.-U.S. Ambivalent Ambience

The Pakistani social environment encompasses both the socio-cultural settings of the Middle East and the organisational experience of the Orientals. Enmeshed between the Arab world and the Eastern civilisation, the Pakistan culture has imbibed the best of both worlds and is eminently regarded as a representative of both (Khan, 2012). The religious influence of its Western neighbours has affected Pakistan and made it a Muslim country in a way that is different from its Eastern neighbours, India and China (Khan, 2012). The Pakistani population is diverse and composed of people of Indian, Arab and Central Asian ancestry. The percentage of the Arab-origin population in (Azad Kashmir) Pakistan (like the Abbasis who came to Sindh with Muhammad bin Qasim in 710 A.D.) is minimal, having less than five per cent of all the total population. Some sections of the outside world regard Pakistan as an Arab country even though it is certainly not. Of course, its significant relation with the Muslim Middle East is an acknowledged fact. Pakistan can, therefore, not detach itself from the Arab countries’ stereotypes when its immigrants access the Western world (Khan, 2012). More fitting is the image of the Pakistani diaspora as being synonymous with Arab-Muslim acculturation.

The experience of the Pakistani immigrant community in the United States cannot be defined without contrasting the hegemonic culture of the host country and that of Pakistan. A study by the United States Religious Landscape Survey that was conducted in 2012 showed that Christians in America consisted of 72% of the total population (Jones, Cox & Navarro-Rivera, 2012). The percentage of Muslims in that period was less than 1%. The considerable difference between the Christian and Muslim population shows that America is predominantly a Christian nation. Such figures are in complete contrast with the Pakistani demographic situation where the percentage of Christians, Hindus, and other religious minority constitute less than 5%, while Islam is the dominant religion comprising 95% of all Pakistanis. Constitutionally, Islam is the state religion in Pakistan while the United States is constitutionally a secular country. The
discourse of contrasting the Pakistan and American settings remains incomplete without regarding religious influence.

Traditionalism is one of the defining factors that distinguish Islam from other religions. The five fundamental pillars of Islam have been dubbed and decried as fundamentalism, even though they have similarities with other great religions. In *Thinner Than Skin*, the desire to go back to the basics is shown when Nadir is told: “show us the dirt” and forgo his love for aesthetics (Khan, 2012, p. 34). The influence of Islam in the general context of national politics in countries where it is the dominant religion contrasts sharply with Western countries that espouse the secular division between State and religion. Religious choice does not affect the daily lives of the American people and is purely an individual preference. However, religious bias and cultural prejudice persistently predominate in Western history and politics. Kattan (2014) observed that in Islamic countries, religion plays a prominent role in influencing all the aspects of the lives of citizens, and to an extent, even of visitors in socio-cultural interaction, e.g., Suleiman and Maryam extend hospitality to Farhan and Nadir when they arrive in Pakistan. This sign of hospitality is both religious and cultural.

The traditions of all Arab and Muslim immigrants are rooted in Islamic doctrines that influence personal life in matters of their unique cultural code concerning language, dress and behaviour, and reflected in their manners and morals, character and conduct. The apparent emphasis is on the manner of dressing modestly, primarily by the female gender (Khan, 2012). The Western world does not advocate such traditions, and its citizens are free in sartorial matters and appearance. Islam also prohibits its followers from consuming liquor, pork and other religiously questionable meat (Mishra, 2007). Prayer is not a matter of choice for faithful Muslims, but a prescription for Islamic piety. The coexistence of folklore in Maryam’s pagan rituals indicates the grim reality of a war with these rituals being used to highlight its socio-economic reasons.

The contrast with the American culture becomes stark when the role and stature of women in society are compared (Hamzeh, 2011). Where Islam is the dominant religion, the communities are predominantly patriarchal, with women only playing a supportive role to the male figure in the society (Hakim-Larson, Kamoo, Nassar-McMillan & Porcerelli, 2007). However, their determinate role in family matters is decisive. The
United States Constitution confers equal rights on both genders. They differ sharply with the Islamic tenets and teachings. Muslim immigrants from Islamic countries have to experience culture change—even shock—when they interact with American social values, cultural trends, and behaviour patterns. Historically, South Asian Muslims had to struggle for their identity between the native Indian culture and Arab Muslim culture brought about by Islam.

Similarly, Pakistani-American immigrants have to struggle with an additional cultural shift when they have to experience Christian and Secular dominated American traditions (Khan, 2012). The acculturation process has to include the multiplicity of all those cultures, while also embracing the individualist values of the Western world (Schaefer & Simon, 2016). The Muslim culture faces a unique challenge in the formalisation of their marriage systems, as American laws do not have any place for polygamy. The Islamic doctrines, on the other hand, are declaredly against some of the American sociocultural realities of homosexuality, lesbianism, same-sex marriages and divorce (Khan, 2012). That is also true of Judaism and Christianity. It is observed that the process of acculturation for the Arabs and Muslims, at times, involves the total denial and negation of the values of Muslim culture, which nurtured the young immigrants before immigration. Without that, they cannot fit in correctly with American context (Barry, Elliot & Evans, 2000). To fit into the global context, however, like Khan shows in her novel, both Pakistani Muslims and the American public need to heed Farhana’s example, i.e., to overlook the differences and charge a common front (Khan, 2012). Nadir, too, had to don the Western cultural costumes and to revamp his identity for quite some time, and while doing so, he had to shed his recognisable appearance as a Pakistani by casting off the indigenous ensemble.

4.11. The Diaspora Narratives Versus Select Western Fiction

Comparing with John Updike’s Terrorist (2006), Martin Amis’ The Last Days of Muhammad Atta (2006) and Don DeLillo’s Falling Man (2007), Changez, Chuck and Nadir are acquainted with and acclimatized to the American pop and high culture and feel at home in the shadow of the skyscrapers of New York. Unlike these characters, the protagonist of Terrorist (2006), Ahmed is bashful and retiring, unsuccessful in conforming, and sexually frustrated. Thereby, he is struggling to hold back his erotic
desires and subsequently heading to added isolation and self-estrangement with the “spoilt” Western materialistic society. Ahmed can easily be engineered and manipulated, and, in turn, he seeks comfort in God and the *Al-Quran* (the Holy Scripture of Muslims). Later, in the novel, he is instigated by the Imam and is acquainted with other fanatical Muslims, who escorts Ahmed to a fatal enterprise. As stereotyped, Ahmed says in a firm tone that:

> Western culture is Godless … and because it has no God, it is obsessed with sex and luxury goods…. I of course do not hate all Americans. But the American way is the way of infidels. It is headed for a terrible doom…. Look at the history the school teaches, pure colonialist. Look how Christianity committed genocide on the Native Americans and undermined Asia and Africa and now is coming after Islam, with everything in Washington run by the Jews to keep themselves in Palestine. (Updike, 2006, p. 38)

Ahmed’s disruptive outlook and parochial perception are inflexible and unyielding. He is a non-conformist, who despises merely any recreation and is disdained by his companions and friends. Likewise, Muhammad Atta, a leading character and an alleged hijacker of the 9/11 plane, is epitomised and illustrated by Martin Amis (2006) as:

> He [Muhammad Atta] also joined the hatred of music. And the hatred of laughter. ‘Why do we ever laugh?’ he was sometimes asked. Zaid [another alleged hijacker] would answer, ‘How can you laugh when people are dying in Palestine?’ Muhammad Atta never laughed…. he found nothing funny. (pp. 99-100)

In Don DeLillo’s *Falling Man* (2007), the introduction of Hammad, as a construct of a “terrorist’s” character, is central to DeLillo’s description of the 9/11—as a plan of terrorism. He is complex, unlikable and had poignant memories associated with his mission of terrorism, which makes him an unsightly character. Similarly, Hammad has an obsessive tendency towards and an ardent longing for the hideous mission of terrorism, inculcated in him through indoctrination of *Jihad*. Thus, the sanctity of *Jihad* is deliberately distorted to malign Islam as terrorism and extremism. He has an isolated
disposition and a split identity, which cynically ponders between the colonial Britishers and imperial America (DeLillo, 2007). The physical and psychological states of his split personality are torn apart and do not agree to each other because he compulsively thought that “he was not here, it was not him” (2007, p. 175). The Masjid (mosque) is the only place which he believes where he can put in all of his best to “struggle against the enemy, near enemy and far, Jews first, for things unjust and hateful, and then the Americans” (2007, p. 80). The mosque—the space of isolation, referred to as a “room” in the novel, is the most suitable place for plotting against the West and its vested objectives as opposed to Islam. It also provides him with a feeling of comfort and a promise of reviving the lost history of Islam and the Muslims.

Ambivalence in the character traits of Hammad corresponds to the established stereotyping of Muslim characters in the context of 9/11. The complexity of the narrative, the intricacy of its characterisation and density of the 9/11 strikes, convey DeLillo’s message of linking the violent past of Hammad with the terroristic present of the 9/11 strikes. DeLillo advocates the perpetuation of “war on terror” and implies that the opponents of this war would bring about more harm to humanity in the future. Ironically, the self-proclaimed ‘war on terrorism’ has revealed itself as the Western War of Terrorism, which continues even in 2017 in Muslim countries. This point was driven home through the characterisation of Hammad, accompanied by the portrayal of Amir, another Muslim character, and leader of the terrorist mission, to intensify the implications of the 9/11 incident.

Ahmed, Muhammad Atta, and Hammad behave in a manner that is typical of the stereotyped role allocated to a typeset Muslim character in the post-9/11 literature, especially fiction. Most, if not all, Western literary writers tend to misrepresent and satirise Muslim protagonists, contempituously and derisively. This historical stereotyping of the East and its Muslims as fierce and ferocious, naïve and gullible, is not new though. However, the 9/11 disaster distorts the image. In the guise of perverted Muslim characters, such disparaging Western literary writers incline to mounting disgust and aversion. Richard Gray is of the view that “what is meant to sound different but authentic too often comes across as artificial, even stereotypical” (2011, p. 80). Thus, Islamic (an anglicised version of Islami) history, culture, literature, and worldview are looked at biasedly by the Eurocentric literature. They are stamped with
fanaticism and fatalism. Even the slightest joke is interpreted as a sin, and any proclivity to worldly entertainment is deemed to be heinous and punishable. Such gruesome dubbing of Muslims as pessimistic and misoneistic, aggravates appallingly, the global perception about Islam and its followers. The contracted and constricted viewpoint of these Western fictional versions leads to the presentation of political issues in an “Oriental frame of cultural conflict” (Maria, 2011, p. 114). These novels significantly disregard the importance of international strategic dynamics like the global political economy, geopolitics, international relations, cultural norms and onset of neo-imperialism and neocolonialism. These are real-life critical issues between the East and West, which formulate the future—much beyond 9/11 into the 21st-century and the third millennium. Edward Said, in Orientalism, concentrates on the global North, when he talks about the impending hostility and antagonism between the East and West. Relating the issue to the 9/11 world, Said (2001) states that provocation of the wily “War against Terrorism” by America led to several questions of waging war with an ambiguous adversary, and also its debatable and divisive role (para.3). However, these punitive ploys manoeuvred to present “the Middle East and Islam” as the devastating opponent of the West (2001, para.3).

Contrary to other Muslim characters, usually misconstrued by Western literary writers, Changez, Chuck and Nadir are different from their contemporary protagonists projected by the West. They represent enlightened moderation focusing on the future and are well-adjusted to a foreign society with people from diverse communities. It is not an issue for them to live in and interact with them, amicably and agreeably. Their character traits involved in the counter-Orientalist discourse are typical of “mixedness” with other cultures, and thus leading to “hybridization”. Also, this replicates the three novelists’ accounts of living in and experiencing the U.S. in a multicultural and multinational environment.

All the three novelists, Hamid, Naqvi, and Khan, propound counter-narratives based on personal experience because of having spent considerable time in the West, mainly, in the U.S. and the U.K. They have lived through their literary tenets, socio-cultural ethos, and political discourses. Mohsin Hamid came to America when he was three, got educated at Princeton and Harvard, served in the commercial sector, obtained British nationality, and now spends time between Pakistan and the U.K. H. M. Naqvi, a
Karachiate, studied at the Georgetown and Boston universities, served in a corporate institution in America and now spends his time between the U.S. and Pakistan. Uzma Aslam Khan, born in Pakistan, obtained her early education in Karachi and completed her B.A. in Comparative Literature at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, New York. She also studied for her Masters of Fine Arts from the University of Arizona, Tucson. Similarly, the protagonists of the three narratives were educated in the U.S. and worked there for quite some time. Their educational and professional experiences make these fictional characters convincing individuals. They had settled and acquired essential know-how of their dual cultures, Pakistani and the American. This syncretic identity enables them to have parallel knowledge of “the metropolitan history that is narrated and of those histories against which (and together with which) the dominating discourse acts”, thereby along these lines allowing their protagonists to revisit and re-signify historical signification, incisively (Said, 1994, p. 51).

4.12. Conclusion

The argument developed in this chapter complies with the postcolonial conceptual framework theorised by Fanon, Said, and Bhabha. They, by the close of their theoretical construction, recommend interaction and exchange of socio-cultural norms, beyond ethnic, linguistic, political and ideological differences. About cultural hybridity, the main feature of postcolonial theory, the major characters in the novels under discussion also negotiate their identities and reconcile with the circumstances before their transformation ensues in the wake of 9/11. Thus, the initial sections of the novels describe merging with the American pop culture, readily and voluntarily.

Frantz Fanon, an assimilationist, in the beginning, projects a radical role in the later phase of his thought and writings. Even so, he recommends interactionism after having secured national liberation. The entire process of securing national independence from the international and national bourgeoisie is initiated and established through an intemperate and adamant approach. The conflation of the French colonisers and Algerians colonised in the colonial period was not thought of and seen as a phase of ease and freedom. Fanon believes in complete emancipation, in which even the national bourgeoisie, or the local cronies and agents of the colonisers, are evicted from the independence movement. However, having applied an uncompromising radical
approach towards achieving national independence, he later offers a course of negotiation for reconciliation.

Edward Said described the Orientalists’ insular and constrictive outlook about the Orient and the exclusive power to dominate and rule the East for their vested political and economic interests over the years. However, he implies a course of negotiation between the East and its geographical and ideological counterpart, the West. He concludes in *Orientalism* that he neither proposes any new system of ideas or action for pacifying the differences between the two hemispheres nor is he “anti-West”. In his acclaimed analysis of the Orient, *Orientalism*, Said investigates the conditions, in which the West, through its writings, especially, literary texts, or, more precisely, the novel, deconstructs the East for constructing opinions and interpretations about it and its people. Through the novels of E. M. Forster and Joseph Conrad, for example, Said establishes how the East had been the project and source of Western experience(s) and understanding, and how the Orientalists presented the East in the pre-and-post-colonial times. Such cultural construction was possible only through cultural hybridity of the colonised East and the coloniser West. Said has only narrated the checkered history but has not furnished any solution to the cultural fusion.

Homi Bhabha, through and through, asserts the need and importance of cultural hybridity, as necessary for creating a harmoniously balanced multivocal society, wherein the majority and the minority would capitalise upon the “ambivalence” that they had contributed to. Bhabha advocates multiculturalism and multinationalism and believes in cultural intermingling for the promotion of “cultural difference” and “cultural diversity”. Such a situation provides equal participation to both the coloniser and the colonised for sharing their cultural ethos and logos. Nevertheless, this cultural intermixing entails “mimicry” on the part of the colonised that would eventually oust the colonised’s culture.

Studying the three novels in the light of the scope and significance of the conceptual construction and outline of Fanon, Said and Bhabha, on the subject of Cultural Hybridity, one can conclude that the protagonists of the narratives got hybridised in the loop of “Americanization” and/or “universalization of American national identity”—later turned into “American-led cultural globalization”. They actively utilise the role of
Pakistaniness, in all respects, to constitute the hybrid configuration and privilege the American society, by and large.

Supporting and promoting American-guided hybridisation, as a benchmark, at times dilutes their indigenous identity and makes them seem like Americans. Reminiscent of Said’s “double vision”, they keep on moving to the Bakhtinian “double-voiced” discourse—a coalescing of mainstream voices and merging of identities through fiction—that sufficiently cater to the meaning and message of cultural hybridity—in the age of globalisation (1984, p. xiv). They not only adopt a hybrid culture but also speak and stand for it as their own, quite proudly. Mohsin Hamid, in an interview with the National Public Radio (NPR), states that:

For some people, like myself, that’s not a difficult thing. You think, I’m a bit of both, I’m a hybridized person. That’s fine. But for others, it can be, “I have to reject one of these two things that are confusing me.” And in this case rejecting America, trying to be just Pakistani or just Muslim. Which of course isn’t true to your experience and isn’t even true to your identity. But if you walk that path, it can lead to a dangerous place. (Hamid, 2010)

From the 9/11 viewpoint, Hamid’s stance promotes hybridity due to the mounting pressure on Muslim immigrants, especially the Pakistani community. In such a situation, they will either pledge their allegiance to America or Islam. The third option that the three protagonists opt for is to stay adhered to the natural-neutral path of transformation, though reluctantly and transiently. Thus, Changez, Chuck, and Nadir debate circumspectly like Fanon, Said and Bhabha in the issues of cultural assimilation and hybridity. Cultural hybridity is a response to the dualistic rhetoric ratified by George Bush’s politico-historic ultimatum to Pakistan, that: “you’re either with us, or against us”. To avoid any troublesome happening and to beat with American pulse, the three characters comply with the emerging situation. By doing so, they also seek and secure the sympathy of Anglo-American readers, as the audience can see their lives replicated in them. Because they do not interrupt and distract the neoliberal voice of America, they gain the compassion of the Western world and are put up with by the discourse of America-led globalisation. Since their presence has nothing to do with
confrontational political discourse about 9/11, they are thought of and accepted as American citizens, almost till late in the novels. The resentment begins when the discourse about and fight against terrorism are related to the Muslim community, because of which Pakistani Muslims also became victims of Western hostilities. Later in the novels, such pugnacity against Pakistani Muslims unfolds the malicious intent of the U.S.-led globalisation; and, in turn, opens their eyes to approaching transformation. These immigrant narratives recurrently inquire, defy and contest the Western parochial discourse about the fixedness of identity and their cultural and historical discourse that claims their civilizational superiority. The periodical course of civilizational growth and rise is reinforced by Hamid, Naqvi, and Khan, using re-signification through historio-cultural discourse. Their liminal space and hybrid identity enable the protagonists to assert Pakistan being the cradle of great civilisations in the past. However, contemporaneously, it has fallen prey to its current religio-political and ethnonational crises. Peace-loving Pakistanis, though they occupy a plural space, are an abiding national asset, for promoting peaceful coexistence. They are incompatible with the Orientalist insular stereotyping. The people of Pakistan equally aspire to socio-economic prosperity and educational advancement, like those of the average Western population.
CHAPTER 5

POST-9/11 TRANSFORMATION IN THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST, HOME BOY AND THINNER THAN SKIN: A PARADIGM SHIFT

5.1. Introduction

After the 9/11/2001 American traumatising tragedy, the emerging paradigm shift is both systemic and personal. The present chapter aims to examine the post-9/11 transformation in The Reluctant Fundamentalist, Home Boy, and Thinner Than Skin regarding dominant contemporary voices about religio-political, socio-cultural and ethno-racial identities. Since material and non-material cultures are fluid and volatile, they tend to change, either partially or entirely, from one form to another over time and space/place. They even, at times, revamp to an entirely new making, depending on the intrinsic, extrinsic, or both conditions. The researcher is of the view that cultural transformation, being integral to social change, as expressed in its related theories of history and social change, is reflected in the novels critiqued in this thesis. These theories can be classified broadly as Evolutionary, Revolutionary, and Transformational. All the three narratives reinforce the ‘emigrant novel[s]’—not ‘migrant’ tales, that is, not only “voyaging in[to]” (Said, 1994, p. 211) the American society but chronicles “of leaving America” in the wake of 9/11, as a result of reconsideration, reawakening and, ultimately, transformation (Yaqin, 2008, p. 47; Medovoi, 2011, p. 644). Mohsin Hamid himself identifies The Reluctant Fundamentalist as a “twist on the classical immigrant tale” (Perlez, 2007, para.13), as it characterises the contemporary century to be schismatic and divergent, wherein “the magnet switches and pushes immigrants away” (2007, para.14). The declaration is
antithetical to what Richard Gray (2011) is looking for in the post-9/11 fiction. Gray wishes for the 9/11 novel to participate ingeniously with the fresh conflict and conjuncture to let the “Others” experience the strangeness and newness of the conditions that surround them. To him, Bharati Mukherjee’s *Jasmine* (1989) and Christiana Garcia’s *Dreaming in Cuban* (1992) are eccentric in the sense that they deal with these themes and tropes. The immigrant individuals in these novels add up to new identities in “their liminal conditions, their positions between historical borders and cultures” (Gray, 2011, p. 88). Michael Rothberg (2009), too, complements the “deterritorialized” America which he considers as an inwardly developed sovereign country yet with outreaching power and control (p. 71). Thus, Gray argues that American culture is becoming globally popular in the sense that it attracts people from around the world. Rothberg states that American cultural hegemony is not only becoming influential but increasingly outspreading. Hence, the novels under discussion, like Gray’s model, start with emigrant tales in which the characters enter America with the aim to settle there and procure a stable future, with its all-inclusive socio-economic perks and privileges. At the outset, the protagonists experience an accommodative and assimilative environment, conforming to their pursuit of a promising future for fulfilling their hopes. Conversely, the 9/11 terrible act, as Noam Chomsky calls it “the horrendous terrorist attacks on Tuesday are something quite new in world affairs”—insofar as its target, America, is concerned since the War of 1812. The event worsens the already critical condition and aggravates the disparity between the ‘insiders” and “outsiders” more than ever before (Chomsky, 2001). Their national, religious and racial identities become suspect and fearsome in America. The discourse of Orientalism gets restructured, designating Muslims as diehard fanatical terrorists and obsessive maniacs, who are incapable of mingling with modern Occidental culture(s).

The latter halves of the novels, after 9/11, trail Rothberg’s (2009) pattern to indicate the monopolistic strategy of “America’s global reach” to expose “the cracks in its necessarily incomplete hegemony” (p. 158). Despite their liberal outlook and worldviews, the characters were driven back to their fixed identities by being subjected to ruthless discrimination, unyielding surveillance and harsh handling (Gaskew, 2008; Cainkar, 2008). That repressively coercive treatment compels them to turn to their Pakistani national allegiance and unrelenting desire for homecoming and to articulate “emotional truths” while sustaining social segregation.
The narratives tend to ask frequently “the vexed questions of identity, memory, and home, which such displacement produces” (Ashcroft et al., 2002, p. 218). The novels subsequently undermine the stereotypical discourse of “Others”—the “Outsiders”—for certain transformation. Transformation in the emerging form of indigenisation, or more specifically, *Pakistanisation* (strong affection or support for Pakistan), is the primary argument for which the researcher concentrates. Though the protagonists were fully immersed in the thriving American society, they continued to be “Pakistani[s] at heart” (Yaqin, 2008, p. 45). Thus, the urge for reverting to Pakistani identity, its socio-cultural mores, and historical roots was impending in their hearts and souls.

Grant David McCracken in *Transformations: Identity Construction in Contemporary Culture* (2008), is of the view that:

Transformation can be a source of creativity.... It can be a source of innovation.... It can be a release from disability.... It can be a release from constraints of one kind or several.... It can be a matter of curiosity...or simple opportunism.... Sometimes, it's the revelation of long-kept secrets.... All humans have the ability to assume "shapes of a different kind." Self-transformation is the native gift of every member of the species. (pp. xxi-xxii)

One of the forms of modern day slavery, cultural hybridity thwarts all options and choices related to one’s freedom of thought and action and hinders the introspective tendency to retrospect one’s origins, thoughtfully. It hampers the ways and means to re-examine and reacquire one’s indigenous identity. Also, dependence on foreign culture(s) causes a parasitic identity that never fully functions and is liable to imitate and appropriate foreign influences, unreservedly; thus, creating a vacuum for a distinctive indigenous character and its attendant features.

Transformation, on the other hand, is a long-lasting intrinsic human quest for self-discovery that leads to self-realisation. In this socio-political context, harbouring Pakistani identity and "reinvention" of self-transformation is the only way out to motivate and prompt “Self-actualization”, a concept used and explained by Abraham Maslow in *A Theory of Human Motivation* (2000), which necessitates self-probing and
promotes self-accomplishment for securing an optimistic future. Allama Muhammad Iqbal (Pakistan’s national poet, thinker, and philosopher) terms it as “Self-realisation” in the Islamic context. These terms and concepts contribute to ultimate transformation (of humans) from all internal and external distractions and disorientation.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Arjun Appadurai and Valentina Bartolucci argue that since 9/11/2001, perceptual experiences about Muslims have been reconstituted and have brought them in to be melded with “terrorism” and “radicalism”. Allegedly, their microscopic minority has turned out to be terrifying and terrorising, contrary to what they had been before 9/11. To exacerbate the post-9/11 condition, Judith Butler (2006) returns to the Manichaeism of George Bush, which is “an anachronistic division between ‘East’ and ‘West’, [that] in its sloshy metonymy, returns us to the invidious distinction between civilization [our own] and barbarism [now coded as ‘Islam’ itself” (p. 2). For the biased Orientalists, such pejorative narration helps to widen the gap between the two concocted binaries of the world—the East and West—in the postlapsarian age. To greater dismay, the discourse of Islamophobia keeps on expanding the community of terrorism, indicating that:

The construction of a ‘deculturalised’ Islam is a means of experiencing a religious identity that is not linked to a given culture and can therefore fit with every culture, or, more precisely, could be defined beyond the very notion of culture. The issue is one not only of recasting an Islamic identity, but also of formulating it in explicit terms. (Roy, 2006, pp. 23-24)

The Orientalists are of the view that the “Clash of Civilizations” is the outcome of the divisive belief systems, cultural conventions and worldviews between the Orient and the Occident, “known as Clash theory, it purports that entire groups of people who share the same religion or geography, also share the same consciousness and beliefs” (Raynor, 2006, p.1). Inspired and triggered (in the recent past) by Samuel P. Huntington’s The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order (1996), a cluster of Western authors believe that this theory is the fundamental cause of global agitation, thus harming the cause of global peace and harmony. This argument is biased but ironically popular in some sectors of the Western society, arguing that the
confrontationist cleavage of conflictual differences between the East and West is widened by the perception of the Muslims about Western lifestyles and cultural norms. The rapid growth of the Muslim population and its Islamic consciousness led to the rise of Islamic insurgency and, ultimately, the fall of Soviet Communism. In turn, it created a vacuum for the rise of so-said Islamism, intrusion of the West in the Muslim world, regime changes, and prejudiced the creative interaction of the East and West; and, initiated several questions, the inmost two being: “who is to rule? [And] who is to be ruled?” Even though the questions have already been answered, their recurrent repetition renews the hostility and aggression between the two distinct geographical and ideological hemispheres.

Thereby, the political rhetoric of terrorism and its reactively conservative anti-Western ideology homogenised all Muslims regardless of their respective cultures. That was detrimental to the prospects of peace, either locally or globally. Even multiculturalism after the Immigration Act of 1965, which provided a hybrid space (as discussed in Chapter 4), was devastated. The Orientalists and Islamophobes alleged that these extremist Muslim communities were manipulating the narrative of multiculturalism for their vested interests in the post-9/11. That confounded the conditions further, thereby creating a cleavage of animosity and fear. Lean’s The Islamophobia Industry (2012) was seeded cancerously, to distort the image of Islam and the Muslims, and to let it nurture to Islamophobia...a Multimillion-dollar Industry (Rifai, 2016). Fully funded, sponsored and patronised by Western fanaticism, Islamophobia evolved over the past decade and so, to a sizable institution, spitefully distorting Islam, and its peaceful principles and practices.

However, notable modern leftists like Emma Goldman, Noam Chomsky, Edward Said, Michael Moore, Ted Rall, Howard Zinn, Naomi Klein, John Pilger, Robert Fisk, Tariq Ali, George Monbiot, Ken Livingstone, Tony Benn, Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, Seumas Milne, Jeremy Corbyn, George Galloway and Russell Brand persisted in their severe indictment of the exploitative expansionism of the U.S., and this was in addition to their defence of Islam and the Muslims. They decried the imperialistic role of America while it bullies to impoverish the weaker nations, mercilessly and indiscriminately. The callous warmongering disposition of the U.S. has, in effect, created Islamophobia. The imperial ambitions of America have disrupted global peace after World War II, in
general, and precisely, after 9/11/2001. As a result of the Western victimisation of Islam and its followers, Pakistan’s Islamic identity, too, came under caustic and contemptuous scrutiny, causing humiliating trauma to those having national allegiance to Pakistan and its Islamic ideology. The consequent disgust and disdain caused by acute atrocities in the post-9/11 conflict-ridden world resulted in the Muslims to experience excruciating Western xenophobia, radicalism, and charges of anti-Semitism. Several writers challenged the Muslim’s image stereotyped as nontolerant and sadistic. Pakistani fiction writers were persuaded to “write back”—with Occidentalist epistemology—to the Orientalist discourse of “terrorist ontology” while going through the present plight. As a result, such contentious context, cultural transformation and indigenisation were in dire need at the time; they were the sole solution and salvation, which were exemplified in the three novels. Mahmood Mamdani (2005) goes a step further by historicizing and pointing out that 9/11 and its subsequent repercussions are the "first and foremost as the unfinished business of the Cold War" (p. 13). This thematic defence of Islam includes fiction written in the English language. However, Pakistani English fiction is uniquely exceptional in a sense because Pakistan is an ideological Islamic state and its society has been a targeted victim of the post-9/11 “war on terror”, including Pakistani Muslims living in the diaspora.

Pakistan’s strategic location is another apparent reason for its victimisation. Contextualising Pakistan’s strategic position, Richard Jackson, in the Foreword to The Making of Terrorism in Pakistan: Historical and Social Roots of Terrorism (2013), observes that “Pakistan looms large in the Western imagination as the epitome of current security threats… [and] thus represents the quintessential nightmare of the contemporary Western collective imagination” (p. viii). Hence, historicising terrorism and extremism in Pakistan, and linking it to political violence, social disintegration, and economic debacle, over the years, after the independence in August 1947, has become hackneyed.

Protagonists of the three novels undergo the same adverse fate and suffer indiscriminately, following the 9/11 strikes. As mentioned in chapter 4, before 9/11, the principal characters were homogenised in the American society and felt like natural citizens of the New World. However, after 9/11, they feel alienated and self-estranged due to the maltreatment they were subjected to by the American community, institutions
and government. Excruciating interrogation, torture, anguish, and unease caused by the FBI and other intelligence agencies lead them to rethink their indigenous identity and impel them to have recourse to their roots. It was all because of *Islamophobia*. The clichéd Orientalist version bracketed with the East and Muslim was rephrased in a manner that rearticulated Muslims as miscreants and a looming menace to the American sovereignty at large. Exacerbating the post-9/11 encounter between West and the Muslim world, Cheryl Bernard’s *Civil Democratic Islam* (2003) divides the Muslim world into four main sects, namely: fundamentalists, traditionalists, modernists, and seculars. Allegedly, escalating ‘fundamentalism’ in the Muslim community baffles the American foreign policy and worsens the clash between the “insiders” and “outsiders”. In the three novels, secularism remains the leading trait of the protagonists to which they are passionately tethered. ‘Fundamentalism’, however, rouses them to ponder over self-determination, in the jarring post-9/11 world. Thus, the conflict looms large, and, in turn, metamorphosis is the inevitable necessity that is emerging steadily in the offing.

As a result, having been charged with ‘fundamentalism’, Changez, Chuck, and Nadir introspects with determination to seek their national identity and resort to indigenisation for transformation in the midst of contemporary political and ideological tensions. Pursuing self-exploration and self-discovery, they are so transformed that they have the least resemblance with their hybrid configuration and structure. The leading characters experience the “mechanism of identity” (pp. 8, 152), a phrase used by a notable contemporary sociologist, Anthony Giddens in *Modernity and Self-Identity* (1991); and, later on, employed as “transformational routines” by Grant David McCracken’s *Transformation: Identity Construction in Contemporary Culture* (2008, p. xxii). It meant a radical change in oneself, influenced by all the set conventions responsible for the reinvention of indigenous identity. At this crucial-critical stage, socio-personal privileges granted by the US were of no benefit to them compared to their Pakistani national identity and sense of nationhood. They remonstrated the American global monopoly, exploitation of the underdeveloped world and its greed for materialism. The rise in consumerism, another segment of globalisation, has led to identities becoming more of a commodity that one can buy and sell using material goods. For that reason, cultural hybridity only benefited the U.S. and its invasive designs to induce material greed coupled with her political supremacy over the globe. Paradoxically, what looked to be stable socio-economic standing to the characters of the narratives, was acquired
at the cost of losing their distinctive characters and value of their talents. Bidding and bargaining were the yardsticks for selling and buying the gifted abilities of those who came over from the Third World to the land of dreams. Multiculturalism was believed to be an endowment in the hybrid zone by the migrant “others”, and suspected to be a terrorist lobby. As a result, retrogression was imminent and transformation impending in the novels under debate.

The present chapter focuses on geopolitical, religio-cultural, and ethno-racial factors that usher in the dominant characters to potentially pervasive transformation and escort them to irreversible self-discovery by shedding the American socio-cultural fabric around them. Such an uncompromising changeover disagrees with the conceptual framework of the three theorists, Frantz Fanon, Edward W. Said and Homi K. Bhabha mentioned in chapter 3 about cultural hybridity and social fusion, and focuses on total transformation using indigenisation in the three novels under discussion.

5.2. Post-9/11 Transformation in The Reluctant Fundamentalist

5.2.1. Introduction

*The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, the second novel of Mohsin Hamid, drives home the fact that no experience is as poignant as a homecoming. As though Changez (the interlocutor) who had a safe and secured economic future in the U.S., yet he would not sustain the psychosocial injustice and humiliation of those who were serving America after the crucial event of 9/11. Without objective evidence and reasonable proof, Muslims were put to torture and torment and were forced to rethink their true identity and bona fide habitat. That is, it was a blessing in disguise as well. The Muslim immigrants were conferred an opportunity to reinvent their social conscience, which was hitherto constructed as the ‘Other’. Revisiting and retracing his social, political and cultural transformation, or more precisely, the Pakistani cultural renaissance, Changez compares the ancient civilisation of Pakistan and its neighbouring countries with that of contemporary America. While sitting in a local hotel in the bustling street of Anarkali, Lahore, he takes pride in having innate connection with Pakistan when talking to the American visitor (the addressee), that “four thousand years ago, we, the people of the Indus River basin, had cities that were laid out on grids and boasted underground sewers”; and, the most acculturated and technologically sophisticated Indus Valley
Civilisation, wrapped up the region now called Pakistan (Hamid, 2007, p. 38). Emotional and psychological agitation ever haunts Changez's memory that he witnessed and experienced right after 9/11 when “Pakistani cabdrivers were being beaten… the FBI was raiding mosques, shops, and even people’s houses” (2007, p. 107). Such physical abuse of Muslims, especially Pakistanis, offended him severely and made him reconsider his diasporic disposition.

The entire story is in a flashback narrative technique that recollects the rise and fall of his American dream and his homecoming. Four parallel threads constitute the dynamic plot of the novel: interaction with presumably an American tourist; Changez’s schooling in an elite American educational institution (Princeton University), and his professional career at Underwood Sampson; and, his passionate love for Erica (an emotionally and psychologically disrupted maniac). The latter three (as narrated to the American) is responsible for his radical restructuring. His disillusionment with the American worldly lifestyle begins after 9/11, the news of which he heard while he was in Manila on an official trip. He was relentlessly enraged and exasperated at the maltreatment of Muslims at airport receptions and in other public places. His fury and frustration also got intensified on the ill-treatment of Erica, as she by now was hospitalised because of her psychological derangement, and later on reportedly committed suicide. His distrust and want of passion for his particular job contributed to his estrangement with America. The American dream becomes a horrific interpretation. His unshaved appearance is another kinaesthetic expression of his annoyance with America. Everything happening in and around him impels him to rupture the cocoon of dual identity and to come up with renewed zest to know himself, his past and present. Returning to Pakistan and taking up a job as a university lecturer in Lahore refuels his activism against the American foreign policy and the ‘war on terror’ rhetoric. Over a passage of time, his transformation is fulsome and duly justified, as well.

5.2.2. Counteracting and Combating the Stereotypes
The novel under review attempts to smash the offensive stereotypes of radicalism, reductionism, and fanaticism, which Muslims are linked with, in the post-9/11 American society. The novel encapsulates the intensity of fending off the vile typecasting and the explicitness of aversion to America. Thus far, such anti-American sentiment was either overlooked due to cultural fusion or was of marginal magnitude.
The frustration came into view after 9/11, with heightened annoyance over the abuse Muslims were subjected to.

Changez, in his conversation with the American listener, defies the argument that Muslims are extremists because of the way the Orientalist media project them. They are fellow feeling, peace-loving people, who have rich socio-cultural and geo-historical legacies. Also, Changez tries to dissipate the fear of the Muslim’s beard, which has scared the American interlocutor, who right now represents America. The West conveniently ignores other beards: of Christians, Jews, Sikhs and the faddish secular ones of Hollywood and the media. Changez says to the American that: “Ah, I see I have alarmed you. Do not be frightened by my beard” (Hamid, 2007, p. 1). The American reiterates his comments on the beard when he sees Changez taking liquor, despite his beard, because liquor and beard are together self-contradictory distortions of the Muslim’s image. Changez clarifies in response to the American not to “misconstrue the significance of” his beard (2007, p. 53). Thus, Changez attempts to counter the stereotype of the Muslims’ beard, on the one hand, and on the other, the prohibition of alcohol in Muslim communities. He keeps on explaining that the beard alone did not characterise his Muslim identity, but symbolises his grievances against the bullying America. That was his futile personal self-defence, but it is utterly indefensible in traditional Islam. It was commonly observed that many young Muslims sought reversion to their racial and religious identities out of pungent protest and resistance against American discrimination and chauvinism (Maria, 2011). Sporting a beard is ritualised in Islamic societies, and that:

Many Muslim men wear beards in honour of the Prophet Muhammad, who had a beard. Some believe that beard should be left untrimmed…but many do not accept this assertion…. Only in Afghanistan under the Taliban regime were men absolutely required to wear full, untrimmed beards. (Esposito, 2002, p. 101)

Esposito argues that sporting a beard after 9/11 in America by Muslim men is associated with extremism. Thus, the beard is imagined to be derived from religious fundamentalism and extremism. With his beard, Changez is identified, in the view of American assessment as a changed man: “it is remarkable, given its physical
insignificance—it is only a hairstyle, after all—the impact a beard worn by a man of my complexion has on your countrymen” (Hamid, 2007, p. 130). At public places, his beard was looked at scornfully, and Changez was verbally abused. Wainwright, his non-American friend, and Jim, his employer, at the Underwood Samson, were also critical about his beard, expressing their serious concern about Changez’s changed appearance. To his great anguish, he was called a “fucking Arab” and was provoked by a passer-by to wrestle with him.

While they were conversing with each other, the American noticed a bearded man gazing at the bevvy of girls who were coming from the National College of Arts, Lahore. Induced by stereotypes, the American interlocutor presumes that the man with the beard is a fundamental Muslim who dislikes the college girls’ trendy and fashionable outfits. In reaction, Changez probes him by asking that “you think he will scold them for the inappropriateness of their dresses—their T-shirts and jeans” (2007, p. 22). Changez explains that the man looking at the girls need not, necessarily, be linked with religion or cultural values; rather, indicates it in his attitude by which he deems it improper of women to wear such dresses in public domain. That is an evasion of the Islamic modest dress code for both genders. The Western biased manipulation of the distorted image of the beard, with the media discourse dubbing it as extremism and a potential threat to the West. Because the Western media motivate the American interlocutor, Changez tries to correct his perception, thus: “but you should not imagine that we Pakistanis are all potential terrorists, just as we should not imagine that you Americans are all undercover assassins” (2007, p. 183). While highlighting the negative image making of Muslims through the media, Edward Said (1995) states that: “one aspect of the electronic, postmodern world is that there has been a reinforcement of the stereotypes by which the Orient is viewed. Television, the films, and all the media’s resources have forced information into more and more standardized molds” (p. 26). Thus, media mesmerism has brainwashed Western minds, convincing them to believe the Muslims’ historical, cultural and religious stereotyping.

The taxonomy of fundamentalism and radicalism, however, is tried to be detached from the discourse of Islamophobia and Muslimphobia in the novel. Moore-Gilbert (2012) observes that The Reluctant Fundamentalist overturns the “teleologies within which ‘fundamentalist’ is stereotypically framed” (p. 193). However, in response to the biting
remarks of Erica’s father about the institutional issues in Pakistan, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* clarifies that the word ‘fundamentalism’ has no religious significance here. Although such terms are recurrently employed in the novel, they are interpreted differently. The term ‘fundamentalist’ is used intentionally in the title of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* to signify the protagonist’s repudiation of the American consumeristic economy and capitalist society, and not necessarily to imply religious disassociation by Changez (Hamid, 2007, pp. 98, 100, 116,153, 154). Thus, he critiques the American materialistic society, which does not care for human values and persistently pursues fundamental secular goals to gain material progress.

Read (2008) is of the opinion that the hostility and intolerance against the diverse settler communities exacerbated after 9/11 attacks because they were brought together beneath an exclusive faction—“Arab”—despite massive diversity among these Muslim communities from all over the world (p. 305). Changez, too, was subjected to severe discrimination, as he was mistaken for an Arab. Religion and ethnicity were so confounded that a person claiming to be a Muslim would not be able to escape the denomination of being called an ‘Arab’. Thus, Samuel Cohen (2009) argues that:

> The Arab and Muslim worlds were demonized, leading to acts of verbal and physical violence against Americans of Arab descent and those mistaken for them [like Sikhs who have worn long beards], widespread government investigation based on ethnicity, and generally a return to the fear-filled yet comfortably familiar world of us-versus-them. (p. 5)

Among various physical characteristics (including beard) were thought of as having a connection with the identity of a terrorist. So, it was not only Muslims, but Sikhs and followers of other religious factions (who had beards) were subjected to torture. Such maltreatment with victims earned their fury and indignation for the law enforcement agencies of the U.S. Thereby, widening the gap between “Us” and “Them”, the historical bipolar division between the West and East.

Intensifying the post-9/11 conflictive situation and relating it to the fall of the Berlin Wall, Marilyn Young (2003) observes that “the world that seemed to crumble with the Berlin Wall in 1989 reappeared, a little dusty. Good and Evil, Us and Them, Enemies
“Everywhere” (p. 12). Thus, the post-9/11 world became vitally critical in the sense that it widened the already existing divide between the East and West and aggravated the differences between the two hemispheres of the world which, temporarily before 9/11, had been fused. Changez discovers an entirely changed America when he comes back from Manila after 9/11. One such change he observed was the spangled star banner, the American flag, which waved on every building he saw in New York. That reflected the American passion for patriotism and ardent sympathy with victimised America. Changez observes that even Muslim communities had installed the American flag on their vehicles to show solidarity with America. He becomes outraged by the rudeness he receives everywhere because of intense nationalism in every nook and corner of the country. He notices that the role of both the government and that of the mainstream media was identically worsening the situation. That cannot be dismissed easily nor rationalised (Hamid, 2007).

That is the heightened sensation which Changez begins to feel after 9/11 while he is on his way back to New York from Manila. He feels embarrassed when he sees that the passengers on the plane feel uneasy because of his alleged belonging to an ethnic faction linked with terror attacks. Such discrimination troubles him, as he imagines himself culpable of the 9/11 assaults which had perpetrated a heinous crime against humankind. His dissent is revealed through his calm disposition that he displays on different occasions. On his arrival at the John F. Kennedy airport, the height of insult begins when he is sternly treated by the airport officials and is relentlessly investigated by the armed guards about his whereabouts. Soon after, at Underwood Samson, he is confronted by an unwelcoming attitude of his professional colleagues, frequently staring at him with distrust. He feels that heated America, itself, was scrutinising him with suspicious looks, unwilling to accept him as a real son of the New World. Also, it conveys to the world that the “mightiest civilization [has been] slighted [and it had better refrain from its] wrath” (Hamid, 2007, p. 79). He recollects how America was seized by a “growing and self-righteous rage” in the ensuing months of 2001 (2007, p. 94). He also explains how the intelligence agencies were relentlessly targeting public places and arresting Muslims for severe interrogation in detention cells (Hamid, 2007).
5.2.3. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist: A Geosociological Appraisal*

According to Said’s (1993) view, it can be said that *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is the “historical experience of resistance against [the American] empire”—as applied to the post-9/11 period (p. xii). Said argues that historically, armed, cultural and political agitation against colonialism and imperialism was frequent for self-reliance and geo-ideological independence. Socio-politico and cultural issues are the leading traits of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* for acquiring indigenous identity and cultural transformation. However, the novel goes beyond and above the traditional narrative of resistance to a more nuanced critique of the American politico-cultural hegemony across the globe, which does not spare individuals as well as communities. The novel counteracts the American perspective of Orientalism and properly projects socio-cultural prominence of the Pakistani national identity. Maligned, ostracised, abused and subjugated factions have their distinct outlook that is contrary to the Western debate on Orientalism, which influences the discourse of historicity evolved by the West. In this context, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* explores the loud and clear voice of the conflictive identities who over the course of time, challenge the American empire to squeeze through the ordeal of syncreticity to cultural transformation. Changez assertively tells the American interlocutor about one’s identity: “it is the thrust [and momentum] of one’s narrative that counts, not the accuracy of one’s detail” (Hamid, 2007, p. 118). Ambivalence and fluctuation between love-hate relations is the primary feature of such resistance tales, emphatically against the neo-colonial American empire. Apart from serving the American empire, the protagonist of the novel pursues personal growth and professional career development. Richard Gray (2011), while talking about imperial America, is of the view that “imagination [of Changez] has now been colonized by the United States”, as he had cultivated an idealistic relation with America, liaising the bridge between the practical and imaginary (p. 21). Such a romantic rapport simultaneously attracts as well as repels. Being the nucleus of the neoliberal economy, America is “everything…that people both hate and long for” (Buruma & Margalit, 2004, p. 14). In return, America, too, scares away those ethnic and racial others and the outsiders, who decline its politico-economic and cultural superiority and unforgivingly spite her.

Don DeLillo’s *Falling Man* pertinently identifies the loftiness of the twin towers with the immensity of the American military, economic and political might and its
democratic autonomy. Their tragic targeted demotion is naturally regarded as a punishable provocation: “weren’t the towers built as fantasies of wealth and power that would one day become fantasies of destruction?... The provocation is obvious” (2007, p. 116). Thus, symbolically, the ascent of the towers is the rise of America as a superpower, and their fall causes reactive confusion and revenge. Jean Baudrillard’s *The Spirit of Terrorism and Other Essays* reinforces this reaction when he says that the coercive and “definitive order” of the American empire, embodied by the World Trade Centre (WTC), inflamed a chauvinistic and xenophobic response to it (2003, p. 6).

9/11 fiction and its critics have frequently mentioned this "definitive order" of the New World against the Third World. Such an existentialist picture of exploitative America is portrayed by Deborah Eisenberg’s *Twilight of the Superheroes* (2007), where people are exposed to “the dark world that lay right behind it, of populations, ruthlessly exploited, inflamed with hatred, and tired of wanting for change to happen” (pp. 32-33). However, that remains undiscovered by the American empire until the 9/11 event. Jay McInerney’s *The Good Life* (2006) has a telling association with the theme of suppression by the American material empire, which it deems necessary in “terms of investment and vacation opportunities” (p. 50). The tyrannical domination of the U.S. in the unipolar world after the fall of the U.S.S.R. seems to be essential to maintain its socio-cultural and politico-economic supremacy over the globe. Albert Camus’ *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays* (1967), as motivated by Jean-Paul Sartre’s *Nausea*, speaks of the same exploited world when he outlines the image of absurdity, after discovering and resolving it through human dignity and resoluteness as follows: “the moment when the stage sets collapse and we discover that the human enterprise is fundamentally artificial and absurd” (p. 22). Zizek’s (2002) argument corroborates the oppression of the empire and its deliberate infliction on the weaker nations in the manner of what “took place in New York on 11 September”, which invited “its citizens to the ‘desert of the real’”—the substantial fact of the persecution of the Third World, that was so far, secreted at the back of the “digitalized Third World” affluence (pp. 3-5). Thus, for the U.S., the 9/11 event justified its present persecution project (of the Third World) and, in turn, justified its plan for conquestorial invasions.

Contextualising American cultural capitalism, the novel under examination exhibits its indifference to and dismissiveness of the American imperialistic mania after 9/11. An
example of such apathy is witnessed in Changez’s work at the library of Near Eastern Studies. He works to pay for his education, which he hides from his friends, as he had shown himself to be well-off and could afford the expenses of his education. He has chosen the job in the library, thinking that it is a safe place where he would rarely be disturbed by his friends. Brain-drain is a well-known fact about America. Thus, it is only interested in collecting educated minds and working class skills to serve its own economic goals for securing its capitalistic designs of dominant ascendancy in the world. American slogans of global peace, interfaith harmony, civil liberties and justice are merely empty promises by which the consumeristic economy of America operates. Changez, the victim of this oppressive system, of which he was an integral part until 9/11, was dismayed by its impact and is now indulging in excessive resistance.

Being Pakistani, he was concerned about the economic aid given to his country at the expense of compromising its integrity and autonomy. Changez was bitterly aware of the fact that “finance was a primary means by which the U.S. empire exercised its power [and hegemony]” (Hamid, 2007, p. 156). He was also aware of this truth even before deciding to resist the lure of the manipulative empire. It had inculcated in him the interpersonal skill “to recognize another person’s style of thought, harness their agenda, and redirect it to achieve our desired outcomes” (2007, p. 36). Since the overall American economic system aims at fortifying its wealth at the cost of misusing the natural and human resources of the Third World countries, therefore, it has earned the hatred of those nations, of which Changez is the epitome. Frantz Fanon (1963) states that capitalistic consumerism has gone to the end to “increase its wealth, its gold or diamond reserves, and to establish its power” (p. 101). Changez’s employer at the Underwood Samson informs him that “you’re blood brought from some part of the body that the species doesn’t need anymore” (Hamid, 2007, p. 97). Paradoxically, the reference is made to the brain drain from developing countries (like Pakistan) by America, to strengthen its financial structure, and thereby, to assert its hegemony everywhere.

America’s economic dominance impacts its socio-political dynamics and cultural framework. It influences the mindset of even ordinary Americans, as seen anywhere around the world. Changez recognises the American interlocutor in The Reluctant Fundamentalist from his “bearing [and apparent demeanour]”; although his external
identity is yet to be discovered as an emissary of the American empire (2007, p. 2). The outward appearance of the American is tantamount to the arrogance, which makes him different from others. That reminded the readers of Changez’s experience of the Americans’ haughty attitude towards the Greeks when they were on their study trip from Princeton to Greece. The Princetonians’ overbearing interaction with the Greeks exposes them as if “they were its ruling class” (2007, p. 21). As mentioned in Chapter 4, Changez too had to put on the guise of pride and self-conceit because of his merger with the imperial class and culture. However, later on in Pakistan, he felt reassured by his home to point out the “entitled and unsympathetic American [glance]” (2007, p. 124). It was he, himself, who was transformed and not the place from which he had come. Oddly enough, in the past, he would have felt privileged if he were deemed to be an American. Now, on the other hand, he felt displeased, seeing himself in an American persona. Unhesitatingly, he was critical of the problems Pakistan was passing through, but he had little tolerance for similar criticism by an American. He felt irritated when Erica’s father reminded him of the political problems in Pakistan. He resented the “American undercurrents of condescension” and haughtiness (2007, p. 55).

While on an official trip to the Philippines, Changez felt honoured as well as superior to be called an American. To impress the Filipinos, he pretended to be an American. The reason is that they revere and idolise the American empire for its economic assistance and aid. Therefore, the imperial class was welcomed for being “members of the officer class of global business” (2007, p. 65). While doing so, he had to hide his Pakistani identity, for receiving due prestige and stature. Nonetheless, some distressing incidents in Manila altered, rather, transformed his perception of America and Americanness. The bus driver who took him and his colleagues on a tour trip kept staring at him contemptuously for a long time. That made Changez confused as well as perturbed, and he started thinking of the disdainful stare, to infer the intention of “an undisguised hostility in his expression” (2007, p. 67). After much thought, he concluded that the driver did not accept him as a natural American citizen, but only as a travelling companion of the imperial gentry, while pretending to look like them. This impression was traumatising for Changez, and he felt as if he had lost everything including his precious Pakistani identity which he was born with.
Annoyance caused by the driver is evocative of the collective fury of the Third World against the Empire and its wrong policies. Said (1994), while speaking in Franco-Algerian context, calls such a stare as a natural phenomenon, when the subjugated class empathise to assert together their collective “native resistance” against imperialism (p. 218). Third World countries are of the considered view that America is bullying them for her ulterior motives, without respecting their national ethos, autonomy, and law. Their present persistent economic plight, they believe, is largely due to the interventionism and universalism of America (Moore-Gilbert, 1997). The weaker states are continually demeaned and exploited by the “state of plenty that characterizes” the U.S. (Hamid, 2007, p. 47). Aggravatingly, Euro-America is callously heedless of the “humiliation that is experienced by most of the world’s population” (Panuk & Isin, 2001, para.10). Having “shared a Third World [sense and] sensibility”, Changez instinctively interpreted the facial expression and body language of the driver (Hamid, 2007, p. 67). Resonating with Edward Said, Changez on that very day in Manila relates himself intuitively to the driver by realising that he is employed and engaged by the empire for serving its economic purpose. Changez recalls and regrets that, in his extreme infatuation with the American dream, he got commingled with his professional associates in pursuit of the principles of the free-market economy. The Americans say to Changez: “you are so foreign”—which is reminiscent of his foreignness and a compelling impetus for acquiring his indigenous identity (2007, p. 67).

5.2.4. The Reluctant Fundamentalist: Geopolitical Acrimony and Backlash
Changez was in Manila when the 9/11 event happened. As he was watching television, to his greater surprise, he saw the World Trade Centre collapsing and turning into scattered rubble. Initially, the news was utter disbelief for him, however, churning through different media channels, the news got confirmed, which for him, was too tragic to understand. The chaotic cataclysm, with its tumbling towers, vast plumes of fire and smoke and frenzied folks, made him unconsciously grin, as his “initial reaction was to be remarkably pleased” (Hamid, 2007, p. 72). He could not resist and justify his joy at the loss of scores of harmless people who had nothing to do with such devastation. Also, Changez testifies to his smug pleasure at the misfortune of America because the American empire insatiably pursues her expansionistic, narcissistic and neurotically individualistic policies and practices. He failed his basic humanity by ignoring the people as distinct from the typical structure’s collapse. Dominic Head (2009) argues
that similar to the unveiling of the Islamic countries, Changez’s “mask of the subaltern
slips” and falls apart (p. 143). That is the turning point in the narrative which confounds
the readers, by and large.

_The Reluctant Fundamentalist_ supposed 9/11 strikes as a reaction to the arrogant hubris
of America. Changez feels euphoric that “someone had so visibly brought America to
her knees” because of her baleful domestic policy and international stance and strategy
(Hamid, 2007, p. 73). The novel despises America’s course of action, as it “[humiliates
and then threatens]—that’s what makes it insufferable” (Perlez, 2007, para.15). That is
why she had to face up to her demonic actions. It is beyond Changez’s understanding
how the U.S. would first grieve at the loss of her citizens; then and thereafter rejoices
at seeing the films “so prevalent these days of America munitions laying waste the
structures of your enemies” (Hamid, 2007, p. 73). Such explicit projection persuades
him that even the American empire is not “completely innocent of such feelings [of
seeing others in pain and enjoying it]” (2007, p. 73). The narrative covers all these
frustrating queries that remind America of her cruel contribution to global aggression
by breaching the UN legislation on peace. The execution of innocent people and
extermination of their geo-ideological reality and socio-cultural identity cannot be
justified by any means whatsoever. If this is the yardstick of justice for ensuring global
peace, then America is not above the law of equality and equity. However, September
11 provoked the violent impulse against the cultural and racial “Others” (Moore-
Gilbert, 1997, p. 292). Therefore, stalking the event, America encroached upon
countries of geostrategic importance like Afghanistan which was rich in natural
resources like Iraq, to pursue its imperial ambition of grabbing and controlling at a
“time of unquestioned dominance”, worldwide (Hamid, 2007, p. 115). Such
geographical occupation of the countries mentioned served the imperialistic design of
the U.S. and, at the same time, paving the way for future hegemonic expansion.

The novel analyses the American justification of the Western War on Terrorism which,
ironically, later turns out to be the War of Terrorism. Although the warmongering cartel
is not revealed overtly, the role of the MIC (Military Industrial Complex) and its
abominable sale of WMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction) around the globe for proxy
wars by terrorists is highlighted. Thus, the crime of subversion, sabotage and terrorism
are executed through the “organised and politically motivated killings of civilians by
killers not wearing the uniforms of soldiers” (2007, p. 178). The American empire formulates and enacts the strategies of violence, under the pretext of war against terrorism, for ransacking G.O.D.: gold, oil, and drugs, wherever they are discovered. Muslim countries like Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan have been on the head list instantly after the 9/11 incursions. These nations in the “war on terror” lost hundreds and thousands of innocent people.

At this point in the novel, the situation gets intensified further, when the description of affliction enforced by intelligence agencies in torture cells is linked with the incidence of a lost boy. The missing boy, who was accused of being an accomplice in the killing of an American official, was supposed to have been “whisked away to a secret detention facility…in some lawless limbo between [America and Pakistan] (2007, p. 182). Hamid argues that the rhetoric of the “war on terror” is merely a lame excuse for America and its cronies to expand their sphere of intrusive influence. Though broadly classified as state, inter-state and non-state terrorism, its core cause has been side-lined conveniently, like its correct definition.

Changez’s mobility from the centre to the periphery always embitters his taste for America and its foreign policies about Third World nations. In this regard, another turning point in transforming his perception of the American empire is his official visit to appraise a book publishing firm in Valparaiso, Chile. The company’s publisher, Juan-Bautista, contributed to altering his mindset and affiliation with the Empire. The publisher believes that Changez is a representative of the American capitalist empire who unsettles and spoils people in the Third World at the decree of the U.S. Such pungent yet accurate remarks agitate his mind to rethink his syncretic identity in favour of transformation. Changez is reproached for playing the role of the present-day janissary. Janissaries were teenage Christians who were taken captive by the Ottomans in the fourteenth century and were detained and brainwashed against their fellow citizens. The implication of mentioning the janissaries is that the American Empire hires people from around the world to train and use them against their people for achieving their goals; like many foreign fabricated NGOs.

Similarly, as referred to by Juan-Bautista, Changez too is recruited by the empire for economic exploitation of his people. His eyes are opened to that fact after realising his
position as a henchman working for Western imperial ambitions against the sovereignty of his own country and compatriots. This realisation subsequently triggers off his ultimate transformation. The perception of his endemic identity discerns its ultimate identification with the “inward transformation that began when he realized he was half-gladdened by the World Trade Centre attacks” (Lasdun, 2013, p. 1). Having been through the dilemma of identity crisis and now acquiring a transformed identity, Changez abandons everything and gets back to Underwood Samson to quit the job. Anna Hartnell (2010) identifies the abbreviation of the U.S. with Underwood Sampson. Hence, renouncing Underwood Sampson is tantamount to saying goodbye to America.

Returning to Pakistan, Changez feels liberated from the imperial clutches. Now, he can explicitly express the facts he had understood all this time. He was ambivalent because of his inner assertions about cosmopolitanism and cultural heterogeneity and could hardly say anything because he served the American economy. However, by the time Changez is emancipated, he goes to every credible extent in raising his voice against America’s “constant interference in the affairs of others” (Hamid, 2007, p. 156). He says so publicly and candidly to the mass media, as well as his students and colleagues at the university where he now teaches. He expresses his dissatisfaction over America trespassing the international law of justice and peace by invading sovereign states and societies, including Iraq and Afghanistan. His outrage exacerbates with the news of the occupation of Afghanistan, which shares its geographical borders and socio-cultural mores with Pakistan. Any despicable incident in Afghanistan instigates destabilisation of peace in Pakistan. American intrusion in and occupation of “Pakistan’s neighbour…friend and a fellow Muslim nation [makes Changez] to tremble with fury”, as Afghanistan also shares Islam as its religion, with Pakistan (2007, p. 100). He reproves the U.S. for her aggressive foreign policy that tempts other economic powers for waging wars with small countries, without any justification.

Contextualising the appetite for invasions and occupations in South Asia, Changez brings to light the hegemonic outlook of India, as she follows the footprints of America while dealing with Afghanistan and Pakistan (Hamid, 2007). Changez concurs with Osama bin Laden by saying that September 11 “united” (2007, p. 168) Americans with the perpetrators of 9/11; that is to say, that the attackers wanted America to be exposed to torture as she had been inflicting on “others” (as cited in Morey & Yaqin, 2011).
America had been safe and sound from terrorism at the time when “others” were suffering from the pain of it. As Zizek (2002) argues, extremism and radicalism for America was the trouble that “happens there not here”, thereby, it remained safe and unscathed until 9/11 happened (p. 13). Violence, aggression and terrorism had hit the weaker nations while America remained disengaged from their social perception to social reality. America not only proliferates violence around the world but also tries to establish the terrible update that the “entire planet was rocked”—the news that shocks the world (Hamid, 2007, p. 168). Said (1994) response to the unspeakable actions of the U.S. as “crimes of violence, crimes of suppression [that disorientates and frightens the world—irregrettably]” (p. 195). The Reluctant Fundamentalist offers a solution to the unjustified unstable conditions created by America by suggesting that the U.S. should be intercepted and halted in pursuing its vile imperialistic aims for ensuring global peace and prosperity. Leerom Medovoi (2011) calls this recipe of a remedy as the commencement of “terminal crisis” as if it were to meddle with the hegemony of the New World Order (p. 644). Giovanni Arrighi (2005) observes that the “terminal crisis” in the American global exclusivist order has set in because it had pre-emptively encroached upon Iraq in 2003 (p. 57). He keeps on expounding the waning sway and supremacy of America for the reason that the “world [has] rejected American leadership to the extent that had no precedent in the annals of US hegemony” (p. 58). Because the American military-strategic, socio-cultural and politico-economic influence outreaches peripheral spaces change is essentiated in the “turn from the study of national literature to the literature of an empire” (Medovoi, 2011, p. 649). For that reason, Medovoi explores that The Reluctant Fundamentalist participates in “America’s shifting global position” atypically antithetical to American notable domestic voices in fiction (2011, p. 644). This “shifting global position” corresponds to a colossal imperial standing and stance that reinforces its authoritative control over the globe.

The Reluctant Fundamentalist tells the tale of despair and defiance against American callousness, harassment and mass murdering in the countries that are suspected to have links with terrorism. The U.S. has, of course, targeted all alleged crimes, without any convincing evidence, thereby breaching the Universal Human Rights Charter, Conventions, and Laws. Therefore, Changez dissociates himself from his imperial imprint of recognition and eschews his acquired identity of a “modern-day janissary, a servant of the American empire” (Hamid, 2007, p. 152). He relieves himself from the
clutches of rich American life, both privately and professionally, which had rarely allowed him to dissect and examine the corporate capitalist system and society for which he worked. Things have changed now, and he can see happenings around him with eyes wide-opened. He compares America with the history of past empires to infer that the U.S. is not different from other bygone empires, as she is bent upon the imposing subjugation, grinding the subservient class, and always watching over the oppressed masses as racial “others” (Hamid, 2007). Changez was cursed with offensive language by being called a “fucking Arab” (Moore-Gilbert, 1997, p. 295). It is the current derogatory curse-word for Arabs, who are identified with the racial “others”. In rejecting such humiliating abuse, he discarded all that was associated with America and began to teach at a university in Lahore, the heart of Pakistan. Together with that, he led an active campaign against American imperialism.

Although Changez was surrounded by acute peril to his person because of his indigenously driven passion he believed that the solution lies in both personal and national liberation from the American imperial system, which drains the blood of Third/Muslim world countries like Pakistan to strengthen itself. His words were well-received by his pupils, as the gospel truth, because he had been part of the American capitalistic corporate economy, which is deeply embedded in exploitative doctrines. With the aim of highlighting Pakistan’s sovereignty, consolidating its global image and promoting its moral stand on national and international issues, he mobilises not only the people around him but also coordinates mass meetings to register his reservations about the double-faced American policies. Consequently, he discovers himself “rather like a Kurtz waiting for his Marlowe” to bring him down (Hamid, 2007, p. 183). Even though Changez is trying to lead a usual life, he is possessed by the obsession that someone is watching him. The analogy of Kurtz, who is acclimatised to the Congo as an indigenous being and had little hope of recovery, expected Marlow to retrieve him from the Heart of Darkness. He discloses to the American interlocutor, who is already aware of his negative sentiments towards America by expressing “that America might react to my admittedly intemperate remarks by sending as an emissary to intimidate me or worse” (2007, p. 183). Referring to Joseph Conrad’s Heart of Darkness (1899) and its principal characters, also implies that American neo-imperialism has replaced the jargon of traditional colonialism, and has resurfaced such in new-fangled terminology. Changez’s estrangement is the depiction of turmoil stimulated by disruptiveness and
divergence enacted by an implied debate established on falsehood. Control and authority are the twin factors, according to Edward Said, to be responsible for creating discord in relations between people, which could otherwise proceed, peacefully.

5.3. Post-9/11 Transformation in Home Boy

5.3.1. Introduction

Bashir Ahmed (2010) states about Naqvi’s Home Boy as a narrative of change over from one extreme of a carefree life in America to another extreme of a determined rethinking of returning to his Pakistani origins. Of the novel, he says that: “the three key characters in the book are introduced very much as products of New York City. But as the story unfolds, the limits of that immersion and of their own ease with their adopted surroundings are tested” (paras. 4-6). Home Boy, H. M. Naqvi’s debut novel and a successful endeavour in negotiating multiple identities in the post-9/11 situation is another tale of transformation. As mentioned earlier, the triad of friends, Chuck: Shehzad, a cab driver, once a banker; AC: Ali Chaudry, a Ph.D. dropout, now a self-appointed political analyst; and, Jimbo: Jamshed, live a carefree life in the bustling city of New York. The story is also instructive and interesting in the sense that how a group of casual friends is adversely affected by 9/11 and its outcome. The event guided them to readjust the course of their lives and make them rethink their originality. Home Boy entails strands of contention and conflict, Islamophobia, family expectations and marriage within the Pakistani community as juxtaposed to the Western lifestyle and traditions. All hopes and merry-making are reduced to emptiness when the 9/11 occurs, and the threesome consciously realises what Chuck says that: “you were a squatter all this time, not an original settler” (Naqvi, 2009, p. 35). The quote reminds of transformation and recourse to patriotically-motivated identity and its socio-cultural ethos.

Chuck is deeply inspired by the words of Jimbo's father, an ageing man, who explains Jihad as under:

That he has embarked on a jihad to make the world more beautiful by gardening, and Chuck remarks, "Old Man Khan reminded me that the term [jihad] translates to 'struggle', particularly the struggle within: to
remain moral and charitable, acquire knowledge, and so on". (Sawhney, 2011, para.6)

By the end of the novel, Chuck has to make a big decision. Should he take on a promising new job in finance or forsake his beloved New York for Pakistan? Chuck's dilemma reveals some exciting home truths about the post-9/11 world. This subtlety is drowned by so much sensationalism, coincidence, and stereotyping more than ever before (Sawhney, 2011). It is, of course, a turning point in the novel for all the three, especially Chuck (the protagonist), who thus far was unaware of the fact behind the reality of the presence of ‘the exotic’ in the midst of Western sophistication. Probing one’s own self and stretching out to the state of ‘self-actualization’, as theorised by Abraham Maslow, and postulated as ‘self-realization’ by Allama Muhammad Iqbal, corresponds to the transformation of Chuck and other characters in the novel, especially in the Iqbalian Islami sense. The process involves not only a physical denial but a psycho-spiritual and socio-cultural estrangement from Euro-America, as they tend to discard all those having identification with Islam. The process to come out of dichotomous identity is arduous and painstaking. However, the transformed indigenous identity is stable and unwavering.

## 5.3.2. Neutralising Stereotypes

The American media present developing countries as naïve, uncivilised, unwilling to change, and defiant of modernism in the contemporary world. Their anchors and pseudo-experts justify American invasions on countries which have nothing to do with terrorism. The credulous public around America relishes such sensational news and views. Without verifying the credibility of the American media onslaughts, “everybody’s busy parceling myths and prejudice as analysis and reportage” (Naqvi, 2009, p. 114). Among the innocent victims of such mislaid analysis was Ansar Mahmood, a Pakistani in his mid-twenties, in the Home Boy who was picked up by the FBI and was interrogated severely. His only fault was to take a photo of the Hudson, which to the police, had a water purifying plant in it. The suspicion of being an extremist got him arrested and subjected to torture.
In the *Home Boy*, the term ‘fundamentalism’ implies uncompromising opinion about related issues. The word ‘fundamentalist’ is used to indict Iran as a precarious neighbour of Afghanistan (Naqvi, 2009, p. 200). *Home Boy* also points out the materialistic objectives of neoliberal America. Thus, the notion of fundamentalism infers that American society capitalises on material greed and gain, not essentially on Islamic fundamentals. Fundamentalism is a metonymy which is used for Islam and the Muslims as a whole. Therefore individuals claiming to be Muslims are collectively treated as suspect fundamentalists. Among Orientalists, few associate violence, vandalism and vehemence with Islam and its believers, the Muslims. Francis Fukuyama (2002) imagines the entire Muslim society, the *Ummah*, as an “Islamic-fascist sea within which the terrorist swims” (p. 34). Naqvi’s *Home Boy* opposes the cynical approach of myopic Orientalists to distinguish individuals from the group. After 9/11, Chuck discusses the Western prejudice of looking at all Muslims as a potential threat to the Western ideology of liberty, equality, and fraternity. They are suspected of always intriguing against the freedom of America. The West, especially America, has bracketed all Muslims into a single homogenised unit by dubbing them as parochially zealots, fanatics and extremists, disregarding their wide and varied communities all over the world. The truth is that the Muslim world is a mosaic rather than a massive monolith. They are so lumped together that the violation and viciousness of a single individual are regarded as collective Muslim violence. An interrogator at the investigation cell recurrently asks Chuck that “I’m trying to understand why Muslims terrorize…does the Koran sanction terrorism?” (Naqvi, 2009, pp. 146-7). Chuck aptly answers that he is a Muslim and has read the Quran, yet he is not a fanatic. Likewise, the easy-going Jimbo is a “bad drunk—but he’s no terrorist” (2009, p. 209).

*Home Boy* cross-examines the stereotypes Muslims are identified with while trying to dispel the distrust created and promoted by the West. Naqvi defends the innocence of Muslims and their desire for peaceful coexistence in a demographically heterogeneous America. Chuck and his companions frequent liquor bars and drink while ignoring the Islamic tenets about alcoholic drinks. The love affair of Jimbo and Duck is another example of negating the stereotyping of Muslims. Naqvi explores how a Muslim can marry a non-Muslim. Similarly, Jimbo’s father who comes from the north of Pakistan and has traditional views about such matters is pleased with the marriage. Thus, Muslims’ tolerant attitude and broad-mindedness are projected.
Home Boy contradicts the misconstruction of patriarchy in the Islamic communal system that allegedly subjugates women-folk. The novel argues that women participate actively in public and domestic spaces at par with men. The dynamic character of Mini Aunty is portrayed as a prosperous medical professional who works in American society. She is persuasive enough in bringing together notable people, like hosting the consul general and federal ministers from Pakistan visiting the United States. She is equally important to Chuck, A.C., and Jimbo for advising them on their personal and public matters. Another impressive woman is Chuck’s mother, who has been a source of inspiration for him since he was a child. All this time, he “didn’t want to upset his Ma [mother]” and remained respectful to her (2009, p. 139). He always remained the good son, as his mother wanted him to be. Chuck sums up the influence of his mother on him as “I suppose the single guiding motivation of my life has been to impress Ma”, while Grizzly, the investigator, interrogates him (2009, p. 145). Even though she never actually appears in the novel, Chuck refers to her in his narrative of the present which reminds him of his past. He is in touch with her continually to let her know whatever happens around him, except his detention by the FBI since “everything’s changed for worse” (2009, p. 236). In a nutshell, he personifies her as his right mentor and guide, who nurtured him lovingly.

Amna is Jimbo’s sibling sister whom Chuck is attracted to and being fascinated by her character. Chuck is curious about her wearing a veil in a country where the hijab (veil) is resented. To his great surprise, she explains to Chuck that covering her figure is not under any religious obligation or compliance with any social norm. Instead, she wanted to hide her fatness being irritated by the nasty name as a “marshmallow girl”, her class fellows yelling her at (2009, p. 265). Chuck’s personal opinion about hijab contradicts the stereotype related to veil. He ponders that “donning the thing [—veil]” is the defective rendition of religion (2009, p. 68). His mother did not wear hijab in her life and he also “did not care to wear identity on sleeves” (2009, p. 68). Likewise, the Islamic injunction about consuming alcohol may “easily be interpreted either way” (2009, p. 71). Of course, these are secular misinterpretations for personal convenience, if not laxity. These instances reflect that Chuck desires to secularise and Westernise Muslims. Even though Chuck, A.C., and Jimbo refer to Islamic tenets, it is only to justify the American lifestyle. Even A.C. tilts towards “vigorous atheism”, and does not back off from disclaiming Islam a “[expletive] religion” (2009, p. 2). He keeps
repeating that Islam is as fierce as Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and other religions because “man has been killing and maiming…since the dawn of time” (2009, p. 122). Is that the fault of religion, per se, or of human nature’s perfidy? Overriding cultural and religious stereotyping, Naqvi’s plain talk is tantamount to anti-Islam tirades.

*Home Boy* has been judged by critics for the creation and presentation of bizarre characters while attempting to rectify stereotypes. In his review, Hirsh Sawhney (2011) considers *Home Boy*’s characters to be implausible because:

> The author [Naqvi] tries to make his primary characters well rounded, but these attempts backfire. Take the drug-using AC, who works as a substitute teacher in a "rough-and-tumble South Bronx school", for which he receives medals and awards. AC's saintly backstory rings false, but Naqvi doesn't seem concerned with plausibility. His characters are instead props designed to explode misconceptions about drug users, Pakistan or Islam. (para.5)

Thus, the characters turn out to be nonessential and dispensable, their roles becoming incoherent. Likewise, at places, Naqvi’s narrative digresses into moralistic speeches while trying to dispel misunderstanding about Islam and his native identity. The very beginning of the story echoes the same incongruity on the part of Chuck as Naqvi’s mouthpiece when he responds that “we weren’t the same” to the charge levelled against Pakistanis, as “all you Pakistanis are the same” (Naqvi, 2009, p. 2). Individual and collective typecasting of Islam and Muslims is full of twists and turns in the novel’s narrative and dialogues. One such scene is when Old Man Khan explains the concept of *Jihad* in Islam. Stereotypically speaking, *Jihad* in the Western disclaimer of *Islamophobia*, means fulfilling the divine commandment of engaging in war with non-believers and killing them whereas, while toiling in his garden he explains, that for him gardening is *Jihad* as a creative effort, in its core concept of creating peace by taming personal, social and human evil. For that matter, *Home Boy* better explains the denotation and connotation of *Jihad*, depending on individual and social human conditions. Thus, it is a spiritual personal and social struggle for positive goals, peacefully, like “God’s work to make Heaven on earth” (2009, p. 67). The best form of *Jihad* is an inward spiritual struggle against one’s own evil ego, for moral-spiritual
'Self-realisation'. As such, *Jihad* is the foremost life-long process of creativity in tune with the literal, proverbial and intentional meaning of Islam as perpetual peace by sublime submission to God’s will. Thus, *Jihad* is compassionately caring living. The meaning and message of *Jihad* are to endure the trials and tribulations of life steadfastly to attain piety and enlightenment: *Irfan*. This correct elucidation of *Jihad* is either omitted or ignored, which is why the sensational stereotype of terroristic *Jihadism* dominates the media and masses. In its military manifestation, *Jihad* is just like war in the Western ideological-cum-strategic sense. H. M. Naqvi’s *Home Boy* does refute the stereotype because it is conscious of the fact and tries to assert its role and reality in Islam. Chuck says that he “could not change the way” he was identified by people in his surroundings (2009, p. 130). Such insights and sensitivities got reinforced following 9/11, which caused an astronomical rise in Western bias and bigotry.

The lamentation and protest of *Home Boy* after 9/11 is not different from *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* when critics identify Muslims as “suspect citizens [who are subjected to an inquiry for] signs of betrayal” (Maria, 2011, pp. 111-112). Chuck, A.C., and Jimbo also came under severe scrutiny and were isolated from the pack; they were excruciatingly interrogated for what they were bracketed with. As everything in the surroundings had altered drastically, the characters forsake their easy-going lives and tend to focus on news and reviews broadcasted on T.V channels, being “anxious and low and getting cabin fever” (Naqvi, 2009, p. 7). Chuck and his friends experience discrimination and abuse in public places. They feel that they had been set apart from the rest of Americans. People look at Chuck intently which makes him feel “like a marked man” and thinks little of himself as a person (2009, p. 262). He is puzzled by people around him, wondering whether their glares are: “to tacitly claim him as their own [or] dismiss him as the Other” (2009, p. 56). Chuck and his companions were engaged in a bar brawl, as a handful of Americans assumed them to be Arabs because of their brownness. Chuck feels powerless and incapable of handling the situation, disabled by the long and lingering history from the colonial to the postcolonial times of subjugation, animosity and aversion. That reveals that they hold little influence to reconcile the conflict, as it had descended from the “crushing momentum of history” (2009, p. 30). So, historical continuity of the conflict is at play that worsens the situation and, thus triggers off the transformation of the central characters in the novel.
Chuck was much surprised by the interrogation of a police officer who found the "Metrostanis" in a cluster, which to the officer was alarming for no evident reason. It was not a big deal for a brown man to travel to America in the pre-9/11 world, but in the post-9/11 conditions, it became challenging (Naqvi, 2009). Intelligence and law enforcing agencies were present everywhere to scan every furtive and suspicious movement. Their ethno-racial appearance was suspected and looked down upon even by the guards of bar houses. Several crimes were committed out of hatred, Naqvi expounds so that many Muslims tried to return to their homelands, where they had not been to for years (2009). To save their lives, many Muslims preferred to leave for the neighbouring Canada and Mexico. Many of them were detained without any apparent reason and were sternly scrutinised because of their ethnicities. Chuck and his companions met the same fate. The founding slogans of fraternity, freedom and equality, which enthused American independence were forgotten in the post-9/11 amnesia. Doom and gloom scenarios stalked the “Others” living in America. Chuck being a victim of such affliction, was compelled “to reconsider his own religion and national allegiance” (Sawhney, 2011, para.3). Moreover, that was the only likely and credible alternative for them.

The most significant part of the narrative is the seizure and detention of Chuck, A.C. and Jimbo on their alleged affiliation to a terrorist cartel. Apprehension, precariousness, and indecisiveness about what is to happen next intensify the situation, which is categorically described in the characters’ experience of enervating incidents. Empathetic feelings of readers are aroused by their graphic articulation, which reveals the anxiety and anguish of victims of the post-9/11 American authorities. President George W. Bush’s notable address to the American nation right after the 9/11 strikes worsens the conditions for Muslim immigrants of different ethnicities, as it targeted them explicitly. The speech provoked people to either side with America or with the enemy for bringing the terrorists to justice. It thereby aroused antagonism against and vengeance from Muslims because they were thought of as a source of imminent terror to American independence and global peace. The speech proclaimed “age of liberty, here and across the world” to destroy the “age of terror”; it caused the fatal eruption of wrath (Naqvi, 2009, p. 129). Paradoxically, the tragedy triggered off the U.S. spawned “age of terror” with violence and viciousness. Slavoj Zizek (2002) approaches the aftereffects of 9/11 in a similar analogy and forecasts America’s role in a newly
emerging world of terror. He argues that America will either hide in her cocoon and will protect itself from the external dangers or, she will outreach to the outside world to curb the violence so that it might not happen again and spread anywhere in the world. Thus, merely protecting itself is not sufficient. Instead, she would tend to suppress violence everywhere in the world, in all its forms and manifestations. Ever-escalating terrorism is today, a global curse and challenge. The narrative under consideration seems to follow Zizek’s approach while dealing with the culture of terrorism and attendant security issues. However, later it contradicts Zizek’s view that America will opt to curb global violence because it goes around the world to spur violence.

After 9/11 America fully empowered its constabulary, crime squads and intelligence agencies to deal strictly with Muslim immigrants and to ensure homeland security. Obsessed with the power mania, the police arrested several innocent people and tortured them, for no valid reason. People with beards including Sikhs were dealt with severely, even by the general public. Many were taken into custody “on suspicion of terrorism on the flimsiest basis” by police squads and law enforcement agencies (Crockatt, 2007, p. 83). Uninterrupted arrests and detentions were extended, especially to Muslim immigrants, with renewed vigour in “paralegal categories, torture, and rendition” (Morey & Yaqin, 2011, p. 35). Execution of such militant mission and its terrible consequences intensified the situation around and ultimately forced the characters to revisit their settlement in the U.S.

Chuck and his friends were never asked why they were picked up by the police. Separate investigators cross-examined them, taken away in separate vehicles, and placed in separate detention cells. Chuck was coerced by his interrogator, Rooney, to admit that he and his friends had links with a terrorist group to prove him as a criminal and liable to an action. He was warned that if he refused the command of the police officer he would bear its brutal brunt. As an immigrant intruder, he was also threatened with solitary confinement. He could also be repatriated to Pakistan if he were fortunate. The investigator used the most insulting language about Pakistan, calling it “Bumfukistan” (Naqvi, 2009, p. 135). That exasperates Chuck more than ever. He is ordered to strip off his clothing, exactly in the way how Changez was directed to do at the airport. That shames Chuck and makes him indignant of his Muslim immigration status in America. The height of his disgrace was when he was called a “sand nigger”
Denigration of Islam and terrorism by Grizzly, another investigator, makes it plain to Chuck that “you a terrorist, [because] you a Moslem” (2009, p. 143). It adds fuel to the fire and insult to injury. Such investigations in closed rooms are a continuation of Islamophobia and Muslimphobia at the global level. The investigators are convinced that Muslims are terrorists, so they are curious to know the references in Al-Quran related to violence and forcefulness (Naqvi, 2009). However, the investigator does not believe Chuck when he says that he has not seen any reference in the Al-Quran to terrorism and radicalism.

Chuck, in his conversation with Grizzly, argues that although Islam is deliberately construed as proliferating terror and violence, it has nothing to do with intimidation and belligerence. He tries to clarify factually, the difference between what is real and what is stereotyped about Islam and its followers. However, the investigator seems unsatisfied with the explanation and responds by saying that Muslims around the globe are antagonistic to peace, as they follow the teachings of Islam and the holy book, which instigate them to hatred and hostility against nonbelievers. Grizzly’s negative notions are directly derived from Islamophobia. When their luggage was searched for explosive-making guides and ground strategies, they found William Powell’s The Anarchist Cookbook (1971) and Ibn Khaldun’s prolegomena Muqaddimah (1377), which A.C. was reading for his doctoral thesis. Indeed, it was a great embarrassment for Chuck and his friends when they were “humiliated, starved, physically and mentally abused”, as nothing erroneous and inappropriate was found against them (Naqvi, 2009, p. 172). Everything they were accused of was a sham and deliberately concocted against them. In the end, the characters in both narratives conclude that everything said and done was contrived against them. Therefore, it influenced them to the dynamism of conflict and confrontation, and defiance for transformation.

5.3.3. **Home Boy: Politico-Economic and Socio-Cultural Analysis**

Naqvi’s mouthpiece, Chuck, comes to understand and gains experience of how the capitalist system functions and the exploitative nature while working as a financier on the Wall Street, and despite this he continues to work for the empire for the material perks and privileges. While the financial dynamics in both novels, The Reluctant Fundamentalist and Home Boy, are similar, the reaction of the protagonists is different. Chuck accepts to stay in the system as its servant, but Changez turns down the lure of
lucrative offers. There is no choice in the American politico-economic system: take it or leave it, is the motto, which requires rigorous submission and essentiates adaptability. The free-market economy pursues to multiply its wealth by any means, as the “Procrustean machinery” does for more productivity and better outcome (Naqvi, 2009, p. 37). Thus, immigrants are modern day slaves and human-robots in the capitalist economy, which use them callously to serve its purpose without keeping their needs on its priority; that is done by imposing its own terms and wages for the employees. However, there is a lesson for Pakistan and other Third World countries in the Western practice of minimum wages and maximum working hours. The former varies with the rate of inflation, and the latter is followed strictly. Chuck grudgingly remains part of the ruthless system as leaving one master results in accepting another like him/her. The real reason of his expatriation to Pakistan is his reluctance to continue serving the system and to stand against it for its globalistic exploitation.

5.3.4. **Home Boy: Geosociological Reluctance and Resistance**

Unlike Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Chuck and his companions in the *Home Boy* are unable to understand the events initially. By the time Chuck is interrogated at the detention cell, “America’s own Abu Ghraib”, if Chuck had imagined being pleased with the disaster, he thinks of the grilling to be nonsensical with no validity to answer it (Naqvi, 2009, p. 133). Thus, the events were so sudden and unexpected for them that they were unable to arrive at any convincing conclusion thereby leaving them in a limb of indecisive uncertainty. Their social cohesion with the pre-9/11 parasitic host America was so intense that the questions regarding their rancour for America seemed unreasonable. They had no answer to the questions but to remain silent.

In the ongoing rant of rising hatred of America in *Home Boy*, the rhetoric of “the Clash of Civilizations” advocated by *Islamophobes* after 9/11 triggered by Francis Fukuyama (2002) projects that the Muslim world and its followers commemorate 9/11 “because it humbled a society that they believed was at its heart corrupt” (p. 31). The current critique is largely expressed through cultural and religious narratives, which seek to expose Huntington’s notion and its adherents. The thirstling theory’s thrust is that the principal cause of hostilities to the West, after the fall of Soviet communism, is the religio-cultural differences between the East and West, which are deepening over the
years to come. The “collision of worlds” is close at hand, because the Western world is stunned by and outraged at the Muslim world, which observes September 11 with rejoicing (Booth & Dunne, 2002, p. 1). Thus, 9/11 is the watershed event which divergently polarises the world into irreconcilable divides, aggravating the historical gaps. Hence, it becomes a wounded and fragmental world.

Several fiction writers have expressed their concern over the death of guiltless people; however, they still try to familiarise themselves with the geosociological background of the 9/11 tragedy. Famous Turkish novelist, Orhan Pamuk’s The Anger of the Damned (2001), probes the issue of the solemnisation of September 11: “later, as I walked the streets again, I met one of my neighbours. “Sir, have you seen, they have bombed America,” he said, and added fiercely, “They did the right thing” (para.4). Pamuk argues that the imperious regime of the U.S. is responsible for the aggravation of the crises between the Christian West and the Muslim East. The opportunistic and dehumanising attitude of America has deeply dented the Third World nations by colonising their politico-economic power potential and socio-cultural ways of life. Victimisation of the weaker nations by exploitative capitalism has caused them untold embarrassment and exponential anguish. Another similar and striking description shared by a Syrian professor, Sadik J. Azm, when he was on his official trip to Japan in Islam, Terrorism and the West (2005). He states that the visual depiction of the 9/11 assaults on the media channels made him think like as “[he] could not help experiencing a strong emotion of Schadenfreude that [he] tried to contain, control and hide…. At that moment, [he] intuitively knew, as well, that millions and millions of people experienced the same emotion throughout the Arab World and beyond” (Azm, 2005, p. 6). He keeps on exploring the historical roots of such fissures and conflicts, attributing them to America’s narrow stance and punitive strategy in international relations. The Arab world, too, is the victim of such vicious policies that heightens the discords.

The overall conclusion in the Muslim world is that after the fall of Soviet Communism, America invented the white lie of the ‘Green Islamic Threat’ to the West to justify its ever expansionist hegemonism and conquostorial colonialism. In this context, the Home Boy concurs with those above critical and literary writings by fellow Muslims, while raising its voice of discontent and disaffection with the intrusive policies and punitive practices of America. Similarly, Home Boy describes the same precarious policies and
unsafe practices adopted by the American empire in the wake of the September 11 attacks. The narrative resonates rapid American rejoinder against the Third World spaces to blast towns and cities “to kill the bastards” and to persecute them as malignant “others” (Naqvi, 2009, p. 52). Likewise, America’s “purple fury—a ruthless indignation that does not leak away in a week or two…or wandering into…corruptly thoughtful relativism” is now a new dimension of America’s relationship with the “others” (2009, p. 52). The wrath seems infinite, and the reaction is the worst.

Afghanistan and Iraq fell prey to the desperate vengeance of America after 9/11, showing the fault lines in the stunning shift of American domestic and foreign policy against the socio-cultural syncreticity and assimilation of people, from around the world regardless of race, religion and ethnicity who are settled in America. In the wake of 9/11, “the worst and most background features of the latest U.S. imperial adventure [began to reveal and thrive]”, as argued by Paul Gilroy (2005, p. xii). Said, too, believes that there was no deliberation and planning on the part of America over what is to be chalked out in the post-9/11 world and the decision of hurling upon the weaker states was the proof of its aggression, as he stated in his research article, titled, “Islam and the West are Inadequate Banners”. Alternatively, as Said points out, that communal rage and “thought-stopping fury” (Said, 1995, p. xxii) were “funnelled into a drive for war” (Said, 2001, para.4). Said advocates an intellectual and sane discernment of the emerging post-9/11 conflictive conditions, the responsibility of which virtually lies with the U.S. to sensibly arbitrate and negotiate, but America did not do so.

The novel abides by the similar principles of the liberation of thought and actions, as argued by Gilroy and Said. However, it seemed useless to actualise such precepts in a society driven by paranoiac and chauvinistic ideals in the post-9/11 arena. The narrative highlights such contradictory reactions in the arrest incident of the “Metrostanis”. They, the guiltless characters, are on their way to find their missing friend after he disappeared following 9/11. He fell prey to the attacks of which they did not know. On arriving at his house, they were startled to see George Bush’s address on the television to the American nation: “either you are with us, or you are with the terrorist” (Naqvi, 2009, p. 123). Ali Chaudry immediately feels a sense of revenge in the retaliatory speech of Bush, as it reflects a scriptural reference of retribution; that is, “an eye for eye and a tooth for tooth” instead of conforming to the paragon of the Enlightenment that the
West had promised to uphold and abide by (Mathew, 1884, 5: 38). For that reason, he keeps on ranting over the role of America in the prevailing situation, which is contrary to what is expected of her. Promotion of violence by the provoking wars is all the U.S. is engaged in.

The narrative also historicises the American role of war advocacy, which has brought about clash and chaos in most parts of the world. In the context of Pakistan and Afghanistan, American involvement of spawning armed militants, sponsoring, patronising and deploying them is notorious globally. It is in purposive pursuit of American imperialism. That is why many realistic Americans decry her as the ‘Rogue State’ of the postmodern age because of her devious designs. Zizek (2002) believes that the U.S. creates her foes, and projects them to her citizens through the mass media and political parlance as dangerous “other” to make them believe that they hate America for no discernible reason. Thus, reassuring the masses guarantees a release of financial subsidy and rigorous legislations for legitimising their expansionistic and exclusivist projects, while dealing with their imaginary self-invented opponents. The fact is that the outrageous American transgression is always scorned and scolded by the victims.

Homi K. Bhabha (2002) argues that the creation of reductionist binarism of “us” against “them” externalises “the hawkish, imperialist aspect that provokes a widespread sense of injustice, indignation and fear” (p. 4). Therefore, most people resist and contest American politico-economic, socio-cultural and military hegemonism over the globe. There are notable leftist writers in the West who have deplored the U.S. foreign policy because of its negative implications. Home Boy, too, invites the readers to the impartial voices of those writers to arrive at an unbiased and logical solution to the complex crises.

However, in Home Boy, Chuck, after 9/11, transforms into a fierce and furious “other”, who turns out to be retaliatory to those who have been wicked to him and his friends. His dismay causes his resentment at and discomfort with the U.S. He knew that he and his companions have never been part of any evil intentions or plans against anyone, including America, for which he was arrested and interrogated (Naqvi, 2009). Having gone through physical and mental torment, Chuck starts pondering William Powell’s The Anarchist Cookbook (1971), which examines the premise of “sabotage [,
subversion] and acts of terrorism” (Naqvi, 2009, p. 247). Having suffered intense stress and strain in detention cells, he becomes anomalously obsessive. The sufferings were so stern that he was reported to have made suicidal attempts to end everything once and for all. In such distressing conditions, dissociation from the U.S., as she had nothing for him now, was impending and thus, *Pakistanisation* (strong affection or support for Pakistan) was unavoidable. He relinquishes America considering “the fear, the paranoia, the profound loneliness that had become routine features of life” after the September 11 attacks (2009, p. 267). In fact, Chuck started reacting to the manner he was portrayed in the religio-cultural craft of typecasting. He harboured on his socio-cultural and religious practices, despite his reservations about them before 9/11. America had nothing to offer him now, except discriminatory disparagement. Thus, the only haven for him where he would feel protected is his own ethnonational culture, or, more precisely, Pakistani ethnonationalism.

### 5.4. Post-9/11 Transformation in *Thinner Than Skin*

#### 5.4.1. Introduction

The Pakistani-Americans have faced numerous challenges caused by the host community, which has continued “othering” the immigrant community and treating it as suspects in their daily routine life. Achieving integration of the immigrant community has been affected by how the two communities perceive each other’s culture, beliefs and values. The distrust of tourists in the wake of the 9/11 attacks in the Kaghan valley, Pakistan is replicated in the modern metropolis of the world, New York, USA.

*Thinner Than Skin* is a tale of transformational breakthrough based on self-discovery as noted by Afrah Jamal, that “their trusty ally/guide Irfan charts the course to their path of self-discovery past majestic mountains and ice-encrusted lakes” (Jamal, 2013, para. 2). Unremitting threats, temporal pain and pangs, demoralising and unnerving circumstances and incessant search for their true self-paved the way for the characters to embrace their true identity. As the story progresses, Nadir Sheikh and Farhana, the two round characters seem weary and dreary of the so-called bustling land of freedom. More often, on different occasions, they are poignantly reminded of their motherland. Nadir becomes indifferent and dispassionate about his life as a painter (by painting
Californian deserts) in the U.S. and as a result, as he faces dissuasion and dismay. His photos are thought of as a reflection of war-torn Pakistan and its miserable state in the wake of its internal political insecurity and terrorism. These stark experiences and impersonal surroundings embitter his outlook about the ridiculing and scornful attitude of the Americans towards Pakistan and Pakistanis especially after the dreadful event of 9/11. Farhana longs for her origin, as she is nostalgic and craves for quenching the thirst of her split identity. She visits Pakistan to explore the hostile yet spectacular glaciers of northern Pakistan. Beyond that, there is an urge to explore even more the spectacular sight of individuality and identity. The bond and relation of that native attachment are more profound and loftier than the Karakorum and Hindukush mountain ranges. That longstanding craving for Pakistani identity resulted in the transformation of three characters, as quoted by Uzma Aslam Khan in the following words: “the lives of three individuals— a photographer, a pagan woman and a nomad — are transformed in the setting of Northwest Pakistan” (Khan, 2013, para. 2). As a result, they are reborn with renewed attachment and allegiance for Pakistan.

Spellbound and captivated by the scenic sights and traditional customs and above all, the resilience and strength of Maryam (a nomad), Nadir and Farhana are transformed, they become united like the mating glaciers of the Kaghan Valley, which they had come to visit, despite their emotional turmoil and psychological distractions. Besides, their professional fulfilment, that is, Nadir’s eye for photography and Farhana’s studies of glaciology, they discover their invaluable connection to and association with the region. The novel rushes through the rugged experiences while triggering the pace of transformation and paving the way for identity consciousness. “It’s a strange, sad tale, written in a minor key: the characters’ voices are weighed down with melancholy, with memory, and most of all, with the yearning” (Shah, 2014, para.1). They are so afflicted with fused (in case of Nadir) and hyphenated (in case of Farhana) identities that they long for returning to their homeland.

Nadir in the novel encounters the post-9/11 distressing experiences, both as a Muslim and a Pakistani, along with other leading characters of the novel. The suppression includes stereotyping of Muslims, denigrating their ethnic and cultural affinities, and railing against their geopolitical affiliations. Such maltreatment causes tremendous resentment against America and its oppressive policies against Muslims, in general, and
Pakistani Muslims, in particular. That eventually dissuades them from their merger with
the U.S. and its institutions.

As they say, nothing is complicated for a willing heart. The same happens to the
protagonists, who, even having experienced intense situations, are enthusiastic about
acquiring their true self, dignity and integrity. Unlike other novels under discussion, the
setting of *Thinner Than Skin* is rough and rocky, yet the destination is winning and
endearing. The image of true identity is typified and embodied in tall mountains,
leading to lasting connection with the self and the soil that was never located, realised
and obtained in the deserts of California. That was merely a delusive and deceptive
vision that had no interpretation and was misleading in a sense that replaced the real for
the unreal—true identity for hybridity. Thereby, the transition from the alienation of
foreign and fused nature to the indigenisation of one’s inherent national nature was
inevitable.

Uzma Aslam Khan has adopted the use of narration by the main characters of their point
of view. The themes that the novel addresses are from the perspective of the central
character, Nadir, and through him, the reader can note the relationships between other
characters or communities. Using a character directly affected by cultural hybridity
enables the reader to conceptualise the depth of the feelings involved, and ensures that
the real story is not lost in translation. The characters of Nadir and Farhana, involved
in a love relationship, allow the reader to experience intercultural joy, love, hatred and
betrayal. The reader gets a glimpse of how cultural diversity instils differences in
various persons in society. The way they are both different from each other and how
they relate to Wes and Irfan exposes the reader to the different resilience mechanisms
which are employed in the face of adversity. Khan used the characters well, especially
in the time of grief, when Kiran got drowned, to show how human beings are fragile,
irrespective of their societal and cultural affiliations.

5.4.2. ‘Fixing’ and Contesting Islamic Stereotypes
There are stereotypes that are ingrained in the society that only the advocacy groups
and people (interested in the welfare of all races) can demystify. The Pakistanis are
regarded as violent and potentially fighting all the time as war is brought to their
doorstep. This stereotype is evident when Nadir tries to pitch for the image of marble
table tops as something authentically Pakistani. He is eventually told the image which the world wants to see of Pakistan is that: “where are the beggars and bazaars or anything that resembles your culture? It seems to me that when war is going on, a table is trivial” (Khan, 2012, p. 12). Khan uses such stark statements to show the image that Westerners have of Pakistan.

Globally, the issue of stereotyping flared up after the 9/11 attacks especially for Pakistanis. Heightened racial, religious and ethnic stereotypes were enforced, where they were once non-existent (Mason & Matella, 2014). A new range of human rights, civil liberties, and immigration advocacy groups emerged to fight for the common agenda of re-establishing the protection of human rights. The violation of fundamental liberties and the concept of equal treatment, as defined by law, is the standard approach of such Human Rights groups formed after 9/11. Violations emanated both from the public and the institutions condemning the whole community for sponsoring terrorism and harbouring terrorists even though they had lived peacefully with host communities for decades (Bakalian & Bozorgmehr, 2009). Pakistani-Americans’ advocacy groups were only part of the broader movements formed to fight the cruel compromise of the due process of law when dealing with suspects of Arab descent and “Muslim-looking” individuals (Khan, 2012, p. 94). Undue scrutiny resulted in a heightened focus on the actions of immigrants, with many of them having to present themselves for registration, while others experienced increased hate crime.

Increased racial intolerance emanating from hatred directed at communities resembling the attackers of the 9/11 affected immigrants of Arab descent. According to the F.B.I., the violent incidents after the attacks resulted in a disproportionate increase in hate crimes directed against Muslim-Americans (Sheridan, 2006). The word ‘Muslim’ is a religious label that does not define any race. The line between religious affiliation and racial identity is blurred especially in persons of Arab descent. The American media and public view Muslim Americans as being primarily monolithic (McCarus, 1994). They conceptualise them as having similar ways of behaviour and thought despite their differences in national culture.

Little research has been done concerning the experiences of Muslims arising from biased media reports. There has been more of focus on the attitudes towards Arabs as
representing all Muslims. A study in the United Kingdom about Islamophobia indicated that hatred had spiked after the attacks on America (Sheridan, 2006). Intolerance towards Muslim-Americans existed even before the World Trade Centre attacks, with the media portraying Islamism as being violent and intolerant to alternative teachings (Giger & Davidhizar, 2002). This term has been coined by the West to malign Islam. It does not exist in any authentic Islamic source.

Muslim-Americans are part of the American diversity, and an attack on the constituent racial mixture is an attack on American values that can have negative repercussions on the tolerance levels of the host country (Kuo, 1995). The terrorist attacks originated from a deep hatred of the values espoused by several American Presidents in the global arena, which showed a level of intolerance to different strategies (Sullivan, 2015). Converting the simmering hatred of non-Americans of American values into infractions amongst individuals of the same country would be localising global hatred.

The non-Muslim world has regarded the Muslim world to be the fort of terrorism, especially after the 9/11 attacks. It becomes harder for persons of Pakistani origins since they are all deemed to be Arabs or Muslims that are prone to terror. This view has condemned even the innocent people in Pakistan’s Mountains, who have to live their lives as global suspects. Khan in Thinner Than Skin (2012) posits that the inhabitants of the targeted places have left their lives to fate because there is little that they can do about the killings. “Except the two everyone resented most, the army on the ground, and the drones in the air because you can’t kill a drone, it’s a drone. And you can’t kill an army, it’s an army” (Khan, 2012, p. 25). That shows that, on the alleged suspicion of terrorism, even the remote north of Pakistan was targeted for its alleged safe havens and hideouts of miscreants. That also reflects the U.S. terroristic strategy in combating alleged and actual terrorism. It is the outcome of stereotyping the Pakistani Muslim community.

In the immigration context, it would be hard to separate the Western concept of Pakistani immigrants and Arab-Muslim immigrants. The identity of the Pakistani immigrants in the U.S. has been homogenised and referred to as either Muslims or Arabs (Khan, 2012). The Arab world covers an area stretching from North Africa to the Arabian Gulf, encompassing diverse cultures, nationalities and religions (Camarota,
In many social settings, the immigrants from those regions are regarded as Arab-Americans even though they originate from different countries that are not ethnically related. Read (2008) posited that using the term “Arab-American” is a flawed way to define people that come from different nationalities, they do not share a common language and have different religious affiliations. The phrase is, however, still used to identify immigrants from the Middle East, North Africa and Eastern Europe. The Arab American Institute (2012) states that there are three and a half million individuals who are classified as Arab-American in the United States. A majority of Arab-Americans are Christians; only 23 per cent of them are Muslims. These numbers have not stopped the American media and public from labelling the immigrant as a Muslim. Read (2010) further observes that although most Arabs in the world are Muslims by religion, those who have settled in the United States are mostly Christian.

The immigration of Arabs to the United States was in several waves. The first immigrants from the Arab world were mostly Christians driven by the economic lure, just like other immigrants at the time. The second wave of Arab immigrants was composed of Muslims motivated by the desire to better their economic conditions, following periods of economic stagnation in their home nations (Radhakrishnan, 2007). The consequences of the Second World War followed by the Middle East crises made it less desirable for immigrants to go back to their countries of origin.

The adoption of the Immigration and Naturalization Laws of 1965 brought the relatives of immigrants who were naturalised and recognised as Americans. With the turn of events, the desire to go back to their countries diminished as they had their extended families with them. Their cultures, ways of living, and rituals started becoming more evident in their daily interactions. Arab-Muslims in the U.S., are less satisfied with life, compared to other Muslims.

At the beginning of the immigration journey for Arabs into the United States ‘whiteness’ was the defining theme of being granted citizenship (Beydoun, 2013). The Arabs were regarded as being non-white and did not qualify for automatic citizenship. Arab Christians, however, were able to gain citizenship faster because of their religion. The racial factor has been used as the determining factor in America to decide what group qualifies for some individual rights and privileges (Ruffle, 2009). The Arab
Americans who were granted citizenship because of their Christian beliefs, also perceive themselves to be ‘whiter’ and with more privileges than those who were deemed unqualified for citizenship. Cainkar (2008) found that the idea of race in the American context is an ongoing process and continues to contextualise people of Arab descent. The colour bar ‘whiteness’ of the American system regards ‘whites’ as those of Caucasian descent and ‘blacks’ as those of African descent. Others, including people of Arab descent, whether identifying themselves as Christians, Muslims or Buddhists, are regarded as ‘Others’. Ironically, the colour ‘white’ is, scientifically most mixed, comprising the seven colours of the rainbow: the VIBGYOR: violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, red.

The conflation, especially regarding the distinction between Arabs and Muslims, has meant that immigrants of Pakistani descent are neither ‘white’, to be wholeheartedly welcomed, nor ‘black’, to be considered as having a share in the American history (Rosaldo, 1994). In the wider American public, media and films, the Pakistani-Americans cannot escape the label of Muslims in the United States that is associated with the rise of terrorism globally and within the confines of the nation’s borders (Blakely, 2006). Such labelling and genetic constructs have motivated immigrants to seek organisations that would help them interact while ensuring that the social cohesiveness builds an alternative narrative.

5.4.3. **An Uneasy Relationship: Islamophobia**

The relationship between the Western world and Pakistanis was soured after the attacks on 9/11. *Islamophobia* accelerated. Consequently, an entire race has been “othered” by the American imperial system to the point that their civil liberties are under threat. Indiscriminate drone attacks and killings continue relentlessly even after protests by people and governments, especially the targeted folk. (Khan, 2012). The resignation of Maryam and Suleiman, Kiran’s parents, after she drowned in an outing with strangers showed the uneasy relationship between those exposed to the Western ways and those tuned to traditional ways. Without much of a leeway, her father Suleiman could only claim monetary compensation while observing that “if this had happened in America, you’d be in jail. If this had happened to the child of a landlord, you’d be in danger, and in debt (Khan, 2012, p. 155).
The media have pushed the two stereotypes that define the Muslim population: the terrorist male and the veiled and oppressed women (Ammar, 2000). The traditional Arab dress is what is mostly used to portray Muslim men even though the Arabs only constitute less than thirty per cent of the Muslim community. The pluralistic nature of the Muslim community is lost to most Americans. The fact that the adherents of Islam have different backgrounds, cultures, and languages just like Christians. Their diversity is not portrayed in the media and the American public. Other than religion, there is nothing in common between immigrants from Pakistan and those from Egypt or Somalia.


The aftermath of the 9/11 attacks has had dire consequences for Muslim-Americans. Crackdowns on the members of communities with Arab, Pakistani, and South Asian descent have intensified, with their civil liberties significantly curbed, especially of those arrested on suspicion of terrorism. The U.S Patriot Act of 2011 spelt doom for the immigrants, who would be apprehended on terror-related charges. Those who were yet to be granted full citizenship were most affected, as the Attorney General was given the powers to arrest, detain and bring charges against suspected persons without needing a warrant of arrest. The Clear Law Enforcement Alien Removal Act passed in 2003 gave local authorities the power to enforce the Federal Immigration Laws, which resulted in increased surveillance of Muslims. The combined effect of the two laws (2003 and 2011) formed the genesis of the fight for civil rights of the Muslim community. The laws have resulted in a considerable number of Muslim and Pakistani immigrants being detained on issues ranging from immigration to terror-related charges.

Alongside, a well-paying job is becoming rare for Muslims in America. The American dream is becoming more of an illusion, with minimal interaction between communities resulting in limited opportunities. Nadir in Thinner Than Skin sees the irony of immigrating to become a wedding photographer yet there were weddings in Pakistan. Hence, the American dream gets shattered that would seldom be recollected and realised, because of the discriminatory laws and their subsequent execution the characters incurred in the wake of 9/11.
The interaction between Muslim immigrants and Americans was halted after the 9/11. Immediately after the attacks, various threats were reported to the Muslim community. Some even resulted in hate crimes. Workers have reported odious name-calling by their colleagues at the workplace. The height of animosity implicit in the two groups has continued to rise, and the hatred is evident after every attack (Greenhouse 2010). A narrative has arisen the narrative that Muslims pose the most significant threat to the American public, even as the figures show that guns in America take more lives per year in the country, as opposed to terror attacks (Rosaldo, 1994). Instead of dealing with the threat in the neighbourhood, as Nadir observes, Americans have taken the fight to the condemned tribes in North Pakistan, who are killed for things as mundane as funeral processions (Khan, 2012). Trespassing of international geographical border and the disgusting act of killing in the Pakistani regions are seen as abominable. All these obnoxious acts heighten the hatred of Pakistanis for the intrusive and invading America.

Fed with false narratives that the greatest danger is from the Muslim community, social interaction has decreased significantly. That is a precursor to reduced employment chances for the target population. The disparity between the two nation’s wealth is captured in the passage as: “wealthier. Sonia taught at a private school that paid 15,000 rupees per month. Farhana made more than two hundred times as much” (Khan, 2012, p. 25). The said socio-economic disparity adds fuel to the fire and fosters abhorrence for the host country and its biased laws for the Muslim immigrants, especially Pakistanis.

5.4.5. **Capitalism and Cultural Superiority**

The findings regard one community as being superior to the other, and that some communities are looked down upon and sneered at. When Nadir takes prints of photos of the images that represent Pakistan, they are rejected because they do not display the desolation that the American public associates with Pakistan. He noted:

> “Next time you go home, take some photographs.” When it was obvious I still didn't get it, he dumbed it down. “Show us the dirt, the misery. Don't waste your time trying to be a nature photographer. Use your advantage” (Khan, 2012, p. 33)
These words imply that Pakistani culture is considered as nurturing poverty and not nature. It gives a sense of cultural superiority to Nadir when he renders anything to represent Pakistan. The taunting remarks disappoint Nadir about the American socio-cultural ethos, but they increase the value of his homeland. The rude comment leads him to paint the richness of Pakistan’s topography and its socio-cultural legacy. Thus, returning to home becomes impending for him and Farhana to experience the reality of their Pakistani dream: the dream of nationally motivated Pakistaniness and patriotic indigenisation. That also enables him to realise that the lofty mountains of northern Pakistan are far more beautiful than the deserts of California to take shots of them. The only thing missing is the Pakistani lens to look through and capture its pure and pristine beauty.

There are teachings of racial superiority in most communities in the world that desire to establish dominance. When the Pakistani immigrant community settles in America, the tendency to over-emphasise the inferiority of the host culture is high. Given that the Pakistani immigrants have had enhanced surveillance after the September 11 attacks, they tend to keep to their close circles and create a hegemonic or alternative narrative that seeks to position their culture as superior to the others (Purkayastha, 2005). The superior culture originates from a confluence of interests drawing on religion, nationality, culture, gender and race, thereby creating a hegemonic version of an ethnonational culture regarded as being superior when compared with the host culture.

The superiority of the culture is grounded in the teachings of Islam, which are based on the sacred mythology of true origins (Armstrong, 2005). Religion serves as a moral compass that families use to guide their children on values that they are supposed to take even as they are in a country that teaches different values. In Thinner Than Skin, Maryam would always tell her daughter, Kiran, that “walk along walls, not toward them,” she would snap. “one foot loop at a time” (Khan, 2012, p. 52). Maira (2002) observes that with such religio-cultural teaching, families held on to cultures that were on decline back home, because of alleged ‘cultural fossilization’. This negative notion is typically based on the nostalgia about cultures that were once dominant and served their purpose before challenges made them to either seek to change or conform (Davis, 1979). Isolation of immigrant communities is what makes them adopt ‘cultural fossilization’ out of fear that their group identity would be lost. Remembrance of home
country galvanises communities to regard their communities with special significance (Espiritu, 2003). The term ‘cultural fossilization’ is a misnomer. In reality, it is cultural resilience against the onslaughts of Westernism in the name of Modernism.

An approach that considers some communities as being superior to others either culturally or through the capital is neither beneficial to the host nor immigrant communities. When cultures are regarded as being inferior, the rate of interaction results in an antithesis to the ideal circumstance necessary for development (Jacobson, 1998). Parallel narratives result in less integrated communities that are suspicious of each other (Ghaffar-Kucher, 2012). It is also not in the interest of the host society when the immigrant community barricades itself in their houses and fails to interact with others. Wealth is created through social interactions that open up opportunities, options and choices. More jobs result in lesser persons receiving unemployment benefits that drain the resources of taxpayers. Walling up in communities also results in curbing or even denying their civil liberties, because of following their Islamic culture (Raj & Silverman, 2002). That is, again, a myopic view: Islam encourages interactively coequal and peaceful coexistence for mutual growth and reciprocal benefits.

5.4.6. Resentment and Repugnance of America

Economic opportunities and civil liberties are a major attraction for immigrants around the world, but not necessarily American socio-cultural values. To the majority of Muslim-American immigrants and Pakistani-Americans, some of the civil liberties are repugnant. The Muslim world is centred on family values, and the individualism of American culture is alien to their sociocultural context (Thapar-Bjorkert & Sanghera, 2010). The interaction between genders is limited in the Islamic way of life, and people who are used to its teachings cannot relate to the immorality brought about by the free choices in America. Marriages in the Islamic world are a social obligation and are expected to last a lifetime, in most cases, however, not necessarily, always. American culture espouses the value of free choice in marriage, allowing the two parties to sign prenuptial agreements. High divorce rates are commonplace, if not typical. These trends negate even the traditional Christian and Jewish teachings.

Pakistani-Americans brought up in the traditional environment of their home-country experience culture shocks when they are exposed to life in American cities like Los
Angeles where ‘all is fair in love and war’, probably without moral checks and balances. Western licentious issues like the rights of lesbians, gays, biracial, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) are not prevalent in the Islamic world. To the immigrant from a predominantly Muslim country, the values that America prides itself in are to be met with a degree of resentment since they fly in the face of the Islamic doctrines (Rippy & Newman, 2008). Free choice in America has no bounds, and there are no topics too hallowed to escape discussion. While the American nation is established in sacred reverence to an omnipotent deity, the place of God in the society has been relegate to the periphery. Civil liberties have invaded religion to encroach upon the sanctity of worship. In Western liberal materialistic secular societies, Agnosticism and even Atheism are a matter of personal choice. Even Christ and his holy Mother Mary are not spared of sacrilege.

The American resentment stretches beyond the sociocultural issues of its culture (Stanton, 1997). Being a global superpower, its search for dominance in the world arena has left a long trail of victims in its wake. With the September 11 attacks, the retaliatory measures that the US adopted were globalised and spelt doom to millions in the Arab and Muslim world. The American “war on terror” and efforts to depose despised governments by regime change left millions of victims in the targeted countries including Pakistan because of their alleged safe-havens to terrorists. The result is that people hate America all over the world. Such views are shared by the immigrant populations from the affected nations. Right from the American involvement in the Vietnam War, the ravenous role of the CIA in engineering ‘revolutions’ is notorious. The American Crusade—not Jihad—in Afghanistan against the USSR, the two Gulf Wars and the “war on terror”, the American government has played a key role in destabilising well-structured systems in the Muslim world. Even as they seek economic opportunities in America, immigrants from the Muslim world loathe the role of America in destabilising their homelands. The resentment towards world-wide American armed interventions and the number of innocent people who have perished from their actions is felt across the board by immigrants from the Arab and Muslim world (Domínguez & Maya-Jariego, 2008). This resentment is captured in Khan's (2012) observation when she talks of the change in the Afghan flag after the American invasion: it is a sneaky way of saying that “Afghanistan had lost its identity” (p. 21). The drone attacks in the Kaghan Valley and crack down on an alleged suicide bomber,
in the north of Pakistan, instigates resentment against America by the locals, even though they are occasionally hospitable to foreigners in their country.

5.4.7. **Detachment from American Ethos**

Different cultures related well with each other before the spate of terrorist attacks broke the social fabric that held the communities together. After the 9/11 attacks, communities started becoming increasingly wary of each other and had misgivings about sharing life with one another. In *Thinner Than Skin*, the local communities in the mountains ceased their generosity to neighbours, after reports of a terrorist having been harbourd there. “Hard times make hard people,” Irian continued. “These herders would normally never turn away a guest, but they won’t host someone who’ll bring in the IST, though they fear it may already be too late” (Khan, 2012, p. 69). Rejection of the U.S. and its imperial hubris has led everyone in the narrative to be cautious of their surroundings and to be wary of any impending threat. Although going against their traditional value of hospitality, they tend to show their rancour for America and never allow the strangers—“the outsiders”—to stop over in their territory. The regressive transmutation of American authorities to regard immigrant communities as suspects strained relations between communities. Communities previously living in harmony turned against each other, thereby breaking the previously prevalent cultural hybridity. “In the same manner that the American community had become wary of the immigrant community in America, farmers in Pakistan’s Mountains were learning to distrust tourists” (2012, p. 70). So, the Pakistani community, even in the remote northern areas, is as sceptical about Americans, as the Americans are about Pakistanis. Thus, the Lacanian “mirror image” is replicated in relations of both sides that intensifies over time, creating an unbridgeable gap of distrust and cynicism. The differences which Khan (2012) thought of as skin-deep only in the beginning are now surfacing to isolate the East, Pakistan, from the West, America. Such tragic transformation in thought and actions urges upon the Pakistani diasporic community to harken back to its roots and moorings and to resume their socio-cultural norms and mores.

Along the lines of Fanon, Said and Bhabha’s theories, Nadir and Farhana come across the same incongruous and clashing identities, and they grapple with transitional and in-between space through hybridisation. Moving beyond geographical and ideological borders and parleying their identities, they settled in an exotic society that became their
home for quite some time, especially in the formative phase of their lives. Although they acquire educational and professional fulfilment, on the other hand, they feel emotional and psychological melancholy for their home. Above all, they “vacillated between American and Muslim cultures” (Gray, 2011, 59). Nadir being the mouthpiece of Khan goes to the extent of attaining every possible success in education and practical life. The apex of such credentials awesomely overshadows the social class he belongs to, and he, for the time being, is absorbed in New World. Nonetheless, such short-lived happiness is soon to evaporate, and he gets torn apart between Pakistaniness and Americanness. Though he has left America as a reaction expressed in his indignation of her bullying behaviour, he is nostalgic about his sojourn in the metropolis. His crumbling personality, though it had an overwhelming affiliation with America, now feels to take off the facade of fusion, and to review his Pakistani identity.

5.5. Conclusion

The novels rest on ethnonationalism which is antithetical to Fanon’s “national consciousness”, Bhabha’s “cultural hybridity” and Said’s discontentedness on a retreat to “primitive nationhood”. Thus, the narratives negate the conceptual frameworks of Frantz Fanon, Edward. W. Said and Homi K. Bhabha, who, alongside nativist attachment and affinity, also advocate a lasting relationship with the imperial apparatus. Frantz Fanon’s (1963) “national consciousness” is to interact with the “center” (p. 179). Edward Said (1995) believes nationalism to be a “private refuge” (p. 275). To Bhabha, national identity can best be demonstrated in a cosmopolitan/metropolitan space for the promotion of cultural hybridity and founding a plural society that equally befits all the participants.

Contrary to these theoretical doctrines, The Reluctant Fundamentalist reiterates and publicises “anti-American” sentiments and activates campaigns against the American discriminatory and domineering disposition (Hamid, 2007, p. 179). Also, Changez actuates the public to secede from the overbearing approach of the U.S. imperial hubris and emphasises the richness of Pakistani culture, history, and its geostrategic location. Likewise, Home Boy, too, takes a substantial stride of breaking away with American realpolitik and unilateralism. Chuck counters Said’s (1995) view of “new integrative or contrapuntal orientation in history that sees Western and non-Western experiences as
belonging together because they are connected by imperialism” (pp. 278-279). Instead, Chuck bequeaths America in utter frustration, as over a passage of time his dashing hopes of American dream collapsed and his resentment escalated about American *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, in particular, and the autocratic West, in general.

The three novels return to ethnonationalism at the time when they are violently shattered by the disparity between democracy and American imperialism that is equally manifested in its self-contradictory thought and action. Neoliberal America turns down the constructive contributions of the protagonists of the novels which they had offered during their stay in the metropolitan space. Their attraction to Pakistani ethnonationalism is a resolute response to American Imperialism. Its exploitative capitalist system had maltreated them as racial and marginal “others”, and had thus expedited their longing for their homeland, Pakistan. After 9/11, the U.S. became exceedingly inhospitable and exceptionally unhomely for the three novels’ leading characters on ethnic, racial and religious grounds as suspect terrorists. Disappointment turned their assimilation into the American culture to antipathy which heightened after every aggression against them. A similar analysis of *Islamophobia* by Ikram Azam is available in his *Global Peace: The Geosociological Imperative and the Imperial Hubris* (2013), who writes about the issue as under:

> The West, especially the USA, seems to suffer from a compulsive-obessive syndrome to create mythical enemies in order to terrorize and destroy them. The Western: Euro-American history is one of savagery and war—be it against the ‘Red (Communist) Menace’, the Green (Muslim) Menace’ or any other. (p. 15)

Consequently, the recognition and acceptance of *Pakistanisation* (strong affection or support for Pakistan) and *Pakistaniness* (being patriotically Pakistani) is directly proportional to the negation and rejection of imperial America and its neurotically imperialistic approach to and after 9/11. The three narratives altogether abandon “international Capitalism and its New International Imperialism”, and return to patriotic nationalism, indigenous culture, native history and Pakistani social norms and practices (Azam, 2013, p. 15). Pursuing and procuring one’s lost origin after a disoriented search for fleeting pleasure and prominence is more fulfilling than anything else one could
imagine. “Having been courted and then rejected by the west”, the major characters in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist, Home Boy* and *Thinner Than Skin* resort to Islam—its meaning and message—as a complete code of life for irreversible remedy (Head, 2009, p. 144). Nonetheless, their adherence to Islam and its teachings become the prime target of those who malign and resist their transformation as Muslims and patriotically indigenous Pakistanis.

As stereotyped and projected publicly, Islam and the Muslims are the prime enemies in the Western discourse of Orientalism and Islamophobia. In this regard, Hartnell (2010) argues that *The Reluctant Fundamentalist [Home Boy and Thinner Than Skin]* act out as counter-narratives to Orientalism on Islam that “casts Islamism as both the product of and a rebellion against America-led globalization” (p. 341). Thus, identification with Islam and Pakistani nationalism become their first crime for which they would have to pay heavily in the Western discourse on Terrorism and Islamophobia. The transformation of the protagonists is regarded as a backlash and a reaction to the rhetoric of global homogeneity of American culture and a strong revulsion to its modern-day empire. That has been used negatively in some Western works on the subject to denigrate Islam and Muslims. The Muslim characters (as discussed in Chapter 4) depicted by Western fiction writers were once part of the American system and society but later were rejected and discarded.

Francis Fukuyama (2002) points out that while America is a preferred place for settlers, the prospects of its rejection are promptly imminent for the immigrants. Thus, they were “sufficiently repelled by what they saw [and experienced]” (2002, p. 28). Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit (2004), too, refer to related views of bitterness and disappointment for America among expatriates of different ethnicities and nationalities. They are of the view that “the West in general, and America in particular, provokes envy and resentment more among those who consume its images, and its goods, than among those who can barely imagine what the West is like” (2004, p. 15). In the existing case, characters of the novels under examination, live through severe consequences, because they were penetratingly immersed in the American pop culture and had once been the exemplars of its supremacy. The three narratives express that deprivation by and disillusionment with the Western discourse of marginalisation of “others” and its authoritarianism, are the primary and principal reasons that triggered
off a transformation in the protagonists. That, too, reintroduced them to Pakistani ethnonationalism and their homecoming. Though for the principal characters, the journey of “passing” through cultural fusion was gruelling, yet the ending was transformational.
CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction
The present chapter provides a summary of the overall thesis and offers recommendations on negotiating multiple identities in the three novels before and after the 9/11 foray and its consequences about cultural syncreticity on the Pakistani-American experience. As discussed in chapter 4, the socio-cultural and professional assimilation of the significant characters in the narratives was imminent; thus, leading to what Spivak (2003) calls, “Planetarity” (p. 72), as motivated by Derek Gregory, in the pre-9/11 Anglo-centric globalisation and “multicultural” background. That is, the teaming up of diverse cultures triggering cultural hybridity and global heterogeneity while deterritorializing characters and thus blurring geographical boundaries. As critiqued in Chapter 3, the theory of cultural “mixing, syncretism, [and] hybridity” is supported by Fanon, Said and Bhabha in the existing texts and contexts (Burke, 2009, p. 45). However, the vital imperative of the post-9/11 conditions disintegrates and collapses the cultural coexistence of and mutual understanding between the host community and the immigrants, primarily the Muslim settlers in America. In the three novels, Pakistani Muslims encounter the severity of confrontation most immediately and sternly. Their pent-up exasperation surfaces as an unfortified and sweeping animosity against the American institutionalised revulsion and repulsion against them.

The current chapter recapitulates the hard-core substance of the novels mentioned and reviews the irreversible journey of cultural hybridity to cultural transformation in the wake of 9/11 conflict-ridden conditions. The imminent transculturation of Pakistani
characters in the given narratives was instantaneous owing to the sociable surroundings of the assorted American society. Nonetheless, the sooner they adapted to and settled into a new habitat, the faster they unfastened from it. That reflects the binary bipolarity of the American Dream, which first attracts one to assimilate, and then later disillusion to repel. The focal factor is, of course, the 9/11/2001 American disaster, and subsequently, its Islamophobic aftermath. This experience reverses the course of synchronisation and interfaith harmony and widens the gap between cultures, or, more precisely, promotes a clash of cultures. The followers of Islam and its tenets in the novels were subjected to entrenched disgust and excruciating torture for they were believed to be accountable for plotting the 9/11 strikes on the American System. For that reason, all Muslim immigrants, particularly those from Pakistan were laid open for unwarranted interrogation and unjustified persecution, causing deep-rooted differences and disparity.

The three novels covered in this thesis sort out the 9/11 and post-9/11 world in similar ways for depicting the identity crisis, and the way out by gradual yet infallible transformation. Also, the questions of self, system and the significance of the day becomes essential, as Habermas (2003) stresses it as: “the first world-historical event in a strict sense: the impact, the explosion, the slow collapse—all of which was unfortunately no longer Hollywood but a horrific reality—literally unfolded before the eyes of a global public” (p. 7). The quote summons holistic investigation of how different facets of the event are linked to it—and more essentially shapes and guides the occasion. The importance of the day also calls for questions to be answered which came to surface in the wake of 9/11 including the origin of one’s roots and its current attachment to a system of the facade. This tussle of person (real self) and persona (adopted self) emerges immediately after the powerful event as the crushing need was felt for restoring one’s essence. The unsteady discrepancy between fiction and the reality of 9/11 is pointed out by Joseph S. Walker (2004) as: “there is in our time an uncontainable rupture of the boundaries between the fictional and the real that, for many, has come to seem the dominant characteristic of public culture” (p. 336). In the light of the ongoing argument, fiction may fulfil the goals and objectives of the politicians and that of terrorists, but the reality keeps hidden from the public readership.
This blurring situation confuses the global readers, as they cannot arrive at the core of the issue, nor can they provide any solution to it. Traditionally and realistically, fiction reflects reality or strives to do so. However, if fiction stashes away the truth and conceals the face of facts from the general public, then a distrust arises. A similar situation has been observed recurrently in the most important corpus of 9/11 fiction, generating misgiving among the affected peoples even though this might serve the purpose for some.

Locating and diagnosing the fiction that projects 9/11 with its interlinked character and features in the current situation is quite a task. This research argues the fusion of identity (in the given context) before 9/11 and, resultantly, heralding a change to transformation after 9/11. The selected novels indicate how fictional work can be converted and transformed into reality. Protagonists and significant characters in the selected narratives never hide their true identity in the course of time and space-place. A challenging journey from one extreme of fused identity to another state of true self is the core objective of the present thesis. Several distinguished novelists from the East and West have been unsuccessful in aligning reality and fiction.

Post-9/11 Western fiction, on the one hand, is an engaging cultural response to/of Euro-America, while, on the other hand, it sets off identity as national and personal awareness in a significant mass of Eastern fiction including the novels under discussion. Dunja M. Mohr and Sylvia Mayer, in the introduction, titled, “9/11 as Catalyst—American and British Cultural Responses” (2010) from the collection of their essays, state that:

Ultimately, in the U.S. as well in Britain, the catalytic effect of 9/11 has by now produced a large corpus of textual/cultural representations that allow us to identify a variety of aesthetic and thematic responses…
dealing with personal trauma and forming a collective cultural memory.
(p. 2)

In the current context, some well-known contributors to the literary and cultural responses are David Waterman’s Where Worlds Collide (2015), Keniston and Quinn, ed.’s Literature After 9/11 (2008); Irisgler and Jurgensen, ed.’s Nine Eleven: Asthetische Verarbeitungen des 11. Septembers 2001 (2008); Lorez, ed.’s Narrative
In the latter case of identity construction, Leach wants to understand identity through Lacanian psychoanalysis, which aptly applies to the continuing critical assessment of the novels. Lacanian (2003) “mirror-stage” enables the child to identify his self by seeing his reflection and “begins to formulate a coherent sense of self and to develop some coordination by identifying with its own reflected image” (p. 77). This exemplar of recognising oneself in the presence of an external stimulus best fits the novels under argument. 9/11 and its devastation is an external spur and provocation for reconstructing the identity of the characters in the novels. 9/11 fashions the individuality of the characters to transformation. Further, Leach remarks that “the model presupposes a spatialized sense of a visual awareness grounded in the notion of image”; and, therefore, “identification is always specular. It is always a question of recognising—or misrecognising—one self in the other” (2003, p. 77). Since identity is fluid, flowing and fluent, it is constructed and reconstructed in the presence of an external perspicuous stimulation. In that case, Leach observes that the falling of the Twin Towers and the memorial built in that place reminds one of the happenings associated with it, though they have nothing to do with the “inherent meaning” of 9/11 (2003, p. 78). Instead, the memorial is reminiscent of the divide between the East and West. While relating the debate to the fused identity of the salient characters in the novels, it is found out that the memorial of the Twin Towers is characteristically a memoir of the “reflected image” of their Pakistani identity. That too is a spur for them to retrace their cultural origin and moral mooring, in the post-9/11 turmoil.
Thus far, Euro-American fiction has substantially failed to report the 9/11 event and its subsequent implications. The novels under review have effectively converted the challenge into an opportunity of realising, grasping and experiencing one’s cultural source and origin. In the light of the above findings, it is inferred that they have a concurrent connection with post-9/11 Islamophobia, the realisation of identity-divide of Pakistani expatriates and consequent transformation to Pakistanisation (strong affection or support for Pakistan). In the novels under examination, all this is realised and visualised by the characters after having settled in American plural society.

6.3. Summarisation and Analytical Concerns of Novels

The key terms summarised from the above discussion (while contextualising the novels in the background of 9/11) are 9/11 in history, hybridisation, Islamophobia, identity-divide, transformation and indigenisation. There is no doubt about the fact that September 11, 2001, American tragedy was most traumatising, not just for the USA, but globally as well. Its systemic process products have been: (i). Altered human history and (ii). Islamophobia, both of which have traumatised the whole of humanity notably the Muslim World and its Muslims as well as their diaspora communities. This altered reality is reflected in the fiction of the second generation of overseas’ Pakistani writers. The novels under analysis have adequately covered the themes and tropes mentioned above and have discussed them in details in earlier chapters. In the current context of the Islamophobic aftermath, full fourteen years of the 20th-Century and more of the first two decades of the 21st-Century have been bloodied, which is an eerie start for any new century. The best bet to save the rest of this century from the dark-dismal shadow of the 9/11 tragedy is to step back from its pessimistic passion in compassion for peace, Pakistanisation (strong affection or support for Pakistan), and to re-evaluate the whole tragic event in the framework of American socio-cultural and geopolitical homogeneity. Likewise, all the afore-mentioned key terms need to be re-examined and even redefined, under the guidance of transformational literature apart from that produced as a response to 9/11 turmoil and its subsequent aftereffects. Such literature needs to be produced in both fiction and serious objective analysis, inspiring patriotically motivated indigenisation. Just a few select samples of Pakistani diasporic fiction—the three novels—are presented for reading and review in this thesis. The intention is to balance the picture correctly, pointing to the light at the end of the dark
tunnel of current history, which has been prejudiced and poisoned by the American 9/11 tragedy.

The following paragraphs summarise and analyse each novel, independently about the current discourse of hybridisation to transformation, or, more specifically, from Americanisation (strong affection or support for the United States) to Pakistanisation (strong affection or support for Pakistan).

6.3.1. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*
Subscribing to the notion of cultural eclecticism, Changez informs the readers that America has absorbed him via “a process of osmosis” (Hamid, 2007, p. 160). That is, his settlement was gradual and regular as time passes, not only typified by his financial goals but also socio-culturally. Changez’s arrival in and mingling with the host community in the metropolitan New York was “felt—so unexpectedly—like coming home” (2007, p. 32). Moreover, this homecoming was welcomed by his fellows at Princeton University and in New York (2007, pp. 11, 42, 48). The impression of acceptance at the liminal zone gave him the realisation that he has secured an identity more like “Metrostanis”, i.e., Chuck and his friends. However, this adjustment is made possible because of his strenuous efforts, academically and professionally, in the then hospitable America. Initially, he thought that America promotes meritocracy but later, he came to know that the underlying forces controlling America’s hunt for the migrant population to boost its economic might.

The process of aversion from American totalitarianism starts with 9/11, which culminates in detachment and disengagement from the U.S. and its institutional policies and practices. Such is the impact on Changez, Chuck, A.C., Jimbo and Nadir who suffer from institutionalised revulsion and affliction owing to their attachment to the Pakistani Muslim community. In response to such maltreatment, these characters return to Pakistan with the hope to reinforce their Pakistan national identity, which had gone through lop-sidedness.

On the professional ground, Changez was grossly ignored by his colleagues at the Preston University and in the metropolitan New York. He was taken as an alien who belonged to a peripheral zone since he was rapidly losing ground on the centre. Also,
Changez, while pondering over his shattered relation with Erica (an epitome of America) that once cultural contacts and relations are broken, they rarely are reconstructed. Whatever is left outside the exotic identity becomes part of the external world and vice versa (Hamid, 2007). Craving for Pakistani national identity ardently arises in him when he is shunned by the American imperial need and greed and its intolerance of the “outsiders” after 9/11. As such, the inhospitable backlash of psychotic Am(Erica) becomes an impelling cause of Changez’s homecoming, and he feels like having discovered his lost identity. While distancing himself from the American society, Pakistan offers him a respectable job of teaching at the university level in which he takes pride to be a spiritedly contributing Pakistani citizen. He is equally influential and popular with his students and the community around him, which he is much indebted to.

Adding a new dimension to the post-9/11 Pakistani fiction, Changez revisits and revises American power dynamics by transferring them to Pakistan through his American interlocutor. There he takes control of the situation and, as a result, things move at his behest. Mathew Hart and Jim Hansen (2008) observe the shift of power dynamics from America to Pakistan when they argue that “Hamid holds no brief for painless cultural translation or hybridization” (p. 508). In a migrant tale, Changez warped the power dynamics through post-9/11 forceful rejoinder and relocated it to Pakistan from American pre-9/11 corporate hegemony. Thus, Changez’s powerfully pugnacious response to the unknown American interlocutor is face-to-face. His homecoming and pride in his cultural legacy and historical heritage are manifestations of his gradual transformation. Also, his untiring efforts for the promotion of democracy and civil rights in Pakistan are patriotically nationalistic and indigenously inspired. Hamid’s own life echoes in Changez’s account of his personal and professional life. He states that he was among the few international students who secured unique positions at Princeton whereas most of “the Americans faced much less daunting odds” (Hamid, 2007, p.3). While conversing about his educational achievements there, he testifies that “students like [him] were given visa and scholarships, complete financial aid, mind you, and invited into the ranks of the meritocracy” (2007, p. 4). Congenial relations between the U.S. and Pakistan were a core contributing factor, both educationally and professionally.
The Reluctant Fundamentalist is a turnaround from one extreme to the other: from Americanisation (strong affection or support for the United States) to Pakistanisation (strong affection or support for Pakistan). At the moment when he is narrating the tale of his diasporic life to the American interlocutor, he feels “ashamed” of his professional attitude at the Underwood Samson, which was more like mimicry of his elite masters while desperately hiding his Pakistan identity. At times he would call his elderly executive employees by their first names in the American style and would show off an “extraterritorial smile” (2007, p. 65). With such pretentious postures, he felt hallucinated, as in a fantasy world. However, the onset of 9/11, marked the end of his simulation in the shattered utopia. The American bosses were the archetypes of imperial America. Thus, comparing and contrasting the pre-and-post-9/11 identities, Changez reveals his affinity to his Pakistani identity after discarding his hybrid self as unreal.

He started to realise that the buildings at Princeton were not as aged as in Lahore, “but [were] made through acid treatment and ingenious stone-masonry to look old” to create the impression that the American culture is older and superior to the Pakistani culture and its architectural monuments (2007, p. 3). In reality, buildings get discoloured with atmospheric pollution and acid rain, like the Taj Mahal in India. Thus, his delusive fantasy world collapsed the American twin towers. Contextualising and comparing the origins of Changez and Jim, that is, Lahore and New Jersey, respectively, present striking similarities. Both were previously parts of the “wasting away” locales; however, both Changez and Jim view this migrancy trope differently (2007, p. 97). To Changez, the pre-9/11 geographical and ideological repositioning from Pakistan to America was tantamount to relegating the need and importance of Lahore. To Jim, this relocation from New Jersey to New York acquainted him with a liminal space and introduced him to “power [that] comes from becoming change[d]” (2007, p. 97). Jim also belittled Pakistan’s position as drivel, which prompts Changez to homecoming. Subsequently, settlement in metropolitan New York is an asset for Jim but a liability for Changez, as a cultural “other”—and the “outsider”. Becoming conscious of his foreignness, Changez knowingly referred to his seizure-turned-emancipation as “exorcism [from] the unwelcome sensibility by which I had become possessed” (2007, p. 124). Later, in December 2001, on arrival in Pakistan, he cherishes the “enduring grandeur” of his home as a historical heritage, which would have looked dishevelled, had he seen it through the American gaze (2007, p. 125).
He expressed his love for Pakistan, thus: “I am not poor; far from it: my grandfather, for example, was a barrister with the means to endow a school for Muslims of the Punjab” (2007, p. 9). Accentuating Pakistan’s plural nationalism, which accommodates people of all colours, regions and religions, Changez deflected American outlook of Pakistan’s contracted nationalism as well as a constricted democracy (Bhutto, 2009). Referring to the tradition of democratic plurality in Pakistan, even before its creation in August 1947, Changez stresses its progressive contours while tracing back four generations of his ancestors and their devoted contributions. For that reason, Changez advocated a progressive democracy that set aside “all affiliations—communists, capitalists, feminists, religious literalists [and tight traditionalists]” (Hamid, 2007, p. 179). What Changez supported and fought for was unlike what had generally been associated with Pakistan, as perceived by America and its allies. Changez’s views are reminiscent of Pakistan’s founders.

While supporting democracy in Pakistan, Changez believed in a coalition of all political parties for advocating “greater independence in Pakistan’s domestic [, regional] and international affairs”—that would earn an enduring reputation for Pakistan in a global society (2007, p. 179). The idea of such consensual-democracy echoes back to the concept of Islamic Democracy. That would help to solve several outstanding issues of Pakistan, including the long-standing tense ties with neighbouring India. Changez’s concern about domestic and regional issues and their timely resolution is a resounding retort to American imperialism. Similarly, seeing through the old war-mongering ambitions of India, particularly after 9/11 and the deployment of its “artillery battery” near Pakistan’s Eastern border intensified the situation between the two countries (2007, p. 125). Such strategic standoff between them could well trigger off an armed confrontation between two nuclear powers. Changez believed that India would not spare any chance to fight Pakistan, and if that happens, America, despite Pakistan’s assistance to her in Afghanistan, would favour India.

Changez’s homecoming symbolises a new era of a political turnaround. Pakistan’s political turmoil offered him opportunities to prove his academic and professional skills and expertise in the service of good governance and patriotically motivated democracy in Pakistan. His proactive involvement in political campaigns and rallies for transformative change brought about a visible difference in the mindset of people
around him including his students. As a result, he was dubbed as “anti-American”, which risked his life (2007, p. 179). Despite all threats and perils, he never compromised on it.

6.3.2. Home Boy

In Home Boy, Shehzad (Chuck) uses a more sophisticated term “Metrostanis”—coined by Ali Chaudry for his friends and himself that significantly expresses their cosmopolitan outlook on cultural hybridity (Naqvi, 2009, pp.14, 99). That is in contrast to “puppies”[: “Pakistani Urban Professionals” (2009, p. 170). The implication is that their immigration status was characterised not only by economic gains but also by socio-cultural and professional fusion. Initially, Chuck mainly relied on Mini aunty, AC’s elder sister, and considered her a “pillar of the city’s expatriate Pakistani community [rather, more closely] a foster mother”, who encourages Chuck after his preliminary feeling of exilic perplexity (2009, p. 22). However, the shift took place when they met Dora, Jimbo’s girlfriend, and were introduced by her in posh party gatherings. Chuck’s assumption of metropolitan identity made him declare that he never felt different from the natives of the city. Chuck, A.C. and Jimbo’s deep involvement in various communal activities and their socialisation with New Yorkers prove that they were culturally hybridised. Besides, all that happened in the meantime reassured their safe and secure future.

In Home Boy, the case of disengagement from the U.S. is no different, as its characters are subjected to embarrassing interrogation, terrible torture, and distressing isolation after 9/11. Ansar Mahmood, who is in his twenties, is taken into custody by the FBI, for having alleged links with the terror attacks of 9/11 only because he was taking a shot near river Hudson. Chuck, A.C., and Jimbo were exposed to physical and mental affliction by the intelligence agencies in the ongoing rhetoric of “war on terror” on account of their identification with Islam and Pakistan and because they were believed to have plotted the terror attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon (Naqvi, 2009). All of this happened when they did not hear back from their friend Shaman. They eventually broke into his house in Connecticut. The distressed neighbours called the police for help, and thus they were arrested for terrorists. They were kept in separate detention cells and were investigated harshly. Afterwards, Chuck and Jimbo were released after a gruesome inquiry. However, A.C. was charged with having had
sedative drugs, for which he was detained in solitary confinement. In its isolated detention cells, “America’s Own Abu Ghraib”, Chuck underwent humiliating disgrace when he was ordered to “take off everything, [and was jeeringly called as you] sand nigger” (2009, p. 137). He was detained in a congested cell with a blocked and spilling-over lavatory. A series of unabated sufferings became Chuck’s fate, who feared that they might be life-long.

His two other friends passed through even worst treatment when after their release, Jimbo uncovers the “pink welts on his rounded shoulders” (2009, p. 227). Chuck visualises the brutality Jimbo experienced as a jarring display of vengeance. “Tracing the outline of a lash just above the shoulder blade it occurred to me that if Jimbo had been beaten, AC would have been left for dead” (2009, p. 227). On the other hand, A.C. was sentenced to life imprisonment for allegedly keeping drugs and for his involvement in terrorist activities. It was proof of the sheer ignorance of the domestic security and intelligence agencies when Chuck came to know before departing for Pakistan that Shaman died in the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Centre. These macabre happenings took Chuck to the verge of collapse. Therefore, he decided to go back to Pakistan, permanently.

Chuck’s father is another character who died long before the novel began in 1985 when Chuck was five years old (2009, p. 242). It happened when the CIA was financing and sponsoring the Pakistani and Afghani Mujahideen (war veterans) in the war against the Soviet Union. Thus, linking the death of his father to the Afghan-Soviet war (1979-1988) is another clue to the sordid relations between Pakistan and the U.S. Chuck’s confusion about his father’s absence and the intense realisation of his hybrid identity are epitomised in the metaphor of the suitcase given to him by his mother when he was migrating to America—of which he neither knew nor had any clue of its possession. Moreover, that, in turn, echoes his sense of belonging and his lost identity in the metropolis of New York. It continually baffles him to search for his original Pakistani identity. These two virtually absent characters have tremendous bearing on Chuck’s emotional and psychological making and remaking in the pre and post-9/11 conditions, concerning his immigrant status in the U.S. Also, AC’s narration of historical and political features constructs a close link between the Mujahedeen supporters of America in the war against the Soviet Union and the Taliban mercenaries fighting to
fill the vacuum created after the departure of the U.S. from Afghanistan, with the withdrawal of the U.S.S.R. These events reflect the Pak.-American strained ties before and after 9/11. The historical, political and geo-strategic narratives disillusioned Chuck about his hybridity and his physical and emotional attachment to the American dream and its paradoxical reality. The moment of decision had arrived, to return to one’s root for one’s true identity.

Significantly, Chuck crosses his fingers for “Allah bachao, God save us” in the detention cell (2009, p. 128). That symbolises his Islamic-Pakistani identity. His invocation to Allah for help expresses his religious roots. Also, his prayer in Urdu, Pakistan’s national language, confirms his longing for his moral moorings.

6.3.3. **Thinner Than Skin**

In *Thinner Than Skin*, the pub scene allows Nadir to show his skills as a wedding photographer, which he believes is a promising opportunity for him to fit in the “contact zone” (Khan, 2012). Khan, too, believes that because Pakistani nationals have been brought up in the socio-political node of oriental, occidental and Middle Eastern intersections, therefore, cultural assimilation is not an issue for them. The same has been evidenced in her characters, Farhana, Maryam, Wes, Irfan and Ghafoor, in this narrative.

In the current context, Matthias Dickert (2015) argues that Pakistani female fiction writers, mainly, after 9/11, have dealt with issues of “Gender”, “Diaspora” and “Globalization”, besides other subjects and tropes. This novel also tackles these themes while voyaging through from hurting to healing: from hybridity to transformation. It also points out how the Muslim society was ‘otherised’ sweepingly, particularly Pakistani Muslims after 9/11, without a proper probe. Khan (2012) accentuates the issue concerning the series of drone attacks that killed innocent people and the indiscriminate victimisation of people in the north of Pakistan. The Western-American media demonised and dehumanised Muslims, through stereotyping, dubbing them as a threat to global peace and cultural coexistence. All Muslims were homogenised by such ‘stereotypical otherness’, which negated their diversity, as in Christianity and other religions (Khan 2012).
Various laws were enacted to crack down on Muslim immigrants and to persecute them. Such institutionalised bigotry left Nadir jobless and Farhana as a victim of lost identity. As a result, Nadir notices that imperial America has brought its “war on terror” to the peaceful tribal north of Pakistan in continuation of its revenge upon Pakistani Muslims (Khan, 2012). As a photographer, Nadir was reminded of taking shots of Pakistan’s true identity: its land and culture, instead of trying his luck to portray the deserts of California.

Khan (2012) observes that after 9/11, Western tourists are likely to encounter indifference in Pakistan as the Northern tribal inhabitants become wary of Western “outsiders”, being suspect of potentially disturbing their peaceful life. Rumours of terrorists and suicide bombers have further aggravated the looming risk and serenity of the Kaghan Valley and its pristine beauty, including its neighbouring regions. Thus, the severe resultant situation led to a greater distrust between Pakistanis and the Americans.

Recapitulating the storylines in the titled novels, the common analytical concerns of what the researcher has studied and critiqued while applying postcolonial theory characterising cultural hybridity, are as follows:

All the three narratives: Mohsin Hamid’s The Reluctant Fundamentalist, H. M. Naqvi’s Home Boy and Uzma Aslam Khan’s Thinner Than Skin dwell on the phenomenon of socio-cultural synthesis in the pre-9/11 world, enabled by American cultural breadth and wide-ranging scope for mutual coexistence. That enables protagonists of the novels to attune easily in the entirely new conditions and occupy a liminal space, quite willingly and assuredly. All three novels, appreciate and willingly accept the kind and compliant nature of America because it had hospitably housed their characters. Not only did they consider it as their second home, but they also put in every possible effort to permanently secure their identification with American identity.

In the ongoing discourse of cultural diversity, Stephen Howe (2002) observes that colonial/imperial history is the history of “cultural interchange, of synthesis, mixture, or—in a word...[cultural] hybridity” (p. 20). Thus, it is an inevitable necessity and strength of the American empire in the post-modern age to be a hub of cultural variety
and to ensure the “continuing” imperial “legacy”. The imperial masters would not like the contributing culture to predominate.

The American system and society facilitated Socio-cultural and geo-professional assortment. That encouraged Pakistani characters in the novels to live and work in an entirely new community. Thus, acculturation was made possible in the metropolises of the U.S. In the case of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Home Boy*, it was New York, and in *Thinner Than Skin*, it was California. Both metropolises exemplify the encouraging American attitude, inviting Pakistani Muslim characters to snuggle up for promising and prosperous future.

It was observed that such cultural heterogeneity underwent volatile and checkered episodes. In the process, interpersonal relations stood unbroken. Both personal and professional ties (of the protagonists in the said novels) had to go through troubled times in the given theoretical parameters. Cultural fusion did not decline, as it offered “a notion of promise” to the characters under examination (Nyman, 2009, p. 157). Thus, the up-and-down in the series of successive events made the protagonists oscillate between fusion and fission, and despite that, they were momentarily drawn towards American society.

The 9/11 aerial raids and consequent precariousness in interpersonal relations with Pakistani Muslim immigrants came under focus. They paved the way for unstable interactions and associations. That contrasts starkly with the pre-9/11 sanguine environment, which was conducive to mutual understanding, tolerance, and interfaith congruence. After 9/11, American inter-‘cross’-and trans-nationally motivated patriotism turned to national identification and narrow nationalism, which rarely had any place to accommodate cultural cohesion and “pluralistic values” (Li & Brewer, 2004, p. 727). As a result, the epochal event turned out to be a defining and decisive moment for Pakistani characters in the novels. That is to say, America turned from cosmopolitanism to parochialism. The turning point anticipates a passage from cultural fusion through cultural fission to cultural transformation.

Therefore, the intensity of the event and its consequences fractured relations and levied mounting pressure on characters in the novels for immediate evacuation from the U.S.
These characters stood for the whole Pakistani Muslim community. Therefore, such a labyrinthine situation between “cultural embeddedness and contextual constraints” became judgemental for them (Weir & Hutchings, 2005, p. 89). As a consequence, they had to revisit their exotic identity and cultural foreignness, in order to switch over to nativism; and, thus backtracking to their distinctive Pakistani identity.

The Cultural alienation of Pakistani Muslims rose with derogatory sentiments for imperial America, and therefore, for willing withdrawal from its “totalitarian ethos”. Here two major turning points, i.e., hostile tension in the wake of 9/11, and poignant nostalgia for the home are at play to change the course of their journey for lasting transformation. Hence, the researcher concluded that parting with America and divorcing its socio-cultural and professional values, were foreseeable and mandatory for the three novels’ characters since they had been mercenaries to the imperial autocracy of the New World. Parting with America and reverting to Pakistan agrees with the cultural paradigm shift suggested by the researcher.

Prospective indigenisation and Pakistanisation (strong affection or support for Pakistan) appeared the only way out to resolve the issue of cultural foreignness and exotic “otherness”. All major characters in the narratives reverted to Pakistan, physically, emotionally and psychologically. In turn, the impression conveyed is that despite their secured future in the land of promise, they were committed to returning to Pakistan eventually. Thus far, before 9/11, characters of the novels committedly contributed to the socio-economic prowess of America at the expense of weakening their own economic, social and cultural roots by utilising their maximum potentials, expertise and skills, in making America greater.

Their qualifications, specialisations, and experiences were exploited compared to the sparse benefits given to them, as is done with cultural “others”—“directly and indirectly” (Rubin & Verheul (Eds.), 2009, p. 26). In this context, the impression propounded is that America has admitted their Muslim “otherness” for granting potential opportunity to cultural eclecticism; and, thus, advocating global diversity. However, this policy was reversed regressively after 9/11. Therefore, to “the effects of discrimination and constraints”, the leading characters in the narratives were no exception to the general immigrant reaction of revulsion and rejection (Livengood &

6.4. Conclusion

The post-9/11 Western reactionary discourse led the way to Islamophobia and construction of Islam as a religion of reductive ‘essentialism’, ‘radicalism’ and ‘extremism’—perhaps, the faith and its followers being—ever more perilous. Thus, presenting Euro-America (specifically, the U.S.) as protecting its sovereignty and self-determination against the antagonism of Islam and the Muslims. ‘Americanism’ and ‘exceptionalism’ were the patriotic voices that came to the forefront, awakening the Americans to the forthcoming foe. Western fiction was an active participant in the rat race of life and death, warranting the world of the approaching jeopardy. This haste in dealing with undiagnosed conditions, in turn, destabilised and demoralised fiction, reducing it to the pet themes of terror, tension and trauma of the unknown.

Pakistani diasporic English fiction of the post-9/11 generation was well aware of taxing and testing the situation and stood up for a befitting response. That is why it earned global acclaim for its aptness and correct analysis of the sensitivity of post-9/11 world. The novels under review not only identified the dilemma of identity-split after 9/11 but also suggested a stable solution to it, using homecoming and retracing their roots. All the three Pakistani diaspora novelists themselves faced the demanding situations and replicated their experiences into their current novels. These novels enfold the excruciating and heartrending currents, crosstresses and undercurrents of the post-9/11 torrential world, yet again yearn for, review and return to their source, for a fulfilling life ever after. Indigenisation and the discernment of identity transformation is an unmitigated blessing and recompense that the protagonists attain. Above all, the select three novels show the way out of Islamophobia and the consequent identity crisis in a patriotically motivated Pakistaniness from post-9/11 chaotic Americanness.

In brief, all the three novels resist, and revolt against the discourse of Islamophobia and Muslimphobia propagated by Euro-America after 9/11/2001. As a result, the characters fervently follow Pakistan’s geosociological imperative versus the Western-American imperial hubris. Consequently, they opt decisively for indigenisation as Pakistanisation (strong affection or support for Pakistan). That marks the end of their identity crises most manifest in hybridity. Thus, while communicating similarities in their
understanding of the pre and post-9/11 Western World, these three fictional narratives converge towards one another, regarding theme, plot, structure, and characterisation. To recall conclusively, the underlying theoretical background of the novels, is Frantz Fanon’s, Edward Said’s and Homi K. Bhabha’s concepts on the issues involved, i.e., Orientalism, Imperialism, and Counter-Colonialism. The transformational analysis is the researcher’s original contribution to the thesis.

In a nutshell, the narratives, partially voicing Tom Rockmore’s (2011) “Epistemological Constructivism” (pp. xii, 48), repudiate the Fukuyamaite (1992) supremacy of American liberal democracy, Mearsheimer’s (2005) structural theory of “offensive realism” (p. 381), which describe the Western power struggle for global hegemony, Lewis’ (1994) paradigm of historical religious differences, and Huntingtonian (1993) diatribe on cultural and/or civilizational clash. Also, the novels resonate with Ralph Ellison’s Invisible Man (1952), in content and substance, which informed the readers to a disillusioned yet compassionate Afro-American character(s), while simultaneously furnishing a compelling critique of the American culture.

The three novels also invite the readers to ponder life in the 21st-century from an Islamic-Pakistani contemporary perspective.

6.5. Recommendations: Strategic Futuring

Both, continuous creative and critical work is urgently needed in the following fields apropos Pakistani indigenous identity as motivated by its national ideology in the contemporary global setting and scenario:

(i) There are several similarities between pre and post-independence Pakistani literature in the English language. For that purpose, commonalities need to be explored and incorporated in a prospective fiction, in order to project conceivable future and its attendant concerns for answering the unanswered. Such fiction could be looked at in the scenario of the past-present-future continuum, as the three are connected and concomitant, to arrive at a holistic solution to domestic problems in the contemporaneous global setting and scenario. Such futuristic fiction would cover themes and tropes of the geosociological legacy of Pakistan for a global readership.
(ii) Pakistani futuristic fiction in English shall address its indigenous subjects (in question) followed by their credible solutions. The current-contemporary trends and issues, at hand, need to be given maximum attention for future research. Since Pakistani society is ethnographically and demographically plural, that is why each segment of society needs to be accommodated in it for social cohesion and national integration. Cultural diversity reflected in English Pakistani fiction shall enrich its cultural-cum-literary legacy, nationally and internationally, alike.

(iii) It is recommended that Pakistani fiction in the English language shall focus Pakistan’s geosociological role and responsibility to readers from around the around. Such fiction shall concentrate on global peace and fraternity, inter-faith harmony, conflict management and resolution, human/humanistic mores and technological advancements, cultural and civilizational shifts, and global risks accompanied by their plausible solutions, for constructing and projecting peacefully sustainable image of Pakistani society and its people. Such fiction shall also highlight Pakistani’s geosociological imperative versus global imperial hubris, for a better understanding of socio-political and geo-strategic dynamics of global powers.

(iv) It is recommended for prospective Pakistani fiction in English to portray Islam as a perennial peace paradigm as epitomised in Muhammad’s (ﷺ) life. Such fiction shall portray Islam as a complete code of life, and not merely a religion of faith system and appropriate practices ritualised at certain times and places. Such fiction would befit and benefit countering Islamophobia and Muslimphobia that consider Islam as a looming threat to the global peace and prosperity. That would balance the tilted picture presented in Western fiction, abounding discrimination against Islam and Muslims.

(v) At secondary and tertiary levels in the Pakistani education system, the above said fiction needs to be introduced, to equip students with their socio-cultural mores and geopolitical patterns. Such future-oriented fiction shall converge on and present a balanced blend of national and international subjects having controversial orientation. That would give students an opportunity to research global themes of focal importance.
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