Cosmopolitanism, Fundamentalism, and Empire: 9/11 Fiction and Film from Pakistan and the Pakistani Diaspora

DISSERTATION

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By

Suhaan Kiran Mehta

Graduate Program in English

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Dissertation Committee:

Pranav Jani, Advisor

Sean O'Sullivan

James Phelan

Martin Joseph Ponce

Abstract

This dissertation argues that 9/11 Pakistani novels and films privilege cosmopolitan encounters by Muslim, and occasionally non-Muslim, characters that are in conflict with power and simultaneously reject those interactions that are complicit with it. I define cosmopolitan acts as those that do not merely celebrate but critically engage with foreign cultures and peoples at home and abroad. For the purpose of this project, I confine my analysis of power to the influence wielded by religious fundamentalists and political empires.

To make my argument, I examine six Pakistani texts in which 9/11 is not merely a temporal marker but central to their ideological contexts and narrative strategies. These include the novel *The Wasted Vigil* by Nadeem Aslam, the film *Khuda Kay Liye* by Shoaib Mansoor, the novel *Burnt Shadows* by Kamila Shamsie, the novel *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid, the novel *Home Boy* by H.M. Naqvi, and the film *The War Within* by Joseph Castelo (co-authored by Ayad Akhtar and Tom Glynn). Pakistani novelists and filmmakers have acquired global visibility in the last decade, but their contribution to our understanding of 9/11 has not been sufficiently acknowledged.

This project particularizes the recent turn in cosmopolitan theory to accord greater significance to religion in understanding global networks, as seen in the works of Jose Casanova, Craig Calhoun, Bryan S. Turner, and Miriam Cooke. I demonstrate how

Pakistani writers and filmmakers represent a gamut of Muslim encounters with foreignness, which are often marked as heresy or dissent, without making facile claims about their transformational potential. On the contrary, this corpus of work shows keen awareness of the fragility of these connections forged alongside unspeakable acts of brutality.

The turn towards religion in theories of cosmopolitanism is consistent with a new direction in which postcolonial studies is headed. In his 2012 article "Postcolonial Remains" published in *New Literary History,* Robert Young notes that postcolonial studies has not paid adequate attention to alternative communities and acts of resistance in religious contexts. In this project, I take Young's suggestions forward by examining the multiple ways in which Muslim characters in 9/11 Pakistani literature and cinema forge ties with strangers at home and abroad despite facing opposition by Islamic fundamentalists and custodians of the American Empire.

In chapter 1, I detail the antagonistic relationship between cosmopolitanism, Islamic fundamentalism, and the American empire as a framework to analyze 9/11 Pakistani works. The study of 9/11 Pakistani fiction and film also contributes to other ongoing debates in cosmopolitan theory. In chapter 2, I argue that a cosmopolitan worldview is not restricted but enabled through a critical consciousness of home. In chapter 3, I suggest that cosmopolitan links forged between characters in the Global South can be a threat to empire. In chapter 4, I examine the limits of empathy whereby characters reject a cosmopolitan worldview after being dehumanized by brutal acts of torture.

Dedication

To the memory of my grandparents, Mr. Jitubhai P. Mehta, Mr. Sitaram B. Kolpe, and Ms. Usha Kolpe.

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Vita

2002	B.A. English Literature, St. Xavier's College, Mumbai
2004	M.A. English Literature, Mumbai University
2006	M.A. English Literature, The Ohio State University
2008–2012	Graduate Teaching Associate, Department of English, The Ohio State University
January–May 2013	Graduate Administrative Associate, 2013-14 Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar, The Ohio State University

Fields of Study

Major Field: English

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Chapter 1: Cosmopolitanism, Fundamentalism, and Empire

Introduction

This dissertation argues that 9/11 Pakistani novels and films privilege cosmopolitan actions by Muslim (and occasionally non-Muslim) characters that are in conflict with power and simultaneously reject those interactions that are complicit with it. I define cosmopolitan acts as those that do not merely celebrate but critically engage with foreign cultures and peoples at home and abroad. To make my argument, I examine six Pakistani texts in which 9/11 is not merely a temporal marker but central to their ideological contexts and narrative strategies: Nadeem Aslam's novel *The Wasted Vigil* (2008), Shoaib Mansoor's film *Khuda Kay Liye* (2007), Kamila Shamsie's novel *Burnt Shadows* (2009), Mohsin Hamid's novel *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007), H. M. Naqvi's novel *Home Boy* (2009), and Joseph Castelo's film *The War Within* (2005). Pakistani novelists and filmmakers have acquired global visibility in the last decade, but their contribution to our understanding of 9/11 has not been sufficiently acknowledged. In the fall 2011 issue of *Modern Fiction Studies* devoted wholly to 9/11 literature, Pakistani writing does not even get a passing reference, despite the editors' avowed intention to make the volume international in scope. Although Peter Bradshaw's survey of 9/11 films in the September 2011 issue of *The Guardian* goes beyond Hollywood, not a single Pakistani film makes the cut. And in *From Solidarities*

and Schisms: 9/11 and After in Fiction and Film from Outside the US (2009), there is but one comparative study of Shoaib Mansoor's film, *Khuda Kay Liye*, and Mohsin Hamid's bestselling novel, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist.* A more comprehensive study of 9/11 Pakistani texts needs to be done. Apart from its contribution to critical studies on 9/11 literature and film, this project makes significant contributions to recent debates in cosmopolitan theory and postcolonial studies.

The dissertation particularizes the recent turn in cosmopolitan theory to accord greater significance to religion in understanding global networks. For example, Jose Casanova argues that the alternative to secularized, global cosmopolitanism is not always religious fundamentalism (119). Craig Calhoun notes that global religious networks cannot be dismissed as, not unlike secular cosmopolitanism, they provide viable frameworks for integrating peoples. Bryan Turner argues for a new form of cosmopolitanism that includes a commitment to dialogue with religious cultures (253). And Miriam Cooke argues that Muslim women are "committed to a transnationalism" grounded in "specific places and identities," using technology to develop a "new kind of cosmopolitanism marked by religion" (92). In subsequent chapters, I show how Pakistani writers and filmmakers represent a gamut of Muslim encounters in myriad settings without making facile claims about their transformational potential. On the contrary, this corpus of work shows keen awareness of the fragility of these connections forged alongside unspeakable acts of brutality.

The interest in religion in theories of cosmopolitanism is consistent with a new direction in which postcolonial studies is headed. In a 2012 publication of *New Literary History,* Robert Young suggests that in the twenty-first-century postcolonial studies

should take up questions related to "indigenous struggles and their relation to settler colonialism, illegal migration, and political Islam" (22). About the latter, Young notes that as a product of the "secular tradition of Marxism" postcolonial studies was "caught off guard" when confronted with "diverse modalities of Islamic resistance" offered through "unorthodox global formations in the present or the past" (30). Postcolonial studies with its interest in alternative cultures and histories could be more amenable to the limitations of secularism-based tolerance and the possibilities of nonsecular coexistence (Young 31). In this project, I take Young's suggestion about the need to study religious conviviality forward by examining the multiple ways in which Muslim characters in 9/11 Pakistani literature and cinema forge ties with strangers at home and abroad despite opposition from Islamic fundamentalists and proponents of American Empire.

The relationship between the two key opposing terms in my argument—cosmopolitanism and power—has a theoretical precedent. In "The Many Faces of Cosmopol-is" Walter Mignolo contrasts globalization as a "set of designs to manage the world" with cosmopolitanism as "a set of projects toward planetary conviviality" (Mignolo 157). In the managerial class, Mignolo also includes sixteenth century Christian missions, nineteenth century European imperialism, and late-twentieth century neoliberal globalization; in the latter he includes thinkers like Francisco de Vitoria, Immanuel Kant, and Karl Marx respectively. Though Mignolo is in agreement with Kant and Vitoria's ideas of "justice, equality, rights, and planetary peace," he also notes that they are encumbered by "Renaissance and Enlightenment prejudices" surrounding concepts of "race and manhood" (173). Rather than propose cultural relativism as a counter to the universalism of "global designs" and "cosmopolitan projects," Mignolo argues for a

"critical" and "dialogical" (182) cosmopolitanism where the world's subalterns will connect to overcome different iterations of "colonial power" from the perspective of the "colonial difference" (180). This would include a critique of "all possible fundamentalisms (Western and non-Western, national and religious, neoliberal and neosocialist)" and on "faith in accumulation [of capital] at all cost" (Mignolo 181). A more recent work of scholarship titled *Cosmopolitan Thought Zones: South Asia and The Global Circulation of Ideas* (2011) also examines the link between cosmopolitanism and power by attending to anticolonial cosmopolitanisms in South Asia. In the introduction to this volume, Kris Manjapra writes that anticolonial politics in South Asia "created conversations" and "shared dwelling" between "disparate groups" opposed to empire (6). Beginning in the early nineteenth century "South Asian colonial subjects asserted that they did in fact belong to universal communities transcending the imperial axis, and strove for the social good within global horizons" (Manjapra 10). In my dissertation, cosmopolitanism is in tension with two power centers, namely Islamic fundamentalism and the American Empire.

Islamic Fundamentalism

In the introduction to *The Fundamentalism Project: A User's Guide,* Martin Marty and Scott Appleby write that although the precise definition of religious fundamentalism is contested, there is consensus that religious fundamentalists go back to "actual or imagined ideal original conditions and concepts" that they regard as "fundamental" (ix). Although they believe that they "are adopting the whole of the pure past," "their energies go into employing these features which will best reinforce their identity, keep their movements together, build defenses around its boundaries, and keep

others at some distance" (ix–x). The main difference between orthodox practitioners of faith and fundamentalist movements is that the latter "are primarily political rather than religio-intellectual movements" (Ahmad 463). Far from being synonymous with traditionalism, fundamentalism is ironing out the obfuscation of tradition and selectively reading the scriptures to further political ends (Roy *Islam* 3).

In her detailed essay on the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in South Asia, Mumtaz Ahmad writes that Islamic fundamentalist revivalism in the subcontinent was "a search for identity and reassertion of tradition" in a changing society (459). In nineteenth-century colonial India, South Asian Muslims were confronted with a loss of political power and a newly developed consciousness of their minority status, leading some to "seek comfort in Islam's past glory" and others to gravitate towards "modernity" (Ahmad 460). A third alternative that emerged was the choice of "aggressive self-assertion," leading to the birth of Islamic fundamentalism by Muslim groups who hoped to recapture the "pristine purity and political glory of Islam" (Ahmad 461). Ahmad writes that in Pakistan an organization known as the *Jamaat-i-Islami* is the "prime representative" of Islamic fundamentalism (462). The *Jamaat* shares with other fundamentalist organizations the desire to "restore the original teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunna"; a distrust of "later developments in Islamic theology, law, and philosophy"; the right to "independent legal judgment or *ijtihad"*; a view of Islam as a "comprehensive view of life"; and an aspiration for political power (Ahmad 465-466). While the *Jamaat* is a fundamentalist organization, it shares the rigid views of orthodox Islam on social issues and, like Islamic modernists, is distrustful of mystical Islam. The religious

exceptionalism that defines a fundamentalist movement like the *Jamaat* is mirrored in the civilizational exceptionalism of nation-states that harbor ambitions of being empires.

American Empire

In his influential book *Empires,* Michael Doyle defines empire as a "system of interaction between two political entities, one of which, the dominant metropole, exerts political control over the internal and external policy—the effective sovereignty—of the other, the subordinate periphery" (12). Doyle writes that the driving forces of empire are "economic and military, and also political, social and cultural" (19). In his survey of debates on the contested idea of America as empire, Paul MacDonald divides commentators into three factions. These include "imperial enthusiasts" who are votaries of American expansionism overseas and "liberal imperialist authors" who advocate an American Empire on "moral and humanitarian" grounds (48); "imperial critics" who critique the American Empire for being counterproductive to American interests or being a "morally suspect and economically exploitative" (49); and finally "imperial skeptics" who contest the very idea that America is an empire. In his book *Empire For Liberty* (2010) prominent critic of the American Empire, Richard Immerman argues that what is distinctive about the American empire is that it has been inextricably tied to the cause of "liberty" and being a "force of good in the world" (6). Immerman attributes America's expansionist mission in Iraq after 9/11 primarily to the influential neoconservative Paul Wolfowitz. Wolfowitz was a "driving force" behind a document known as the Defense Planning Guide (DPG), created in 1992, according to which America had to maintain its "primacy" "indefinitely if not in perpetuity," making it a blueprint for the "Second New American Empire" (Immerman 217-218). The document made a case for American

military supremacy on the assumption that the world is "inherently dangerous" and rejected "economic interdependence" or the value of "multilateral institutions" (218).

American empire is rooted in the idea of American exceptionalism, or, to put it somewhat more provocatively, the American empire is a global export of American exceptionalism. Although in my analysis of Pakistani texts I focus on American empire, it is crucial to understand its philosophical roots. In *American Exceptionalism: A Double-Edged Sword,* Seymour Martin Lipset writes, "The United States is exceptional in starting from a revolutionary event, in being 'the first new nation,' the first colony, other than Iceland, to become independent. It has defined its rasion d'etre, ideologically. . . . The American Creed can be described in five terms: liberty, egalitarianism, individualism, populism, and laissez-faire" (18-19). Lipset notes that while the United States has been the most "religious country" since Christendom, the American religious pattern is "voluntary" and not "state-supported" (19). In his work *New American Exceptionalism* (2009), Donald Pease writes, "American exceptionalism includes a complex assemblage of theological and secular assumptions out of which Americans have developed the lasting belief in America as the fulfillment of national ideal to which other nations aspire" (7). The idea of exceptionalism is constructed around what are ostensibly American values, namely "tolerance for diversity, upward mobility, hospitality toward immigrants, a shared constitutional faith, and liberal individualism" and rejection of those that are not including "feudal hierarchies, class conflicts, and trade unionism" (8). Pease argues that after the Second World War, the Soviet Union became the "other" of the ideals of American exceptionalism, enabling the U.S. state to represent its "imperial practices as preemptive measures" to contain the Soviet empire (20). In this

regard, Pease adds, “American exceptionalism produced the desire within U.S. citizens to construe U.S. imperialism as a nation-preserving measure that would prevent Soviet imperialism from destroying America’s national ideals” (21). Richard Immerman writes that this was a perspective widely prevalent in neoconservative circles: “[They believed] America must not hesitate to place its power in the service of democracy, liberty, and other ingredients of U.S. exceptionalism (among which were its religious and family values). If that necessitates behaving unilaterally, so be it” (210). These were the philosophical underpinnings of the ostensibly benign American empire. The nexus between American exceptionalism and Islamic fundamentalism took root in Afghanistan and Pakistan after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979.

Ghost Wars: CIA, ISI, and September 11

Wolfowitz’s firm belief in American exceptionalism had defined his antagonism to the Soviet Union during Ronald Reagan’s presidency; however, rather than Wolfowitz, the then director of the CIA, William Casey, made common cause with the Pakistani intelligence services, the ISI, against the godless Soviets. Casey’s profile shows how he was as fervent a believer in American exceptionalism as the neoconservatives were. In his magisterial work *Ghost Wars,* Steve Coll writes that Casey’s fervent anticommunism and Catholicism led to a fixation on the Soviet Union. Casey believed that he was the only person in the Reagan administration who could grasp and combat the Soviet strategy of covert war. According to Coll, Casey’s Catholic evangelism strangely endeared him to the mujahedeen who practiced a parochial version of Islam. To counter Nikita Krushchev’s doctrine of overthrowing dictators through Marxist revolutions, Casey believed that the CIA’s role would be to demonstrate that, as he said at that time,

"two can play the same game. Just as there is a classic formula for communist subversion and takeover, there also is proven method of over throwing repressive government that can be applied successfully in the Third World" (qtd. in Coll 97). He also felt that political Islam and the Catholic Church were natural allies in the "realistic counter-strategy" of covert action by the CIA against Soviet imperialism. The alliance between Islamic fundamentalism and American exceptionalism was a deadly combination with far-reaching consequences for Afghanistan, Pakistan and the United States. While Afghanistan descended further into lawlessness, Pakistan and the United States, despite being at very different stages in their evolution as democracies, have seen an erosion of religious freedoms and civil liberties.

Blowback

Afghanistan became a magnet for terrorists with real and imagined grievances. Zia nurtured the mujahedeen against the Soviets in alliance with the CIA, and with the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan his strategy seemed to have worked. Zia's policies proved disastrous in the long run. The mujahedeen were the predecessors of the Taliban[1] who captured Kabul in 1994 and eventually would provide a base to Al-Qaeda.[2] The

[1] For the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan, the Taliban's relationship to mainstream Islam, and their role in the geopolitics of South and Central Asia see Ahmed Rashid's *Taliban* (2000) and William Maley's edited volume *Fundamentalism Reborn?* (1998).

[2] In his influential book-length study titled *Al-Qaeda,* the *Guardian* reporter Jason Burke writes, "Bin Laden and al-Qaeda are the radical, extremist fringe of the broad movement that is modern Islamic militancy. Their grievances are political but articulated in religious terms and with reference to a religious worldview. The movement is rooted in social, economic, and political contingencies." Burke writes that its earliest cadres were tens and thousands of young Muslim men who made their way to training camps in Afghanistan "to realize their dreams of violent actions against the West" (xxvi). Burke makes the crucial point that Al-Qaeda is not a unified, cohesive group. Though many individuals identified themselves as al-Qaeda and may have idolized bin Laden "individuals and groups had their own leaders, and their own agendas, often ones that were deeply parochial, which they would not subordinate to those of bin Laden or his close associates or any other sponsor" (Burke 11).

belligerence of successive American establishments in West Asia is greatly resented by many Muslims across the world,[3] and a tiny fraction of them flocked to a Taliban-ruled Afghanistan to be trained for violent jihad. This was the laboratory where the diabolical plot against America would come to be hatched.

The consequences for Pakistan were equally serious. The mujahedeen were trained in Saudi-funded religious seminaries established in Pakistan to propagate hardline, Salafi Islam. Non-essentialist forms of Islam grounded in local Pakistani traditions paved the way for strict, literalist versions imported from Saudi Arabia. General Zia also instituted blasphemy laws as an extension of his program of Islamization that led to "hardening the boundaries of the nation through a system of legal exclusions aimed at non-Muslims" (Shaikh 78). Zia's legacy haunts Pakistan to date. On January 4, 2011, the then governor of Punjab, Salman Taseer was assassinated by his bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, for merely proposing to amend Zia's blasphemy law. The influence of the religious right was apparent by the fact that Qadri was showered with rose petals as he was being led to court on trial. Furthermore, after America's bombing of Afghanistan the Taliban have found sanctuaries in Pakistan, compounding the threat to the diverse character of Islam—seen in the attack on the country's Sufi shrines for

[3] This has been noted by thinkers on the left. In an interview in early 2002 Noam Chomsky called attention to America's tendency to back "status quo regimes" in West Asia. It is unsurprising, says Chomsky, to witness "a campaign of hatred" by people who "we're basically robbing and on whom we're imposing harsh, brutal, repressive and corrupt regimes." More recently, the *Guardian* reporter Glenn Greenwald commented, "When [terrorists] are heard, which is rare, about what their motive was, invariably they cite the fact that they have become so enraged by what Americans are doing to Muslims around the world, to their countries in terms of bombing them, imprisoning them without charges, drones attacking them, interfering in their governments, propping up their dictators, that they feel that they have not only the right, but the duty to attack America back." Chomsky and Greenwald's responses to President Bush's question—"Why do they hate us?"—can be summed up using a term coined by the CIA—"blowback, shorthand for the unintended consequences of covert operations" (Johnson xiv).

instance. Zia's regime through its militarization abroad and Islamization at home sowed the seeds for undermining the pluralism of a religion that was shaped by centuries of contact with other, older faiths and customs.

The United States was insulated from the fallout of the CIA and ISI's covert wars for a long time, but the horrific events of September 11 changed all that. Just as Pakistanis have been experiencing a steady erosion of religious freedoms, Muslim-Americans in particular have seen their civil liberties curtailed. In the weeks and months after 9/11, despite the reconciliatory position on interreligious harmony taken by President Bush, sections of the American press and the religious right contributed to a rise in Islamophobia in the United States. In her illuminating study titled *Behind the Backlash: Muslim Americans after 9/11,* Lori Peck writes how Muslim Americans felt excluded from the collective outpouring of grief after the attacks:

> The collective grief that Americans experienced was widely viewed as legitimate, normal, expected, and something to be taken seriously. Muslim Americans found themselves outside the bounded territory that separated the 'legitimate sufferers' from others after 9/11. . . . their grief was dismissed as illegitimate; one could say it was invalidated. As a consequence, their suffering remained largely invisible to the rest of America. (178)

The suspicion against Muslims in sections of mainstream America is symptomatic of a larger, more institutionalized distrust of foreigners. The recent revelations of in the newspaper *The Guardian* revealed the startling scope of the American security apparatus both within and without the American borders. In a detailed article titled "The Secret

Sharer," Jane Mayer quotes Yale law professor Jack Balkin as saying, "We are witnessing the bipartisan normalization and legitimization of a national-surveillance state." Paraphrasing Balkin, Mayer writes:

> In [Balkin's] view, zealous leak prosecutions are consonant with other political shifts since 9/11: the emergence of a vast new security bureaucracy, in which at least two and a half million people hold confidential, secret, or top-secret clearances; huge expenditures on electronic monitoring, along with a reinterpretation of the law in order to sanction it; and corporate partnerships with the government that have transformed the counterterrorism industry into a powerful lobbying force.

The rise of the American security state especially affects non-U.S. citizens living within the United States. In his article "Privacy is not American," Pratap Bhanu Mehta is sharply critical of President Obama's assurances that internet and email surveillance was not going to affect U.S. citizens. Mehta writes,

> The moral hierarchies this insinuates are scandalous. It is a brazen acknowledgment that the rights of non-US citizens or residents count for nothing; American policy can trample on these rights with impunity. For a nation that prided itself on its universalism, this brazen disregard for the rights of others is odd. Presumably, the point of a Universal Declaration of Human Rights is that no state shall violate these rights, not just that your own state shall not. To claim privacy to be American! So much for universality. (1)

The rise in Islamophobia and the aggressive monitoring of non-U.S. citizens, as if they are all potential suspects is at odds with the idea of America's openness to difference.

Cosmopolitanism, Heresy, and Dissent

This is the historical lens with which Pakistani writers and filmmakers see the events of September 11. While they affirm the capacity of Muslims to be at home anywhere in the post-9/11 world, they are acutely aware of the violence perpetuated by parochial ideologues. The fictional characters in these texts are sympathetic largely owing to their ability to embrace difference in the face of divisive and violent agendas. To analyze these characters' antagonisms to religious fundamentalism or empire, I employ the terms heresy and dissent respectively.

I define heresy as departure from religious orthodoxy without a complete break from the past. In *Words of Ecstasy in Sufism,* Carl W. Ernst offers a succinct account of heresy in Islam. Ernst notes that while certain *hadith* (sayings and teachings of the Prophet) mete out punishment to apostates, they do not contain anything to deal with those who rebel secretly against God. To address this problem, jurists introduced the idea of "zandaqah" to stamp out the "infiltration" of Manichean ideas into mainstream Shi'ism. The Shi'i "zandaqah," or heretics, owing to their disdain for social standards, were often confused with "poets, free-thinkers, and mystics" (Ernst 129). The orthodox position on "zandaqah" is summed up in a treatise of the Ottoman jurist of the Hanafi school named Kamalpasha-zadah, who writes that "although zandaqah refers primarily to adherents of a religion that authorizes communal possession of property and women, it by extension means anyone who puts himself beyond the pale of revealed religion by denying God's unity or repudiating His ordinances" (Ernst 129). In my second chapter,

titled “Sufi mystics and Islamic Fundamentalists,” I demonstrate how charges of heresy against individuals or groups are often politically motivated. The relationship between cosmopolitanism and heresy is the subject of a recent book titled *Cosmopolitans and Heretics: New Intellectuals and The Study of Islam* (2011) by Carool Kersten. Kersten examines three Indonesian, Muslim intellectuals—Nurcholish Madjid, Hasan Hanafi, and Mohammed Akroun—who simultaneously reject Islamic literalism and secularism in favor of renewing tradition to make it compatible with modernity. Their openness to “Western scholarship in the human sciences” has created “heresies” that opened up “new perspectives on the study of Islam” (233). In my second chapter, I work with the framework that Kersten provides to read how openness of the mind is a threat to the Taliban.

In his book *A Call for Heresy* (2007), Anouar Majid uses the term heresy interchangeably with dissent, but I keep the two distinct. Majid himself observes that the political culture of the United States reveals a mixing of the sacred and the secular, seen for instance in John Winthrop’s sermon invoking a “Christian community” under a “Government both civill and ecclesiasticall” (Majid 123). This hybridity is also seen in different articulations of empire. Richard Immerman writes that Benjamin Franklin’s *Autobiography* reveals an individual whose “prescriptions for empire” were inspired by “secularism” more than “missionary zeal” (27). On the other hand, for John Quincy Adams, spreading liberty was clearly part of “God’s design” (Immerman 96). Paul Wolfowitz’s need to confront evil was shaped by the fact that many of his relatives had not escaped Hitler’s genocide. The different philosophical orientations of the men who believed in an “empire of liberty” make dissent a more appropriate critical term than

heresy, which has a religious basis. Furthermore, Majid's focal point of criticism in the American context is global capitalism, and while this features prominently in my analysis of Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist,* I focus more broadly on dissent more broadly against empire. The precedent for this is David Mayers's book *Dissenting Voices in America's Rise to Power* (2007) where he focuses on high-profile dissenters in American administrations. Mayers suggests that there are four strands of dissent of American foreign policy, "prophetic, republican, nationalist, and cosmopolitan" (5). Mayers argues that the cosmopolitan strand is connected to the "extroverted and voluble quality of the citizenry," to the diversity of its "religious-national origins," and to "convictions about right national conduct" (7). This strand arose from the notion that rather than exist as "an end in itself" American power should serve "humanitarian" aims on behalf of persecuted groups (7). The fictional characters that I study belong to a racial minority and a religious other; their relation to power is very different from the group that Mayers analyzes. At the same time, the connection between cosmopolitanism and dissent Mayers makes is central to my analysis of Shamsie and Hamid's texts in the third chapter.

Pakistani Fiction and Film

The Pakistani writers and filmmakers I study are inheritors of a rich legacy, and their 9/11 creative output is one of the more recent iterations of this tradition that at least goes back to the creation of Pakistan. Owing to the complicated history of Pakistan, the Pakistani creative community has always been preoccupied with questions of identity and belonging on previous occasions of national crises of comparable magnitude, the partition of the subcontinent in 1947 and Pakistan's breakup in 1971. I examine select texts by

Pakistani authors that engage with these pivtol moments in Pakistani history to suggest continuities between the past and the present.

1947

In his introduction to a four-volume anthology of partition narratives, Alok Bhalla writes that "a single, common note which informs nearly all the stories written about the 1947 partition and the horror it unleashed [is] a note of utter bewilderment" (qtd. in Jalil). Saadat Hasan Manto's short story "Toba Tek Singh" (1955) best illustrates the utter disorientation of characters overtaken by history in a way they can barely understand. "Toba Tek Singh" is set "two or three years" after the partition in an "insane asylum" in Lahore. The narrative begins with the information that Pakistani and Indian governments decide to exchange "lunatics" across the Wagah border with Muslims to be sent to Pakistan and Hindus and Sikhs to India. The inhabitants of the asylum cannot make sense of the partition and are clueless about the location of this new place called "Pakistan." The inhabitants ask, "If they were in Hindustan, then where was Pakistan? If they were in Pakistan, then how could this be, since a while ago, while staying here, they had been in Hindustan?" The news leaves everyone in the lunatic asylum so disturbed that each one descends further into his make-believe world. One lunatic climbs a tree, another one wanders in the garden naked, and two others assume that they are key political figures, Jinnah and Tara Singh. The central character, whom we do not meet until halfway into the narrative, is an old Sikh landlord named Bishan Singh. Aside from his mimetic dimensions, he is also thematized to show how subcontinental identities escape normative categories of nationality and religion. Bishan Singh, who was in the insane asylum for fifteen years, had not slept "even for a moment" "by day nor by night." His reponses to

the ongoing situation are incoherent: "*Upar di gur gur di annex di be dhyana di mung di daal of the Pakistan Government*." On the day of the exchange at the Wagah border, Bishan Singh stops in the middle of India and Pakistan and refuses to move. The story ends with Bishan Singh lying prostrate in no man's land, and the narrator remarks, "There, behind barbed wire, was Hindustan. Here, behind the same kind of wire, was Pakistan. In between, on that piece of ground that had no name, lay Toba Tek Singh." Bishan Singh becomes Toba Tek Singh, a district that is geographically located in Pakistan, but in reality outside the normative categories of national and religious identities.

The rupture in the unselfconscious cosmopolitanism of the subcontinent after the partition is also seen in Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *Cracking India* (1991), which illustrates how the hardening of religious identities intersects with gender-based violence. The novel is focalized from the perspective of a girl named Lenny who is a member of the minority Parsi community. Lenney's "ayah" (nurse), a Hindu, is pursued by men belonging to different faiths. Her preference for the masseur over the ice-candy man, a Muslim, does not go down well with the latter, who kidnaps her and forces her to marry him. Historical violence is intermeshed with personal vendetta as the kidnapping scene is represented as Muslim mobs treating Hindu women as spoils of war. These faultlines sound strange in the months leading up to the partition. When a character named Imam Din mentions Hindu-Muslim and Muslim-Sikh riots in urban centers to his fellow villagers they protest saying, "[O]ur villages come from the same racial stock. Muslim or Sikh, we are basically Jats. We are brothers. How can we fight each other? . . . We are dependent on each other: bound by our toil. . . To us villagers what does it matter if a peasant is a

Hindu, or a Muslim, or a Sikh?" (Sidhwa 64). Another character named Jagjit Singh says, "If needs be, we'll protect our Muslim brothers with our lives" (Sidhwa 65). Once partition becomes inevitable, the child narrator Lenny becomes aware of religious differences. "It is sudden," Lenny says, "One day everybody is themselves—and the next day they are Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian. People shrink, dwindling into symbols. Ayah is no longer just my all-encompassing Ayah—she is also a token. A Hindu" (Sidhwa 101). The permanent scar that the partition left on the pluralistic traditions of the subcontinent are summed up in Faiz Ahmed Faiz's "The Dawn of Freedom":

> These tarnished rays, this night-smudged light –
> This is not that Dawn for which, ravished with freedom,
> we had set out in sheer longing,
> so sure that somewhere in its desert the sky harbored
> a final haven for the stars, and we would find it.

Faiz's "dawn" would prove elusive once again when West Pakistan's unwillingness to respect Bengali nationalism and India's interest in seeing a weakened Pakistani state would lead to the creation of Bangladesh in 1971.

1971

Pakistani and Bangladeshi writers who take up the events of 1971 represent how linguistic and cultural pluralism in Pakistan shrunk owing to the "othering" of Bengali Muslims. The motif of madness seen in Manto's "Toba Tek Singh" bleeds into Naeem Arvi's short story, also in Urdu, titled "Godhra Camp," which highlights the plight of refugees of the 1971 war. The narrative opens with a motor mechanic gleefully filling in onlookers on how a Bengali widow had lost her mind after losing her husband in the war.

The woman and other refugees like her are enclosed within a barbed wire fence, making Godhra look like a "POW camp from World War II" (Aarvi 185). The inhabitants of the camp become a source of spectacle for self-righteous Pakistanis who despise Bangladeshi "darkies" for their betrayal of Pakistan and ignore sane voices who remind their countrymen of West Pakistan's xenophobic policies. The story ends with the voyeuristic gaze on Bangladeshi refugees being turned on Pakistani refugees who made their way to West Pakistan. The narrator observes, "There was only one difference between the Bengali and [Pakistani refugees] is that this time, there were no armed guards. Otherwise, this new camp was exactly like its predecessor" (Aarvi 188).

The impact of 1971 on Bengali-Muslims living in Pakistan is the subject of Kamila Shamsie's novel *Kartography* (2002). The protagonist Raheen is oblivious to how the events of 1971 shaped her and Karim's destiny until she learns why her father, Zafar, rejected Karim's mother, Maheen. Zafar is opposed to West Pakistani belligerence against East Pakistan, but at a pivotal moment he capitulates to the frenzied ultranationalism that engulfs Pakistan. When Zafar's patriotism is questioned by his friend Shafiq, Zafar said, "How can I marry one of them [Maheen]? How can I let one of them bear my children? Think of it as a civic duty. I'll be diluting her Bengali bloodline" (Shamsie *Kartography* 210). Subsequently when Raheen reconnects with Maheen in the United States, she explains Zafar's difficulty with being engaged to a Bengali. Maheen says, "I was just a Bingo [derogatory term for Bengali] . . . your father was something much worse. He was a turncoat, a traitor. A Bingo-lover" (Shamsie *Kartography* 236). She passes on Zafar's letter to her in which, among other things, he movingly talks about 1971 as the year that signified the death of Pakistan. Zafar writes,

> Pakistan died in 1971. . . it was a country with a majority Bengali population and all its attendant richness of culture, history, language, topography, climate, clothing . . . everything. . . . . Pakistan was a nation with an image of itself as a place that was created because that creation was the only way its leaders saw possible to safeguard the rights of a minority power within India. How can Pakistan still be when we have so abused that image— . . . How can Pakistan still be when the whole is gone and we are left with a part? (Shamsie *Kartography* 279)

Unlike the self-serving arguments of some of the characters in Naeem Arvi's "Godhra Camp," Zafar introspects on how ultranationalist forces in Pakistan undermined the pluralistic vision of Pakistan's founders by sidelining Bengalis. Zafar's self-reflective note in which he puts the onus of the creation of Bangladesh on Pakistan's mistreatment of minorities in *Kartography* was very different from the real-world statist response to what was widely and erroneously perceived as Pakistan's humiliating defeat to India. On the contrary, it served as an impetus for General Zia to institutionalize a doctrinaire version of Islam and cleanse it of its South Asian influence; the consequences of Zia's policies and its connection to September 11 are spelled out above.

Contemporary Pakistani Fiction

Just like its literary predecessors, 9/11 Pakistani fiction juxtaposes inclusivist and exclusivist ideas that have shaped Pakistan from within and without; however, contemporary Pakistani writers do not all directly engage with 9/11. In fall 2010, the literary magazine *Granta* published a special issue on Pakistan. In his review, Isaac Chotiner contrasts this issue with an earlier one in 1997 devoted to Indian writers in

English. Chotiner writes, “The collection lacks the whimsy that Americans simplistically identify with India. *Granta’s* Pakistan is a country of jihadists, anti-Americanism and increasingly misogynistic and brutal forms of Islam.” He also notes that the most visible difference is the “depiction of immigrant life.” “Pakistani immigrants, especially in the years since the Sept. 11 attacks, face challenges completely different from those of their Hindu counterparts from India. (Of course India has a huge Muslim population, but the country is seen as a victim rather than a perpetrator of terrorism.)” Chotiner’s assessment is accurate upto a point. *Granta* also contains narratives that illustrate other idiosyncrasies of Pakistani society.

For example, one of the narratives in the issue, Mohammed Hanif’s short story “Butt and Bhatti,” which is a preview of his novel *Our Lady of Alice Bhatti,* is a tragicomic account of a relationship between a nurse named sister Alice Bhatti and a man named Teddy Butt. Butt feigns illnesses to find favor with Alice, and when he fails to endear her he threatens to shoot her with a Mauser. The humor in Hanif’s story comes from the extraordinary lengths that Teddy goes to win Alice’s affections despite having the hardest time articulating his thoughts. The narrator observes, “Teddy is one of those people who are only articulate when they talk about cricket. The rest of the time they rely on a combination of grunts, hand gestures and repeat the snippets of what other people have just said to them” (Hanif 124). Despite this or precisely because of this problem, Teddy complains to Alice that his dreams wake him up. When Alice indulges him, he embellishes his dream to make it sound more sick and romantic but conveniently leaves God out. Ultimately after averting a shootout in the hospital, when Alice drives Teddy away, he leaves the hospital and shoots the Mauser in the air. In a bizarre, but plausible

chain of events Teddy's actions bring the town to a halt for three days. His bullet hits an unsuspecting truck driver who loses control of his vehicle and sets off a chain reaction of events. The overreaction by the Pakistani public could be read as Hanif's social commentary, but the war on terror does not at all feature in his narrative.

Also in the *Granta* issue, Uzma Aslam Khan's short story "Ice, Mating" is an account of the subtle power shifts in the romance of two Pakistani characters with two different attitudes to home. Nadir and Farhana's romance centers around landscape photography and and calla lilies. Despite the fact that these characters share moments of physical and sexual intimacy, their relationship starts to go south when Nadir tells her she does not remind him of his past. Farhana, on the other hand, wants to return home and, without directly confiding in Nadir, obtains a travel grant to Pakistan with her friend, Wesley. The night she reveals this news to him she also lets him photograph her naked spine for the first time. Nadir, who feels emasculated by Wesley's presence, says, "I didn't enjoy it. I didn't want Farhana, neither behind my lens or in the flesh" (Khan 107). When Nadir and Farhana arrive in Pakistan, she is in Wes's cabin "eating breakfast" and his cabin "grows colder" (Khan 109). Nadir's hesitation in returning to Pakistan is partly owing to security concerns as the followers of Syed Ahmed Barevli who dreamed of an Islamic state with Islamic laws are a menacing presence in the area Farhana wants to visit. However, this threat remains in the background as Khan is primarily interested how Nadir and Farhana grow distant from each other. This tale of estranged lovers can be transposed to any context and is not overly determined by 9/11.

There is more to contemporary Pakistani fiction than Pakistani writers in English writing about 9/11. In a tellingly titled article "Pakistani Fiction Hijacked by English

language writers," Nazish Zafar writes, "A minority is being considered representative of Pakistani fiction by the world at large." Zafar is much less effusive about the Granta volume than Chotiner noting, "The works included were either originally written in English or had been lucky enough to get translated into English from Urdu and thus catch the eye of editors of the magazine." Though a few Pakistani writers are the flavor of the decade, in Zafar's view by confining ourselves to them we get a "restricted and myopic vision of Pakistani society."

Pakistani Cinema

Pakistani films of the last decade, though struggling to get off the ground, also address varied subjects. The golden age of Pakistani cinema was from the 1950s through the 1970s, but the country's breakup in 1971 all but killed the industry. Additionally, Pakistani film cannot compete with big-budget and star-studded Bollywood films across the border.[4] In this context, the director Shoaib Mansoor's films *Khuda Kay Liye* (2007) and *Bol* (2011) have been seen as trailblazers. In his conversation with the television presenter Moeed Pirzada, the producer of *Bol,* Fayyaz Khan comments that *Khuda* was a success given Mansoor's interest in creating a solid storyline. The filmmaker and television writer/director Rauf Khalid attributes Mansoor's success to his ability to entertain and educate his audience. The fact that a country like Pakistan that has borne a significant brunt of the war on terror has produced only one such topical film points to the challenges of filmmaking in Pakistan. While *Khuda Kay Liye*—which I write about in

[4] An excellent discussion of the current state of Pakistani cinema and its historical context was conducted by Moeed Pirzada on his television program, *Sochta Pakistan* (2 July 2011). The panelists included Fayyaz Khan (Producer of the Shoaib Mansoor's film *Bol*), Ijaz Gul (film critic), and Rauf Khalid (filmmaker and television writer/director). Mushtaq Gazdar provides a detailed overview of the rise and decline of Pakistani films over 50 years in his book *Pakistani Cinema 1947-1997* (1997).

chapter 2—deals with 9/11, Mansoor's *Bol* is more local in scope. In *Bol,* Mansoor is sharply critical of the nexus between religious orthodoxy and patriarchy within Pakistani society. He exposes the hypocrisy of a religious patriarch who virtually holds his daughters under house arrest and has illicit relations with a courtesan. The film also shows Pakistani society's discomfort with non-normative sexuality through the unfortunate plight of a transgendered character named Saifi. The film ends on an affirming note with the women of the household starting their own restaurant. Unlike *Khuda Kay Liye* in *Bol,* Mansoor turns his critical gaze almost exclusively on elements within Pakistani society rather than those without.

9/11 Anglo-American Fiction

It would be tempting to situate 9/11 Pakistani texts in opposition to Anglo-American works based on September 11, but I plot these texts on a continuum rather than place them in opposing camps. In "Contemporary Fiction and Terror," Robert Eaglestone argues that in their 9/11 works Anglophone writers refuse to engage with the otherness of the terrorists and their ideas. "Instead, they use an array of techniques to recapture this within a pre-established framework of understanding: terror is simply evil (Foer), an illness (McEwan), or stems from incomprehensible personal motives (Rushdie)" (367). Eaglestone is also critical of these novelists for their failure to address the "political antecedents [of 9/11] in imperial and colonial histories" (362). Eaglestone's essay suggests that the mainstream Anglo-American novel of the twenty-first century has not departed significantly from its predecessors in their superficial engagement with terrorism. In his essay "Terror Effects," Robert Young contrasts a "first world" form of terror with that seen in more contested societies like Sri Lanka (and Pakistan). Instead of

"anesthetizing terror by denigrating terrorists [as first-world novelists do]" a book by a writer of Sri Lankan origin like Michael Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost* shows how individuals respond in creative and dignified ways to ubiquitous threats (325). While drawing distinctions between first-world and third-world writers, Eaglestone and Young end up privileging one set of experiences over the other. It might be more productive to evaluate the achievements of each experience of select Anglo-American writers on its own terms before being critical of its ideological shortcomings, if any. In her essay "Storytellers of Empire" Kamila Shamsie sees her work as complementary to Don DeLillo's *Falling Man*, Claire Messud's *The Emperor's Children* or Jonathan Safran Foer's *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*. Shamsie writes, "I'm not saying September 11, the day itself in New York, is not itself a worthy subject for fiction. Only an idiot would say that. But just as the day itself is only one part of the genre of 9/11 nonfiction books, so it should be with fiction." I now examine novels by four Anglo-American writers to suggest how their works constitute a crucial part of 9/11 even as they show different degrees of engagement with the Muslim other. I analyze Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* (2007), Ian McEwan's *Saturday* (2005), Salman Rushdie's *Shalimar The Clown* (2005), and Amy Waldman's *The Submission* (2011) as representative cases of 9/11 Anglo-American fiction.

In *Falling Man,* one of Don DeLillo's main purposes seems to be to convey an everyday American's inability to understand the rules of the post-9/11 world. Focalized through the protagonist Keith, *Falling Man* opens with an impressionistic view of New York City after the fall of the towers. The novel's opening suggests the difficulty that an "ordinary" American like Keith had in placing the events of 9/11 in the context of any available framework. In this altered reality, the individual is overwhelmed by his new

environment of "whipping" papers and "busting" smoke over which he has no control. The book's title has both a factual and a fictional basis. The real-world reference is the photojournalist Richard Drew's picture of a man jumping from one of the towers once it became impossible to breathe. In DeLillo's novel, the falling man is a performance artist who appears unannounced at different places in the city "suspended from one or structure, always upside down, wearing a suit, a tie and dress shoes" (33). The 39-year old artist David Janiak's performances draw mixed reactions; there is a panel discussion on whether the artist is a "Heartless Exhibitionist or Brave New Chronicler of the Age of Terror" (DeLillo 220). When Janiak is questioned by reporters about Drew's picture as a possible inspiration, he refuses to answer any of their questions. He dies a natural death, and like his real world reference, remains somewhat of an enigma to his spectators.

These many refracted lenses that shape the central premise of the novel also determine DeLillo's representation of the Muslim "other." DeLillo's construction of the primary actors of the Hamburg cell mirrors Martin Amis's one-dimensional depiction of Mohammad Atta in his eponymous story. These men "who went to Internet cafés and learned about flight schools in the United States," notes the narrator, "knew that Islam was under attack" (DeLillo 82). The narrator adds that these men who "read the sword verses of the Koran" were "strong-willed, determined to become one mind" (DeLillo 83). DeLillo also attempts to show the incomprehension of lay Americans about 9/11 through Keith and his estranged wife Lianne's son Justin and his friends' attempts to process events. Through delay and indirection, it transpires that the children are trying to articulate the name of Osama Bin Laden—"Isn't [Bill Lawton] the name they sort of mumble back and forth?" (DeLillo 16). DeLillo contrasts these apolitical views with a

politically informed perspective through the character of Ernst Hechinger who goes by Martin Ridnour (Duvall 385). Martin's girlfriend and Lianne's mother, Nina, says that the 9/11 hijackers have no goals and only kill the innocent, to which Martin responds, "They achieve this, to show how a great power can be vulnerable. A power that interferes and occupies" (DeLillo 46). Though DeLillo's narrative privileges the psychological effects of September 11 on a few American characters, *Falling Man* also contains multiple political views that interrogate commonplace assumptions about the events of the day.

The British author Ian McEwan's *Saturday* is set in London on February 15, 2003, at the time of the largest anti-Iraq demonstrations in England. *Saturday* is about how characters grapple with uncertainty by seeking comfort in routine and love. The novel is focalized through the perspective of a British neurosurgeon named Henry Perowne whose hyperrational mind proves to be inadequate in dealing with the post-9/11 world. When Perowne's daughter, Daisy, provides him with a reading list he is dismissive of the supernatural as the recourse of an "insufficient imagination" and a "dereliction of duty" (McEwan 66). The limitations of this view become clear when Perowne's home is invaded by three men, Baxter, Nigel, and Nark, whom he has confronted earlier in the day. Baxter and his companions hold Perowne's family at knifepoint. Baxter has Huntington's disease, and Perowne's attempt to soften him using his medical expertise proves futile. The tide turns when Daisy recites lines from Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach." Baxter undergoes a mood change and Perowne's son, Theo, overpowers him.McEwan's achievement in *Saturday* is to fictionalize how characters use different forms of knowledge to understand the post-9/11 world.

Saturday can be read as a 9/11 novel because it dramatizes conflicting viewpoints of the American invasion of Iraq and reflects mainstream British society's incomprehension of the Muslim other. Perowne gets into an argument with his daughter, Daisy, about the impending invasion of Iraq. While Daisy is fiercely opposed to the war and schools her father on how neocons have hijacked American foreign policy, Perowne sees merit in trying to get rid of Saddam. Perowne's views are shaped by his discussion with his patient, Miri Taleb, who taught Sumerian civilization at Baghdad University. Taleb shares his stories of torture with Perowne saying, "Everyone, from top officials to street sweepers, lived in a stage of anxiety, constant fear. . . Everyone hates it. . . It's only terror that holds the nation together, the whole system runs on fear and no one knows how to stop it" (McEwan 61, 63). Perowne's distaste at the sight of veiled Muslim women reflects the unease of mainstream British society at an alien culture. "The three black columns" in Perowne's view have a "farcical appearance, like kids larking about at Halloween" (McEwan 124). He wonders, "How dismal, that anyone should be obliged to walk around so entirely obliterated. . .They really turn his stomach. And what would the relativists say? . . . . That it's sacred, traditional, a stand against the fripperies of Western consumerism?" (124). Perowne's casual dismissal of the veil as a signifier of oppression is at variance with its strategic use by Muslim women to claim agency.[5]

[5] In "Deploying the Muslimwoman," Miriam Cooke gives an idea of the complexity around the veil: "Since the 1990s, the politics of covering has become highly contested, especially when the state intervenes either to ban the veil or to impose it. In secular Turkey and in Europe, women are claiming the right for the Muslimwoman [sic] to cover, and they are being persecuted for their demands to wear the symbol of their religion in public. Secular societies are not the only places where the veil has become a weapon in the war among women, Islamists, and the state; in Egypt, for example, women are insisting on their right to wear the forbidden *niqab* to university. Conversely, in Indonesia, Afghanistan, and Iran, top-down instructions enforce covering for women" (92).

Salman Rushdie's 9/11 novel *Shalimar The Clown* carefully historicizes the alienation of the Kashmiri Muslim male from mainstream Indian society, but it ends with an indiscriminate critique of Islamic fundamentalism. *Shalimar The Clown* is set in predominantly three locations: the Kashmiri Valley, Los Angeles, and France. The communities in the Kashmiri villages are well integrated, with the most notable example being the alliance between Bhoomi/Boonyi (a Hindu) and Shalimar the Clown (a Muslim). The militarization of the valley after India's failed promises to Kashmir and the infiltration of militant groups from Pakistan leads to the eventual demise of this centuries-old Kashmiri culture. The narrator reserves the harshest criticism for human rights violations committed by members of the Indian police force. The indignation comes through in a series of powerful rhetorical questions: "Who lit that fire? Who burned that orchard? Who shot these brothers who laughed their whole lives long?" (308). Rushdie invites the audience to have the greatest sympathy for the people in Kashmir valley and its syncretic culture.

Consequently, Rushdie's treatment of Shalimar is curious in that it is becomes progressively less about his involvement in the Kashmiri uprising and more about settling his personal scores with the American ambassador, Max, for impregnating Bhoomi. Shalimar starts by joining the Kashmiri "Azadi" (secessionist) movement, but eventually becomes part of a global 'terrorism' network: "[A]ll of a sudden he was forty years old, battle hardened and no longer needed to ask himself what murder might be like" (Rushdie 174). His half-daughter, Kashmira visits vengeance upon Shalimar for stabbing Max, and Kashmira and Shalimar's confrontation at the end reduces the novel to a domestic drama.

Rushdie explores the many dimensions of terrorism in his novel, but his main purpose in *Shalimar the Clown* seems to be to create a tale of scandal and intrigue.

The most consistently sympathetic portrayal of the Muslim other without recourse to naïve sentimentality occurs in Amy Waldman's novel *The Submission. The Submission* explores the fallout of a Muslim architect winning a competition for designing a memorial for 9/11 victims. At the center of the controversy is Mohammad Khan, a brilliant young architect who is declared a winner out of five thousand anonymous entries. His submission is a "walled square garden guided by rigorous geometry" (Waldman 4). Once the adjudicators learn of Khan's Muslim identity, the majority feels like it should revisit the decision in some form or the other, but a character named Claire who lost her husband on 9/11 feels otherwise. The xenophobic attitudes of the public are reflected in two groups, Save America from Islam, headed by Debbie Dawson, and the Memorial Defense Committee, headed by a Sean Gallagher. Though Claire starts off as a principled individual keen to back Mohammad, she caves into the anti-Muslim propaganda and turns against him. On the other hand, Sean starts to see the error of his ways once Claire makes her displeasure with Mohammad public.

At the same time, Mohammad's choice is not entirely innocuous and his actions are not entirely above reproach. He refuses to divulge that the design was influenced by a garden in which he had prayed in Kabul. The earliest clue for this is his reaction to a talk show host calling him out on his motives: "I mean, if I were a Muslim—it hasn't been an easy couple of years for you, I'm guessing, you know, maybe you're a little bit peeved, maybe you're thinking, let's just slip this is under the radar" (Waldman 213). Right after that, the narrator notes, "Mo was so furious at the assertion, and at *the kernel of truth* it

contained, that he couldn't speak for a moment" (Waldman 213, emphasis mine). When Claire confronts Mohammad over where he got the idea for the design, he does not answer her question directly and instead points to how architecture cannot be circumscribed by a particular place:

> Geometry doesn't belong to a single culture. The grid is the quintessential modernist form, as I'm sure that Times critic grasps. It barely appeared in art before the twentieth century, then suddenly it's everywhere. Mondrian wasn't a Muslim. Mies, Agnes Martin, LeWitt, Ad Reinhardt—none of them were. I can't help the associations you bring because I am. (303)

It is hard to disagree with the spirit of Mohammad's comment, and Claire's insistence that Mohammad do away with the Islamic influences on his design to make it less "threatening" is unfortunate. At the same time, Mohammad is also exposed for being a careerist and trying to be a "safe Muslim" when it suits him by his attorney, Laila. Though Mohammad starts to grow a beard after the controversy erupts, he submits a clean-shaven photograph with his entry—"Effortlessly [Laila] had nailed his effort to be 'safe' Muslim when it would help him; to be courageous or provocative only when he thought he could afford to, even if he sometimes misjudged" (Waldman 199). In Pankaj Mishra's otherwise mordant critique of 9/11 Anglo-American fiction, he praises Amy Waldman's *The Submission* for its "rare political intelligence" and "shrewd worldliness." Mishra contrasts this astuteness with the superficial treatment of the global politics of 9/11 in Anglo-American cinema. In this instance too, I would argue that it might be instructive to analyze 9/11 Anglo-American cinema on its own terms before critiquing its shortcomings.

9/11 Anglo-American Film and Television

In his piece, "9/11 films: How did Hollywood handle the tragedy?" *The Guardian*'s film critic Peter Bradshaw presents several trends in 9/11 cinema. In Bradshaw's view the spectacular nature of the tragedy made it challenging for filmmakers to imagine how anything would rival the original. The first phase of 9/11 cinema was evasive about the event or looked at it angularly (James Marsh's documentary *Man on Wire*); the second phase was a "liberal-fence sitter" that was critical of the Bush doctrine of preemptive war but patriotic in character, including such films as Robert Redford's *Lions for Lambs* (2007), Gavin Hood's *Rendition* (2007), Michael Winterbottom's *A Mighty Heart* (2007), and Stephen Gaghan's *Syriana* (2005). Bradshaw opines that documentary films such as Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11* (2004), Antonia Bird's *The Hamburg Cell* (2004), Paul Greengrass's docudrama *United 93* (2006), and Errol Morris's *Standard Operating Procedure* (2008) were more successful in representing the many dimensions of September 11 and its aftermath. Bradshaw singles out three feature films for praise, Samira Makhmalbaf's *At Five in the Afternoon* (2003), Michael Haneke's *Hidden* (2005), and Chris Morris's *Four Lions* (2010). To understand the representation of the Muslim "other" in post-9/11 Anglo-American cinema, I turn to three different films: *United 93*, Sebastian Junger and Tim Hetherington's documentary *Restrepo* (2010), and *Four Lions*. I then look at season six of Joel Surnow and Robert Cochran's hit television series *24.*

One of the purposes of *United 93* (2006) seems to be to celebrate the heroism of ordinary Americans whose ordinary lives were disrupted by four hijackers. The film establishes the ordinariness of September 11 and the unpreparedness of aviation and

security officials to anticipate anything of this magnitude. The snatches of conversations between the passengers and flight crew of United 93 about family and work in English humanize them. Meanwhile aviation officials are seen talking about routine procedures and day-to-day business. The idea that the planes could have been hijacked is greeted with complete incredulity and dismissed as a prank. After the twin towers are hit and people stare in horror at the burning towers, the action shifts almost entirely to flight United 93. Though the state security apparatus failed, the film shows how lay Americans fought with their bare hands to regain control of the flight. The enduring image of this film becomes the triumph of the American spirit against a "foreign" enemy.

The United 93 hijackers are clearly the villains of this piece and could be read as stand-ins for the entire Muslim community. The backstories of the hijackers, Ziad Jarrah, Ahmed Al-Nami, Ahmed al-Haznawai, and Saeed al-Ghamdi, as well as their political motives, are peripheral to *United 93.* The film opens with Ziad Jarrah and his accomplices reading from the Qur'an and offering prayers. This diegetic sound of Qur'anic recitation continues and becomes disembodied as the film offers overhead shots of the Manhattan area. The film picks up this thread of disembodied narration once Mohammad Atta's voice from Flight 11—the first plane that collapsed into the towers—is heard saying, "We have some planes." As the plane is about to go down, the film juxtaposes shots of some passengers praying to Christ, while the hijackers are praying to Allah, implicitly setting up a "clash of civilizations" narrative. This does create a problematic dichotomy even as one recognizes that the filmmaker's principal intent is not to construct an "other."

If *United 93* is a tribute to American civilians, *Restrepo* (2010) is a documentary that invites its audience to think about the sacrifices of young American soldiers in the "war on terror." The film, which chronicles the deployment of a platoon for a year, focuses on a "remote 15-man outpost, Restrepo, named after a platoon medic who was killed in action." In his testimony Captain Dan Kearny who heads the platoon says his mission was not just to get the "bad guys":

> [He wished to bring] some economic growth and prosperity to these people and actually that there is something greater out there that you can strive to do or you can lead a better life. Not necessarily a Western culture you know where you have to do a MTV, and you got to have a McDonald's and a Walmart, but just something better.

Kearny ventriloquizes the official line on American intervention, but his desire to bring a "better life" to Afghans seem honorable. Another member of the platoon Sergeant Brendan O'Byrne speaks very highly of his captain, saying, "The hardest thing Captain Kearny had to ever do is keep sending his men out everyday, when we were losing guys . . . I am sure those days were tough for him because he was still losing guys but still had to complete the mission, so I am sure that was the hardest thing for him. Easily. Easily" (*Restrepo*).

This being said, American military's actions are not viewed favorably by the local Afghans. On more than one occasion, Kearny's platoon is confronted with the fact that innocent lives are lost in their pursuit of the Taliban. The American soldiers who accuse local Afghans of not cooperating with them do not realize that they are petrified of speaking out against the Taliban. On one particular occasion, when Kearny and his men

are having a weekly Shura with the Afghan elders he gets very testy with them and turns foul-mouthed. When they inquire about a particular man named Naeem who they feel was wrongly arrested, Capt. Kearny says, "Naeem was dropped off by another local at Korengal who told us that he was a bad guy working with the Siddiqulah. [Turning around] Who the fuck is Siddiqulah in charge of?" Though Kearny has a ready response, his attempt to pigeonhole individuals as "good" or "bad" does not show an understanding of the complexity of the situation on the ground. This estranges members of the platoon from the very people they are ostensibly trying to help. These moments point to the limitations of projects that almost entirely privilege the perspective of civilians and soldiers respectively. On the other side, Antonia Bird's docudrama *The Hamburg Cell* (2004) gives viewers the perspective of the 9/11 hijackers, but a film about suicide bombers that got audiences talking was Chris Morris's *Four Lions* (2010).

Four Lions critiques Muslim fundamentalists by showing the absurd lengths to which they go in pursuit of their cause. In one of the film's earliest scenes, the British-convert Muslim Barry warns his companions Waj and Faisal to keep a low profile. Barry then proposes that each one of them should eat their Sim cards raw to escape detection. On another occasion, Faisal attaches a bomb to a crow's leg to simulate a suicide terrorist attack saying, "Masha Allah brother crow! Masha Allah brother crow! This may come as a shock to you, but everything will be alright." He points to a miniature house model in the park saying, "See that over there. That's a sex shop, the U.S. Embassy or some other such likely place." "Now wait there. When I say you fly to the target, and I dial this, you go to heaven brother crow. Insha'Allah" (*Four*). He then merely takes five steps and dials his phone, and the crow is blown up.

The film also critiques the idiosyncrasies of mainstream British society. At a seminar titled "Islam Modernization and Progress," one of the five plotters pulls the veneer off mainstream British liberals. He interrupts the conversation and has fake bombs strapped to his body. When he pretends to blow himself up, a white British gentleman who until recently is talking about how he has no problems with ordinary British-Muslims is seen cowering under the table. At the end of the film, as the British police are taking aim at the four bombers "disguised" in outlandish outfits, they start quarreling over whether a Honey Monster (the advertising face of Sugar Puffs cereal) or a Wookie (a hairy humanoid species from Star Wars) is a bear. As they are arguing their real target, Omar, wearing the honey monster outfit, disappears and the Wookie is brought down. Though *Four Lions* succeeds as a comedy, by reducing the Muslim other to a farce it blunts the politics that drives individuals to violence. While the protagonists of *Four Lions* are not vilified for their faith or ethnicity, the film sets them apart from the mainstream by infantilizing them and, arguably, ends up "othering" them. Though Morris's film received very favorable reviews in the United States, *The Guardian's* Ben Walters wrote that it did not fare impressively at the box office. Walters attributes this to the film's "canny positioning . . . at the hipper end of the festival circuit" and the director's unavailability to make himself available before the American media. Morris's film may have appealed to a niche audience in the United States, more attuned to thrillers such as the hit television series *24*.

In Joel Surnow and Robert Cochran's *24,* personal vendetta trumps political motives, but it nonetheless explores the many internal and external fault lines caused by the events of September 11. Season six addresses a gamut of issues including the

radicalization of Muslim youth, attacks on civil liberties of Muslims, and racial profiling. While it calls attention to foreign threats, it also examines the complicity of the military-industrial complex in fueling endless wars that claim lives abroad and in America. The sixth season is structurally similar to the others as Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU)'s primary crisis is masked by a secondary problem, which turns out to be a red herring. In this case, while CTU is preoccupied with eliminating their principal target a former "terrorist" Hamri Al-Assad, al-Assad's former accomplice Abu Fayed, who is apparently cooperating with CTU, plans to set off 5 nuclear bombs on American soil.

Season six has all the makings of a thriller with a "foreign terrorist" as a villain working with the help of "local" foes, but the season also explores the horrific consequences of the profiling of Muslim Americans. The subplot that directly implicates Muslim-Americans is the involvement of a young boy by the name of Ahmed. When Ahmed's father is picked up by the FBI for his alleged involvement in terrorism a Caucasian family—Ray Wallace, his wife Jillian Wallace, and their son and Ahmed's friend Scott—protects him from racist neighbors. However, much to the horror of the Wallaces Ahmed later on trains his gun on them and holds Jillian and Scott hostage until Ray delivers a trigger mechanism to Fayad. Ahmed rebuffs Jillian's attempts to reach out to him by saying that he is a solider in Fayad's army. Ahmed seems perfectly well-integrated and without any back story seems to have become radicalized overnight. Season six, however, also explores the unfair targeting of Muslims by megalomaniacs in government offices and intelligence services. One of *24's* subplots is the split within the American administration over the institutionalized profiling of Muslims. While the white house chief of staff, Tom Lennox and Vice President Noah Daniels propose draconian

measures like internment camps for American-Muslims, President Wayne Palmer and Karen Hayes (the division director of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security) are fierce advocates of civil liberties. Though the President refuses to endorse Lennox's draconian measures, the sixth season reveals the horrific consequences of accommodating the excesses of the security state. The willingness of individuals to make peace with draconian measures like invasion of privacy backfires on them. This is seen in the case of Walid Al-Rezani, the director of the Islamic-American alliance. Al-Rezani is willing to let the FBI break into their organization's database and when his lawyer and lover Sandra Palmer, the president's sister, refuses Al-Rezani is thrown into a detention facility on American soil. Even in the facility, Al-Rezani tries to prove his patriotic credentials by eavesdropping on his fellow inmates and passing on their private information to federal authorities. When his fellow inmates understand Al-Rezani's motives they turn on him saying, "You are worse than them!" This is a damning indictment of the repercussions of the Patriot Act, not only in terms of fostering distrust between Muslims and other religious groups but also creating fault lines within the Muslim community.

24 culls villains from America's older and contemporary foes like the Russians and the Chinese, but it also examines the complicity of American elites in perpetuating global conflict. Season 6 brings this problem to the doorstep of *24's* larger-than-life, bureaucracy-hating, trigger-happy, mythical protagonist, federal agent Jack Bauer. Jack's father Philip, and to a lesser extent his brother Graem, are involved in the sale of suitcase nukes to Fayed. When Jack catches up with Philip, he tries working with the Chinese in return for seeking asylum for himself and his grandson Josh. Philip is ultimately

eliminated, and while the Chinese aren't cast favorably, season six also reminds viewers of the abuse of power carried out by American vested interests.

This brief discussion shows the difficulty in lumping all 9/11 Anglo-American cinema and television together. Shamsie's caution against dismissing 9/11 Anglo-American fiction for focusing on the day of the tragedy can be extended to knee-jerk dismissals of films like *United 93* or *Restrepo* or a show like *24* as jingoistic. They are a crucial, though not the only, part of the multiple perspectives that have shaped the public's collective understanding of 9/11.

Chapter Organization

In my next chapter, titled "Sufi Mystics and Islamic Fundamentalists," I do a comparative analysis of Nadeem Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil* and Shoaib Mansoor's *Khuda Kay Liye.* I argue that in *The Wasted Vigil* and *Khuda Kay Liye* cultural expressions and practices enacted at home by cosmopolitan characters are ruthlessly stamped out by religious fundamentalists as acts of heresy. Aslam draws on the work of the fifteenth-century Persian Sufi painter Bihzad as a heretical counterpoint to the neo-fundamentalism of the Taliban, and Mansoor invokes Bulleh Shah, an eighteenth-century Punjabi Sufi poet, as a model of heresy. In this chapter, I complicate the dichotomy between cosmopolitanism and home to demonstrate how these concepts are interdependent and subsequently triangulate them with heresy. I build on the theoretical work by Chandra Mohanty-Talpade, Roxanne Euben, and Humeira Iqtidar who have argued that the domestic sphere can enable a cosmopolitan worldview.

In my third chapter, I do a comparative analysis of Kamila Shamsie's novel *Burnt Shadows* and Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist.* I argue that that in *Burnt*

Shadows and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist,* key characters that begin by engaging with otherness mostly out of self-interest or in the service of power end up forging relationships within the global South that antagonize empires. I situate my comparative analysis of Shamsie and Mohsin's texts in the context of Harleen Singh's essay "Insurgent Metaphors: Decentering 9/11." Singh argues that 9/11 Pakistani texts offer nuanced depictions of "the disempowered refugee, the disenchanted immigrant, and the dissident citizen" (26). I further Singh's argument about Shamsie's nuanced depiction of certain "third-world" migrants in *Burnt Shadows* by focusing more directly on the character of Raza. I depart from Singh's reading of *Burnt Shadows* as an example of cosmopolitanism rooted in national consciousness and suggest instead that unlike Hiroko Tanaka-Ashraf, her son Raza has no sense of belonging to a fixed place. In my analysis of Hamid's novel, I highlight his use of the Gothic genre and Changez's unreliable narration more than Singh does.

In the final chapter, I focus on two texts that deal with the fate of Muslim students after September 11 in the "West," H M Naqvi's novel *Home Boy* and Joseph Castelo's film *The War Within.* My argument in this chapter is that *Home Boy* and *The War Within* expose the limits of empathy as the protagonists, Chuck and Hassan, are transformed from cosmopolitans into potential or actual religious fundamentalists seeking violent retribution against America's belligerence overseas. In the first section of this chapter, I examine how in *Home Boy* there is a shift in emphasis from N.W.A's interracial appeal to its antagonistic character. In the second section, I look at how the protagonist Hassan is drawn into the world of suicide terrorists despite being able to find a home in "the West."

Chapter 2: Sufi Mystics and Islamic Fundamentalists in Nadeem Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil* and Shoaib Mansoor's *Khuda Kay Liye*

Introduction

In this chapter I argue that in Nadeem Aslam's novel *The Wasted Vigil* and Shoaib Mansoor's film *Khuda Kay Liye,* cultural expressions and practices of characters that engage with otherness at home are ruthlessly stamped out by religious fundamentalists as acts of heresy. The impetus to travel away from home might seem essential to cultivate a cosmopolitan worldview, but this perspective rests on the assumption that home is a static space that stymies agency. This premise has been interrogated by feminist and postcolonial scholars who argue that home, especially the domestic sphere, is a dynamic and non-hermetic space. In *Feminism Without Borders,* Chandra Talpade-Mohanty defines home as "not a comfortable, stable, inherited, and familiar space but instead an imaginative, politically charged space in which the familiarity and sense of affection and commitment lies in shared collective analysis of social injustice, as well as vision of radical transformation" (128). Ania Spyra builds on Mohanty's work to make "active belonging" central to cosmopolitanism in her analysis of South Asian novels. Shameem Black posits an idea of cosmopolitanism that is "less invested in a traditional idea of feeling 'at home' in the world and more committed to recognizing 'the world' through the home" where inner and external spaces are

"collaborative rather than competing realities" (46). This theoretical focus on domesticity is especially significant for my analysis of Nadeem Aslam's novel *The Wasted Vigil* (2008) in the first section of this chapter. For the second section on Shoaib Mansoor's film *Khuda Kay Liye* (2007), I extend the concept of home to include the birthplace of fictional characters, be it Lahore in Pakistan or Chicago in the United States. In *Khuda Kay Liye,* both Pakistan and America are constructed as complex and contested societies where cosmopolitan and parochial tendencies coexist.

In reconfiguring the construct of home from a hermetic to a liberating space the role of religion, and more specifically Islam, remains understudied. Two notable exceptions attempt to fill this lacuna in different ways. In *Journeys to the Other Shore: Muslims and Western Travelers in Search of Knowledge* (2006), Roxanne Euben argues that the "Islamic ethos of travel" embodies a rich "countergenealogy of cosmopolitanism" that emerges from "doctrinal sources" and "historical practice" (178). In her chapter titled "Gender, Genre, and Travel," Euben does a comparative analysis of Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* and Sayyida Salme's *Memoirs of an Arabian Princess* (1886). She argues that in both these texts the "domains of exterior and interior" are "traversed, disrupted, and confounded by women . . . whose domestic space becomes the site of politics and comparative knowledge rather than their opposites" (140). One of Euben's implicit claims is that subjects in these texts have an ambiguous relationship with religion as it both stymies and enables agency. For instance in *Memoirs,* Salme contemptuously dismisses predestination while discussing attitudes towards disease but is also grateful to God for helping her pull through a cholera epidemic (170). Euben, however, does not adequately foreground the role of religion in determining Salme's

ambivalent relationship to her homes in Zanzibar and Germany. In another article "Muslim Cosmopolitanism: Contemporary Practice and Social Theory," Humeira Iqtidar explicitly argues that a cosmopolitan mindset can be cultivated in private spaces through a religious idiom. Iqtidar interviews Pakistani women from the orthodox religious organization *tablighi jama'at* who travel abroad on proselytizing missions. She observes that *jama'at* activists carry out several pedagogical exercises before large audiences and also interact with other Muslim women informally in their homes. "The structure of [these informal] interactions fosters some understanding of different ways of being" despite the fact that the *jama'at* women do not consciously set out "to engage with some 'other'" (Iqtidar 630). Unlike Iqtidar's focus on orthodox Muslims, I examine characters whose engagement with otherness is labeled as heresy by power-wielding groups. I first analyze this configuration in the Pakistani-British author Nadeem Aslam's novel *The Wasted Vigil* (2008) and, more briefly, in his earlier work *Maps For Lost Lovers* (2004).

The Wasted Vigil

Nadeem Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil* is a story of characters that make meaningful connections across deep ideological divides despite being surrounded by death and destruction. The novel spans nearly 30 years of conflict from the Soviet-Afghan war in the 1980s through the aftermath of September 11. In an interview to journalist Raza Naeem in June 2009, Aslam spells out his reason for situating his novel in Afghanistan:

> I thought Afghanistan had been forgotten. This will sound like a strange statement because Afghanistan is in the news every single day. But, you see, it is in the news every day because of what it is doing to the rest of the world: so many US soldiers have died, so many Pakistanis have died

> because of Afghanistan. But what the world did to Afghanistan over the past 30 or so years has been forgotten and is news to most people. So I felt I should remind people of that.

The novel's principal character, Marcus Caldwell is born to British parents in Afghanistan, spends his childhood in England, and moves back to Afghanistan with his wife, Qatrina. The nodal point for the novel's other characters is Marcus and Qatrina's home built in the nineteenth century by an old master and calligrapher, trained in the style of the fifteenth-century Sufi (the mystical dimension of Islam) painter, Bihzad. Marcus and Qatrina have a daughter Zameen and a grandson also named Bihzad. The three of them are the most tragic victims of Afghanistan's endless wars: Marcus's arm is hacked at the behest of the Taliban on false charges of theft; Qatrina is stoned to death by them for committing "adultery" with her husband; and their daughter Zameen is kidnapped and raped by Soviet soldiers and ultimately killed by an Afghan warlord. Nearly 20 years later as the U.S.-led war on terror in Afghanistan gets underway, Marcus also has a guest named Larissa (Lara) who travels from Russia to Afghanistan in search of her brother Benedikt who goes missing in the Soviet-Afghan war. Marcus's other visitor is an ex-CIA officer called David Town who was in love with Zameen and, along with Marcus, tries to locate Zameen's missing son, Bihzad. Town is disillusioned with the CIA after he learns that his colleague Christopher Palantine had ordered Zameen's death. Unlike David Town, Christopher's son James Palantine is a loyal vassal of the CIA and travels to Afghanistan after September 11 to serve his country in its "war on terror." Besides these peripatetic characters, there is also a local schoolteacher named Dunia who is targeted by Afghan warlords and militants for being an assertive young Muslim woman. One of her

antagonists is Casa, a young militant who believes that "human beings had little to offer beyond cruelty and danger" (Aslam *Wasted* 163). Marcus and Qatrina's home, which embodies Afghanistan's pluralistic traditions, particularly its Sufi heritage, is under constant threat by political and religious absolutists, be they Soviet soldiers in the 1980s or the Taliban from the mid-1990s through the present. I argue that in *The Wasted Vigil,* Nadeem Aslam shows how cultural expressions and practices enacted in the domestic sphere by cosmopolitan characters are ruthlessly stamped out by religious fundamentalists as acts of heresy.

Bihzad and the Taliban

Before analyzing *The Wasted Vigil*, I would like to detail the historical context of the painter Bihzad's work, which provokes cultural anxiety among the Taliban. Before Bihzad, Muslim painters in Persia avoided strict mimetic representations given the injunction against idolatry in some hadith ("Sayings and Teachings of Prophet Muhammad").[6] However, Bihzad was active in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries during the reign of the Timurids and Safavid rulers who, unlike their predecessors, were great patrons of the arts. One of Bihzad's masterpieces, for example, is a painting titled "The Prophet Muhammad with the Companions" where the

[6] There is no express injunction against portraiture in the Qur'an. However, according to certain hadith portraits that encourage idolatry are forbidden. Hadith 24: 5272 reads as follows: "Masruq said: I heard Abdullah b, Mas'ud as saying Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) had said: The most grievously tormented people on the Day of Resurrection would be the painters of pictures. (Muslim said): I read this before Nasr b. 'Ali at-Jahdami and he read it before other narrators, the last one being IbnSa'id b Abl at Hasan that a person came to Ibn 'Abbas and said: I am the person who paints pictures; give me a religious verdict about them. He (Ibn 'Abbas) said to him: Come near me (still further). He came near him so much so that he placed his hand upon his head and said: I am going to narrate to you what I heard from Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him). I heard him say: All the painters who make pictures would be in the fire of Hell. The soul will be breathed in every picture prepared by him and it shall punish him in the Hell, and he (Ibn 'Abbas) said: If you have to do it at all, then paint the pictures of trees and lifeless things; and Nasr b. 'Ali confirmed it" (*Hadith Collection*).

illustrations of the Holy Prophet and the first four caliphs are set against a mosque carrying verses of the Qur'an. However, far from being persecuted for his art, Bihzad was employed by the Safavid court. The Taliban's hostility to Sufism for being unmoored from scriptural Islam transforms this fifteenth-century establishment artist into a source of corruption in Islam. The Sufi mystic and painter Bihzad's life and work are cardinal to Aslam's representation of heresy as a counterpoint to the Taliban's parochialism. The Taliban's "neo-fundamentalism" is a cocktail of "traditional Sunni fundamentalism with strong anti-Western cultural and political bias inherited from the Islamist movements . . . " (Roy "Islamism" 202).

The Sunni fundamentalist movement Roy refers to is Wahhabism that seeped into Afghanistan during the Soviet-Afghan war of the 1980s. Abd al-Wahhab, the founder of Wahhabism, explained his ideas in a brief essay called "The Book of God's Unity." According to al Wahhab, "if a person pronounced an oath in the name of someone other than God, believed in the power of a talisman or an amulet, sacrificed to someone other than God, *visited tombs and graves and performed ceremonies at these locations*," he stood outside Islam (Peskes 155, emphasis mine). The latter is very a common practice among Sufis. Flush with cash, the Wahhabis sponsored "madrassas" (higher religious schools) in Afghanistan where youngsters cultivated a skewed understanding of Islam that they would try to enforce as members of the Taliban. In his seminal work *Taliban* Ahmed Rashid notes, "[The Taliban's] exposure to the radical Islamic debates around the world is minimal, their sense of their own history is even less. This has created an obscurantism which allows no room for debate even among fellow Muslims" (Rashid 93). Under the influence of Abd al-Wahhab's hostility to "un-Islamic practices," the

Taliban destroyed Sufi shrines. Ironically, although al-Wahhab thought of himself as answering the Prophet's call to cleanse Islam of its corrupting influences, he was attacked by religious scholars for being a heretic and forming a sectarian movement. As a result, *The Wasted Vigil* is about a conflict between two very different kinds of deviations from mainstream Islam: Sufism, which is not completely wedded to scripture and Wahhabism, which ostensibly outlaws all extra-scriptural practices. It is for these reasons that in *The Wasted Vigil,* Bihzad's paintings that adorn the walls of Marcus and Qatrina's home signify heresy for the Taliban. Commenting on this defining image in his novel, Aslam observes, "I wanted the house to stand for the human body that has been shattered by the war. The house has six rooms. Each of the first five rooms is dedicated to one of the five senses" (interview by Jackie). It is to this focal point of *The Wasted Vigil* that I now turn.

Marcus's Home

The most evident instance of engaging with otherness through subversive art is the unnamed Sufi painter's use of Buddhist imagery in the room dedicated to sight; Aslam uses this illustration of the Buddhist nun Subha to critique the patriarchal character of religious fundamentalism. Subha became a nun under Mahapajapati Gotami, a contemporary of the Buddha and the founder of the first order of Buddhist nuns. The painting of Subha "in dancerly gesture [presenting] her eye to a rogue in the forest" (Aslam *Wasted* 10) is an illustration of an unnamed dialogue poem involving Subha from the *Therigatha,* a "collection of seventy-three poems in the canon of earliest Buddhist literature" (3). In this poem, when Subha is accosted by a lecherous man she resists his overtures by plucking out her eye and giving it to him (Murcott 9, 179). The stranger in turn says,

Make yourself whole again, religious woman.

This won't happen again.

Coming up against you

is like embracing fire,

or grabbing a poisonous snake. (trans. and qtd. in Murcott 183)

Subha's detachment from the material world is rewarded by the Buddha by restoring her eyesight. Besides signifying her spirit of renunciation, Subha's unwillingness to yield to the stranger's demands is also an assertion of her autonomy as a woman. The poem opens with Subha saying, "It's not right to touch a woman who has left home. / The Wellfarer [the Buddha] taught this strict discipline, / and my own teacher [Gotami] too" (trans. and qtd. in Murcott 179). Aslam uses Subha's defiant stance couched in the language of renunciation also to critique patriarchy in Islam. There is an analeptic reference to Subha several pages later when Aslam uses the Rhinoceros Sutra[7] as a prelude to introduce the schoolteacher, Dunia. This Sutra echoes Subha's spirit of renunciation as it advocates "asceticism for pursuing enlightenment" (Aslam *Wasted* 211). Dunia is no ascetic, but towards the end of the book she challenges the militant, Casa, who tries to foist his worldview onto her. When Casa berates Dunia for not wearing the face veil, she defiantly replies, "Who told you that?" She rightly infers that the "source of prayer" for Casa is not "delight [but instead] fear of Allah's retribution" (Aslam *Wasted* 235). By framing

[7] A case in point is verse 17: "For pleasures are attractive, sweet, [and] captivating; with manifold forms (*they distract the mind). Seeing the danger (*in the varieties of pleasures), one should wander alone like the rhinoceros" (Salomon 107). This is reinforced in the injunction against attachment to family and friends: "They cultivate and serve [you] with a motive; friends without a motive are hard to find these days. With the mind unattached (*to this or that family), one should wander alone (*like) the rhinoceros" (Salomon 112).

Dunia's resistance to Casa through the lens of a Buddhist nun's dedication to her faith, Aslam critiques the nexus between patriarchy and fundamentalism using Afghanistan's distinctly pluralistic religious idiom.

Subha's picture, like the others in the remaining rooms, is concealed from the Taliban's view after Marcus smears it with mud; its political significance becomes clear through the hostile reactions of the Taliban to another Buddhist symbol in the novel. Adjacent to Marcus and Qatrina's home is a perfume factory where the head of a Buddha lies buried. This is most likely made in the style of Gandhara art[8] as Marcus ruminates over how the Buddha received a "human face" in Afghanistan by Greeks who endowed him with the features of Apollo. The Taliban are infuriated at the sight of the "idol" (Aslam *Wasted* 31) and fire dozens of bullets into it. Although Casa, the radicalized young man, does not belong to the Taliban, he shares their ideology as seen in his tacit approval of their decision to cut off Marcus's arm. Casa too is visibly agitated at the sight of the Buddha head, rebuking Marcus for being unconcerned about the "idol" (Aslam *Wasted* 170). When Marcus calls attention to verse 34:13 from the Qur'an[9] regarding how Prophet Solomon had decorated his caves with statues, Casa defensively says, "I don't understand why you are disrespecting the Holy Book" (Aslam *Wasted* 170).

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[8]Kurt Behrendt writes, "By the late second century BC, Gandhara's urban elite had developed a refined taste for foreign goods, which provided many of the styles, motifs, and forms that Gandharan artists would selectively recast to create an identifiably Gandharian art. . . [the earliest] artistic styles reflect contact with the Hellenistic world as well as with the Parthian and Shaka traditions" (3, 8). The location of the Buddhist head in the middle of a perfume factory might seem somewhat incongruous given the emphasis on simplicity and renunciation on part of the Buddha. However, a significant aspect of the syncretic influences that informed Gandhara art was the Greek tradition. More specifically, as Behrendt notes Dionysian imagery was an important part of Gandharan religious identity: "The prevalence at Buddhist sites of Dionysian iconography and other non—Buddhist figures probably reflects the value of the newly converted lay community, the patrons for such images, since in Gandhara and many other places where Buddhism spread, local religious traditions were commonly incorporated into Buddhist practice" (30).

[9]For verses from the Qur'an, I refer to Abhullah Yusuf Ali's translation, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an.*

Although Casa is convinced that he is being a good Muslim, this interaction shows that he is unwilling to critically engage even with the Qur'an if that unsettles his set ways of thinking.

The images in the other rooms in Qatrina and Marcus's home that illustrate certain tenets of Islam can be traced to the Chinese influence on Islamic Persian painting. Ebadollah Bahari writes that the Mongol conquest of Persia in 1258 led to a dramatic transformation in Persian painting as it ushered in Chinese influence and led to a "greater depth, dynamism, and decorative detail" (23). One of the major painters of that time whose work illustrates this shift is Ahmad-i Musa, whose innovative style, after falling out of favor for a while, influenced mid-fifteenth century artists, most notably Mawlana Wali Allah (Bahari 27). Wali's emphasis on mysticism over mimetic realism in turn influenced Bihzad (Bahari 28). Though Bihzad was a pioneering painter, this brief account of Persian art shows that his aesthetic sensibility was shaped at least partly by foreign influences. The emphasis on mysticism over mimesis is seen in the paintings in the room devoted to the faculty of smell where the paintings remind the faithful of their duties as Muslims. There are images of "angels bent down towards the feet of humans, to ascertain from the odor whether these feet had ever walked towards a mosque" (Aslam *Wasted* 10). Then there are other angels leaning "towards bellies, to check for fasting during the holy month of Ramadan" (Aslam *Wasted* 10). These could be read as visual renditions of two of the five pillars of Islam, as enshrined in hadith 1:2:7 of Sahi Bukhari: "(i) To offer the (compulsory congregational) prayers dutifully and perfectly and (ii) To observe fast during the month of Ramadan." In 1:2:50 of Sahi Bukhari, these are repeated with the Prophet's exhortation to the tribe of Abdul Qais to "convey them to the people"

they left behind. Consequently the unnamed Sufi artist trained in Bihzad's style in *The Wasted Vigil* could be regarded as an unselfconscious cosmopolitan.

The paintings in the room dedicated to hearing suggest that practices ostensibly alien to Islam are in fact intrinsic to it. The images here celebrate the musical tradition in Islam through pictures of "singers and musical gatherings" and a "lute with a songbird sitting on its neck" (Aslam *Wasted* 10). As I discuss at length in my subsequent section, although music was criticized by certain Muslim jurists for being un-Islamic, the representations here suggest that music is embedded in Islamic scriptures. Above the door that leads to the interior about hearing, there is an inscription, "*Allah created through the spoken word*" (Aslam *Wasted* 10), which alludes to the story of creation in the Qur'an as in verses 2:117, 6:73, 16:40, and 36:82. An excerpt from verse 6:73 of the Qur'an, for example, reads:

> The day He saith, 'Be'
> Behold! it is. His Word
> Is the Truth. His will be
> The dominion the day
> The trumpet will be blown.

In his accompanying notes to this verse, Abdullah Yusuf Ali explains that "His word" is the "key that opens the door of existence" and the "whole measure and standard of Truth and Right" (313). He further notes that the moment the trumpet sounds for the last day "His Judgment Seat will with perfect justice restore the dominion of Right and Reality" (313). The close link between text and image in the room dedicated to hearing suggests that these aesthetic creations do not exist as ends in themselves but to illuminate Allah's

moral supremacy. The Taliban's disapproval of this synthesis of figural and calligraphic art can be gauged by their reaction to the paintings of Qatrina.

Hybridity, Paintings, and Perfumes

The Taliban are unable to make sense of Qatrina's paintings, which she does in the privacy of her home because, much like the images in the room dedicated to hearing discussed above, she creates hybrid forms of Islamic art shaped by contact with foreign and indigenous influences. Once while visiting a patient, Marcus finds a box containing Qatrina's paintings of ninety-nine different names of Allah stolen from his home. When Marcus tries to retrieve these paintings, it leads to a public altercation following which he is hauled up by the Taliban and wrongly accused of theft. The Taliban are completely flummoxed by the paintings that synthesize traditional calligraphy with figural imagery:

> each bore one of Allah's names in Arabic calligraphy, the Compassionate One, the Immortal One—but the words were surrounded by images not only of flowers and vines but of other living things. Animals, insects, and humans. They wanted to tear out these details but couldn't because the various strokes and curves of the name took up the entire rectangle, reaching into every corner, every angle. A man slapped Marcus, expressing everyone's feeling of rage at the quandary the pictures had placed them in. (Aslam *Wasted* 179)

Qatrina's paintings follow the aesthetic principles of the illustrated book that flourished in Persia after the Mongol invasion in the thirteenth century with the Chinese influence on Islamic Persian painting (Bahari 23). Jonathan Bloom and Shelia S. Blair echo Bahari's point about the Chinese influence and add that the art of the illustrated book

received patronage from the religious Abbasid caliphate that was in power before the arrival of the Mongols (192). These books were a collaborative outcome of the artist and the calligrapher, and their shifting importance determined the relative space given to the image and the lettering. Aside from their obvious ignorance of the very traditions they claim to defend, the Taliban react negatively to an idea simply as it escapes their dichotomous worldview of Islamic and "un-Islamic" practices. Their reaction also shows the overlaps between patriarchal and fundamentalist ways of thinking. In *Religious Machismo: Masculinity and Fundamentalism,* Mark Muesse draws parallels between "dominant qualities of fundamentalism" and "elements of hegemonic masculinity" (19) Muesse notes that these ideologies are similar in their preference for reason over emotion, their fear of sexuality and the human body, and their quest for control. Therefore faith should never be based on "feeling or any subjective experience" and "mystery" but on "clearly formulated statements of truth" (91). The Taliban's decree to have Marcus's hand cut off for "stealing" Qatrina's ninety-nine paintings stems from their intolerance of subjective expressions of faith.

The hybridity of Qatrina's paintings has a secular counterpart in Marcus's perfumes, which he makes in his factory by putting things together without knowing the outcome in advance. Marcus prepares a perfume for his daughter Zameen (her name means "earth" in Hindi/Urdu) by drawing on several ingredients from across the world: "Iris—root butter from Florence. Lemon. Bulgarian rose. The wood of the Indian *oudh* tree that has been eaten by fungus . . . . the sweet—smelling putchuk of Kashmir was used in Europe" (Aslam *Wasted* 172). He also makes a trip to Bombay's famed Muhammad Ali Road to meet the suppliers of perfume raw materials where he—a

Muslim convert—is overwhelmed by the "flying and dancing forms" (Aslam *Wasted* 172) of Hindu gods and goddesses. The cosmopolitan attitude that engenders this hybridity is crystallized in the image of the container of a perfume bottle designed by Qatrina with ". . . a map of the world and the world *Zameen* acid-etched onto the glass" (Aslam *Wasted* 84). The violation of Zameen's body by Russian soldiers and religious fundamentalists is a figurative demise of the cosmopolitan ethos embodied in the objects designed after her. This collective assault on Zameen is a way for Aslam to draw equivalence between religious and political fundamentalists, a point that I will elaborate in due course.

Confining my analysis to religious fundamentalism for now, the perfume factory adjoining Marcus's home is a threat to the Taliban on two other counts. Marcus and Qatrina hire Afghan women to work in the factory, so that they can earn an independent wage. Once the Taliban take over, they declare "earning a living" "inappropriate conduct for females" that would lead to their arrest for "insubordination against Allah's will" (Aslam *Wasted* 178). After the perfume factory is shut down, Marcus and Qatrina secretly run a school with forty children sitting around the statue of the Buddha for four hours every day. The Taliban threaten to kill Marcus and Qatrina on the grounds that they had been teaching children "things other than the Qur'an" (Aslam *Wasted* 194). Though Marcus denies their accusation the first time, he fails to keep his cover on a subsequent occasion. The Taliban force the school to be closed by leveling false charges of adultery against Qatrina and thereby sabotage the act of acquiring secular knowledge by equating it with corruption of Islamic values.

Non-normative Families

Besides opening the space for entering otherness through art and education, Marcus and Qatrina's home also creates a utopian possibility for ideological foes to overcome their differences and establish filial ties. The ex-CIA agent David Town cannot extricate himself completely from his contempt for Communism, but he and the Russian guest Lara can forge links outside the ideological prism of the Cold War. Although they fail to translate their feelings for each other into a physical relationship, they are connected by personal losses. David's most significant act of embracing difference is reaching out to Casa, the militant who hates "the West." Though David knows about his identity, he takes Casa under his wing by restoring his health and building a boat with him. When Christopher Palantine's son James Palantine tortures Casa saying that he is a child of the devil who is only capable of spreading destruction, David intervenes by saying, "He is the child of a human, which means he has a choice and he can change" (Aslam *Wasted* 306). Although he tries to physically prevent Casa from embarking on a suicide bombing mission Casa resists and sets the detonator off—"the blast opens a shared grave for them on the ground" (Aslam *Wasted* 312). The formation of this non-heteronormative family of Lara, David, and Casa is a possibility that does not emerge given Aslam's acute awareness of the fragility of these bonds.

The young CIA agent James Palantine's attitude to Casa makes him a mirror image of religious fundamentalists. James's fluency in Pashto enables him to elicit information from Afghan locals, but his ability to blend in is pressed in service of his government's militarism abroad. When James talks to the young schoolteacher Dunia about American magnanimity in getting rid of the Taliban she fiercely retorts, "The Taliban regime had been in place for years and no one was particularly bothered about

getting rid of it . . . You are as bad as [Casa] is" (Aslam *Wasted* 277-8). Unlike the ex-CIA agent David Town and the Russian woman Lara, James Palantine's absolutist perspective makes it difficult for him to see individuals outside an ideological prism. Aslam's critique of Islamic fundamentalism works effectively by contrasting it with Sufism as it manifests in the domestic sphere. In the concluding portion on Aslam, I briefly analyze the continuities between Aslam's earlier novel *Maps For Lost Lovers* (which I will refer to henceforth as *Maps*) and *The Wasted Vigil* to point out the limitations of Aslam's critique of fundamentalism.

Non-religious cosmopolitanism in Maps For Lost Lovers

While in *The Wasted Vigil* the domestic sphere enables a cosmopolitan worldview through a religious idiom, in *Maps* the relationship between Islam, cosmopolitanism, and domesticity is not mutually constitutive. In *Maps,* the cosmopolitan character is Shamas who has emigrated from Pakistan to England with his family and settled in a fictional town called Dasht-e-Tanhaii. Shamas's agnosticism and proficiency in English make him the acceptable face of the Muslim community in Britain, a fact that his deeply religious wife Kaukab greatly resents. Kaukab, the daughter of a cleric, has had a sequestered upbringing and resents her husband for confusing their children with "Godless ideas" (Aslam *Maps* 34). Kaukab has deep misgivings about her children, or any young Pakistani courting non-Muslim, white women. Kaukab's children in turn resent her attempt to exercise control over them, whether about choice of vocation or whom to marry. When Kaukab berates her daughter Mah-Jabin for her failed marriage to a Pakistani and making plans to go to America, Mah-Jabin contemptuously dismisses her as an individual "trapped within the cage of permitted thing" (Aslam *Maps* 113). The

narrator attributes Kaukab's mindset to clerics who prey on the vulnerability of Pakistanis displaced from home. The space for a non-institutionalized form of Islam as a counter to Islamic fundamentalism is not as well developed as it is in *The Wasted Vigil.*

Aslam's mordant critique of custodians of Islam in *Maps For Lost Lovers* extends to *The Wasted Vigil.* The narrator in Aslam's subsequent novel is contemptuous of the "dozens of clerics—the emir, the haji, the hafiz, the maulana, the sheikh, the harat, the alhaaj, the shah, the mullah, the janab, the janabeaali, the khatib, the molvi, the kari, the kazi, the sahbizada, the mufti, the olama, the huzoor, the aalam, the baba, the syed" that routinely brainwash the militant Casa and other youngsters like him into harboring a twisted view of the world (Aslam Wasted 162). Their "lament for the lost glory of Islam" is attributed to believers for not being rigorous enough in one's religious belief and practice leading to decadence among men and disobedience in women (Aslam *Wasted* 162). Aslam's criticism of those who in his view misguide lay Muslims can be connected to his public persona as a "moderate" Muslim after September 11.

Accolades and Limitations

The publication of *Maps For Lost Lovers* and *The Wasted Vigil* earned Nadeem Aslam accolades in "the West" for his work, following which he has publicly positioned himself as a "moderate" Muslim. In an interview published in *The Asian Literary Review,* James Kidd introduces Aslam by saying, "As Hanif Kureishi gave a face to an immigrant identity in Britain amid the racist violence of the 1980s, Nadeem Aslam has emerged as a major voice on Muslim identity in the wake of the 2001 World Trade Center bombings." In public reading of *The Wasted Vigil* at the 2011 Jaipur Literary Festival in India*,* Aslam reiterated this by saying that after 9/11, he became more conscious of his identity as a

Muslim and felt people like him needed to speak to avoid his faith being hijacked by a handful of radicals. Elsewhere, Aslam talks about his response to the rise of Islamophobia in New York: "[Fellow Muslims said] leave us alone, we are decent people, we are not involved. I sympathized with that viewpoint, but these are strange times. We are involved. They involved us. Let's ask moderate Muslims to stand up and say it" (Interview by Marianne) Though this is a commendable position to take, I would like to suggest that while representing Casa's skewed thinking in *The Wasted Vigil* Aslam overreaches. As my earlier analysis shows, although Aslam shows how Islamic mysticism is grounded in scripture, his engagement with the Qur'an while trying to illustrate Casa's rigid mindset tends to be uneven.

Aslam's use of scriptural Islam in certain portions of *The Wasted Vigil* was called into question at a book reading in Lahore, Pakistan. An audience member named Khuban Omer Khan—a documentary filmmaker by profession—took exception to what she saw as Aslam's misquoting or quoting verses out of context in his book from the Qur'an. In her blog, Khan writes that she personally attended a reading of Aslam's novel where she asked him:

> Mr. Aslam, your fictional book is based in reality, it's not make believe right? And in it you have described the mindset of a jihadi. Now, an American journalist who has written a review of your book in the *New York Times* has said that 'those unfamiliar with Islam may misconstrue your characters' thoughts as being consistent with the faith.' How would you respond to this statement? Also, do you have any obligation to your

reader to present an informed fictional account or can you write anything at all without any obligation to the audience of the message's veracity?

As an illustration of Khan's concerns, Aslam translates verse 9:39 from the Qur'an as, *"If you do not fight He will punish you severely and put others in your place, said the Koran"* (*Wasted* 164). Abdullah Yusuf Ali translates 9:39 as "Unless ye go forth / He will punish you / With a grievous penalty." Importantly, Ali interprets the call to "go forth" as the "condition of all progress in the spiritual and moral, as well as in the physical world" (*The Meaning* 450). Aslam's translation certainly raises questions about his take on verse 9:39; however, unlike Khan, I would argue that this is inflected through Casa's consciousness. Khan writes, "Aslam could have written in his prologue a line or two saying he has misquoted from the Qur'an to fit the mindset of the jihadi terrorist. This way he would have separated his character's mindset from the doctrine itself." However, Khan does not take into account that Aslam signals Casa's unreliability by explicitly pointing out his selective and imperfect knowledge of the Qur'an. At the start of the novel, as Casa drives a novice to a suicide mission he begins "to read aloud verses from the Koran—not always accurately" (Aslam *Wasted* 47). Additionally, verse 9:39 from the Qur'an is situated in the text next to Casa recalling brutal acts of physical violence inflicted on him "to see if he would break under torture" (Aslam *Wasted* 164). Before I address the limitations of my line of defense, I examine Khan's other objection to Aslam's novel.

Khan takes umbrage at Aslam's narrator in *The Wasted Vigil* authoritatively declaring, "The religion of Islam at its core does not believe in the study of science, does

not believe the world runs along rational and predictable laws" (97). Khan writes:

> If you examine the context in which this paragraph was inserted in *The Wasted Vigil,* you will realize that it was unnecessarily forced in between two paragraphs. It does not seem like these are Lara's thoughts, it's seems like an objective statement. I am sure Aslam was aware of the fact that readers of the book, who do not know much about Islam, may already be oblivious to the various Arab/Muslim contributions to science. And in this way he is feeding into their bias against Islam.

The narrator's take on rationality and science does not seem to be as contrived as Khan suggests. Before this comment, Lara is unsure of what she sees outside and believes that she is merely imagining things. Lara's judgments about her environment do not follow from observable information, so this becomes a context for the paragraph on rationality and faith. Also the point about Aslam's omissions of Muslim contribution to science is untrue. After Marcus and Lara's conversation about perfumes, the narrator refers to Al-Kindi, "The Father of the Perfume Industry—as well as philosopher, physician, astronomer, chemist, mathematician, musician and physicist" (Aslam *Wasted* 192). In an interview by Raza Naeem, Aslam talks about Islam's contribution but also strikes a reflective note:

> Islam has contributed so much to the world. But it is not unique in doing that – so have the Chinese, so have the Indians, so has Hinduism. These achievements can be framed in chauvinistic terms. Did Islam give Europe

> the Renaissance? Well, yes and no. Europe was in the Dark Ages. The Greek manuscripts were in Islamic hands, and Muslims added to them. We must consider that those people who were working on some of those texts were actually persecuted by the orthodox Muslims. Al-Kindi was condemned to be hit on the head with his book, until either the book or his head broke. And he went blind. Lara and Marcus have that discussion that philosophy means going against God. So when talking about the achievements of Islam, you need to define Islam. Fundamentalist Islamists did not want any of these things to be achieved by Islam. Even in its glory days.

It would be hard to disagree with Aslam here, but the slippage between the terms "orthodox," "fundamentalists," and "Islamists" is problematic. Also though Khan seems to be overstating her case, it is fair to ask whether Aslam's candidness borders on carelessness. Broadly speaking, Khan's analysis raises questions about the circulation of certain kinds of literary discourse in contemporary times. The idea that certain issues demand a certain kind of treatment is common in ethical-political objections to polemical art. Indeed, my defense about calling attention to literary devices is characteristic of responses of such objections. The debate around Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* (1988) is a case in point. Those who rallied to the defense of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* (1988) after Ayatollah Khomeini's fatwa frequently pointed to the text's fictionality, Rushdie's use of magical realism, and the fact that references to Prophet Muhammad were framed in a dream sequence. The broader issue that Khan's comments

raise is that Aslam is writing when reductive discourses about Islam are in wide circulation in sections of "Western" popular discourse. A narrative device that signals the mind of a jihadi may not be enough to Aslam's Western readership that may consume *The Wasted Vigil* as an authoritative account of Islamic fundamentalism. Given that interpreting 9/11 texts that engage with the Muslim other sits in tension with how Islamic fundamentalism is popularly understood, Khan's concerns are valid, albeit somewhat overstated.

Khuda Kay Liye

In *The Wasted Vigil,* Marcus and Qatrina's home is a source of anxiety for the Taliban because their home engenders subversive ideas shaped by local and foreign influences. In my analysis of Shoaib Mansoor's[10] film *Khuda Kay Liye,* I extend the scope of the concept of "home" beyond the domestic sphere to include public spaces in characters' birthplaces. The film is in four languages, Urdu, Pashto, Punjabi, and English and is set in four places: Lahore and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan, Chicago, and London. There are three significant journeys to and from different points on the globe that structure the film: the protagonist Mansoor's journey from Lahore to Chicago, his brother Sarmat's trajectory from Lahore to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and their cousin Mariam's movement from London to Lahore to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The protagonist Mansoor, who travels from Lahore to Chicago to study music, is much like the "bourgeoisie and middle-class intelligentsia" in Indian novels in English whose "class location, upbringing, and national location" affords them "comfort" and "competence" in

[10] The protagonist of Shoaib Mansoor's film is Mansoor Ali Khan. To avoid confusion, I will refer to the director as Shoaib Mansoor and his protagonist as Mansoor.

the West (Jani 37). This privileged position enables him to travel to America for an education, where he marries a girl named Janie. After 9/11, in the middle of the night, Mansoor is picked up by FBI officials when a neighbor suspects him of being a terrorist and is tortured in a Gitmo-like facility before being deported to Pakistan. At the same time, Mansoor and Sarmat's British-Pakistani cousin Mariam comes to Lahore from London ostensibly on vacation with her father, Hussein Shah. However, as Mariam eventually learns, Hussein Shah, who disapproves of her "Western" lifestyle, intends to get her married off to Mansoor. When Mansoor refuses Shah's request, expressing his discomfort with the arrangement, Shah manages to prevail over Sarmat. Meanwhile, Sarmat has come under the influence of a cleric named Maulana Tahiri who preaches misogyny and hatred of all things "Western." He convinces Sarmat that by preventing Mariam's marriage to a Christian he would be furthering the cause of Islam. This precipitates the third journey when Mariam, Sarmat, and Hussein travel from urban Lahore to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (formerly known as the Northwest Frontier). Though Mariam is led to believe that she is attending someone else's wedding ceremony, she gets forcibly married to Sarmat in his friend Sher Shah's home. Though Sher Shah's home starts off as a stifling space lorded over by patriarchs, Mariam carves out an emancipatory niche for the women of Sher Shah's household by giving them an English education. The film ends with Mariam starting a school in an adjacent location and an initially resistant Sher Shah willingly bringing his daughters to study there.

Music and Islam

While *The Wasted Vigil* was about the heretical potential of Sufi art, in *Khuda*

Kay Liye music takes on an oppositional value to religious fundamentalism. Just as the Qur'an is silent over the issue of portraiture, it contains no injunction against music. Therefore the answers to the question regarding whether music is forbidden in Islam elicits different responses based on selective readings of the hadith (Shiloah 155). There is explicit objection to music in Islam present in hadith 7:69:494 B of Sahih Bukhari,[11] but in hadith 2:15:70 of Sahih Bukhari or in hadith 4:1942 of Sahih Muslim the Prophet does not prohibit two young girls from singing.[12] Moreover, in hadith 6:61:568 from Sahih Bukhari[13] the Prophet appreciatively notes that Abu Musa has been given David's winged instrument or in hadith 4:735 from Sahih Muslim[14] the Prophet exhorts Bilal to call people to prayer. I will refer to these latter hadith when I discuss the courtroom scene in *Khuda Kay Liye,* but for now I'd like to underscore the absence of consensus on the place of music in Islam.

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[11] The hadith reads as follows: "Narrated By Abu 'Amir or Abu Malik Al-Ash'ari: That he heard the Prophet saying, 'From among my followers there will be some people who will consider illegal sexual intercourse, the wearing of silk, the drinking of alcoholic drinks and *the use of musical instruments*, as lawful. And there will be some people who will stay near the side of a mountain and in the evening their shepherd will come to them with their sheep and ask them for something, but they will say to him, 'Return to us tomorrow.' Allah will destroy them during the night and will let the mountain fall on them, and He will transform the rest of them into monkeys and pigs and they will remain so till the Day of Resurrection [emphasis mine]" (Hadith online).

[12] An excerpt from this hadith reads: "Narrated By 'Aisha: Allah's Apostle (p.b.u.h) came to my house while two girls were singing beside me the songs of Buath (a story about the war between the two tribes of the Ansar, the Khazraj and the Aus, before Islam). The Prophet (p.b.u.h) lay down and turned his face to the other side. Then Abu Bakr came and spoke to me harshly saying, 'Musical instruments of Satan near the Prophet (p.b.u.h)?' Allah's Apostle (p.b.u.h) turned his face towards him and said, 'Leave them.'"

[13] The Hadith reads, "Narrated By Abu Musa: That the Prophet said to him, 'O Abu Musa! You have been given one of the musical wind-instruments of the family of David.'"

[14] As per Ibn Umar, the Prophet is believed to have said, "When the Muslims came to Medina, they gathered and sought to know the time of prayer but no one summoned them. One day they discussed the matter, and some of them said: Use something like the bell of the Christians and some of them said: Use horn like that of the Jews. Umar said: Why may not a be appointed who should call (people) to prayer? The Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said: O Bilal, get up and summon (the people) to prayer."

This absence of consensus had negative consequences for Sufi practitioners. The scholar Aman Shiloah writes, "With the emergence of the numerous mystic confraternities, the debate became increasingly heated since music and dance were doctrinally essential to the performance of the Sufi rituals, which enabled the faithful to experience religious feelings to the most effective degree" (155). This created a "paradoxical phenomenon characterizing the place and role of music in worship" as while "on the one hand, there was the absence of an official religious or Mosque music; on the other, music and dance fulfilled a prominent role in most mystic societies" (Shiloah 155). The opposition to music for ostensibly encouraging intemperate behavior among its listeners is typified in the thirteenth-century jurist Al-Jawzi's work *Deceit of Iblis.* Al-Jawzi writes that when stringed instruments are "combined and beaten together particular way, this will elate, and be made unlawful. . . . this combination (of oud and strings) causes elation which takes *one out of the normal mood,* and so it should be prevented" (308, emphasis mine). By taking one out of "normal mood," Jawzi means a state of mind that would divert the believer from the path of God. Besides this scriptural ambiguity, the attacks on music as an un-Islamic practice in Pakistan and Afghanistan are also politically motivated. I discuss the politicization of music in both countries because *Khuda Kay Liye* is partly set in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province adjoining Afghanistan to the West and North.

Music and Censorship

President Zia's Islamization program that he started in the late 1970s and early 1980s, which I have outlined in the introduction, gave upholders of puritanical Islam free rein in Pakistan with the arts becoming collateral damage. In an article titled "The

Musical History of Pakistan," Rafaya Sufi writes, "Pakistani music, as diverse as its multiethnic population, ranges from *qawwali*, a popular brand of music branched from Sufi Islam, to good ol' fashioned rock 'n' roll. It includes diverse elements ranging from music from various parts of South Asia as well as Central Asian, Persian, Turkish, Arabic, and modern day Western popular music influences" This richness meant that music did not completely disappear from Pakistan during Zia's time, but certain kinds of performances could not be openly broadcast or aired. Umar Cheema, investigative reporter for the Pakistani newspaper *The News*, writes how the music industry bore the brunt of Zia's piety drive: "Almost all musical shows on TV that involved women were banned. The mullahs had a serious problem with a brother and sister dancing together on screen. The first video [of singing sensation Nazia Hassan who died of lung cancer] that aired on TV in the early 80s was shot waist up so the audience couldn't see her dancing feet." Though Zia died in 1988 and was succeeded by others who were more tempered in their attitude to Islam, the regulation of morality by clerics continues to haunt Pakistan (Siddiqua). While *Khuda Kay Liye* is set largely after the events of September 11, part of it is set at the turn of the millennium. The film portrays the attacks on a New Years' Eve concert rehearsal in December 2000 in Lahore as having been perpetrated by mobs that are remnants of Zia's legacy. What did Zia's Islamization program do to music in Afghanistan?

The mujahedeen who fought against the Soviet Union were Zia's import to Afghanistan; their proscription of music,[15] which was further intensified by the Taliban, too, was politically motivated. Although the mujahedeen allowed songs to be sung in their honor when they were fighting the Soviets, they permitted very little music to be broadcast on television or radio after the withdrawal of Soviet troops. Musicologist and historian John Baily writes, "Professional musicians had to apply for a license which specified that they could only perform songs in praise of the Mujahideen or songs with texts drawn from the mystical Sufi poetry of the region. This effectively meant that a great deal of other music, such as love songs and music for dancing, could not be performed" (Baily 153). The Taliban passed an even stricter ban against music—except for "unaccompanied religious singing"—with punishments varying from "confiscation of goods to beating to imprisonment" (Baily 158). "The disembodied audio-cassette" and the "mock execution" of "musical instruments" (Baily 155) become the icon of the Taliban rule. Consequently music censorship in Afghanistan is not so much "nervousness about music from a religious point of view, but the ways in which music is used in relation to power" (Baily 163). After the American bombing of Afghanistan, the Taliban found safe haven across their Eastern border in Pakistan and brought their contempt for

[15] The censorship of music in Afghanistan has a longer history. In his essay "Music and Censorship in Afghanistan, 1973-2003," ethnomusicologist John Baily notes that music was always censored in Afghanistan (143) when, for instance, "the single radio station" run by the Ministry of Information and Culture in the 1940s "exercised tight control over what was broadcast" (Baily 143). On the other hand, when the Taliban imposed a ban on whatever they considered music in the 1990s, music itself was banned for reasons of "religious fundamentalism" (Baily 144). That being said, the Taliban's disapproval of music also can be traced back to their upbringing in the Afghan refugee camps in Iran and Pakistan. During Baily's trip to one such refugee camps in Peshawar, Pakistan in 1985 at the time of the Afghan-Soviet war religious authorities had banned music. One of the stated reasons was "that most of the people living in these miserable conditions had lost family members in the war and were in a perpetual state of mourning, thus making the playing of any kind of music inappropriate" (Baily 150).

the arts with them.[16] Despite these acts of censorship, Baily notes that Afghans listened to music clandestinely. Drivers played cassettes in their cars and substituted it with a Taliban sanctioned song at checkpoints; instruments were hidden behind false walls or buried in the ground; and music sessions were held in basements (Baily 158). This clarifies why the act of staging a performance or even listening to music in parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan is a political act.

Cosmopolitanism and Parochialism in Lahore

The opening of *Khuda Kay Liye* shows that the ability of Pakistani youth to comfortably inhabit a "foreign" cultural space at home is a source of concern for religious fundamentalists. At the start of the film, Mansoor and his brother Sarmat are rehearsing for a New Year's Eve concert. The scene is shot in the style of a music video with quick edits and stylized lighting. There are several sources of artificial light—spotlights, neon-bulbs, and stage lights—coupled with upbeat diegetic and non-diegetic sounds to convey youthfulness and exuberance. The energy of this scene with gyrations and vigorous arm movements is in sharp contrast to the preceding one of a mental rehabilitation facility with individuals in various degrees of confinement. Containing lyrics both in English and Urdu, Mansoor and Sarmat's song celebrates the human body:

[16] The Taliban established their base in Pakistan owing President Pervez Musharraf's (2001-8) policy to help them launch an insurgency in Afghanistan even as it was cooperating with the CIA in their war against Al Qaeda (Rashid *Brink* 50-51). Ahmed Rashid writes that the Pakistani Taliban were "local Pakistani Pashtun tribesmen who became radicalized after spending years in the company of either Al Qaeda or the Afghan Taliban and receiving generous payments for services rendered" (51). Once President Musharraf started negotiations with India, young Punjabi militants that fought previously in Kashmir were frustrated and joined the Pakistani Taliban (Rashid 53). They turned against the Pakistani state, their former paymaster, and "killed and bombed their way through Pakistan's cities" (53). Thus though the Pakistani Taliban's influence was confined to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, they extended their influence to other parts of Pakistan attacking "Sufi religious shrines in Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, and other major cities" (Rashid 149).

We will dance all night

If you can't see

Then what's the use of the world?

If you can see but you cannot love

Then what's the use of eyes?

Then see! Then see

See with your eyes' content

Hold your dear ones in your eyes

Can you feel the beat tonight? Can you feel the beat tonight?

Because everybody is flying high

Let your body move tonight

So dance with me tonight. (*Khuda*)

There is nothing particularly Pakistani or Islamic in these lyrics, and they could have been penned by any music band anywhere in the world. Mansoor and Sarmat's rehearsal is stopped by bearded youth on motorcycles with cries of "Nara-i-Takbir" ("Cry out loud") and "Allah-o-Akbar." The intrusion of visibly identifiable Muslim youth stopping Westernized Pakistani youngsters from rehearsing their music performance creates an opposition between secular and religious worlds with the director's sympathies clearly aligned with the former.

This binary of music as a signifier of cosmopolitanism and Islam as a stand-in for parochialism is reinforced in two other scenes. At one point, Mansoor and Sarmat perform a song on television. The brothers and the television presenter are all dressed in "Western" outfits, and the studio lights create a halo effect around the three of them,

accentuating their good looks. These youngsters represent the suave, urban, middle-class Pakistani youth seen in the opening scene. A few moments before this performance, a clip plays of Mansoor's family cheerfully signing a Punjabi song together in a brightly lit room. The only person out of the frame is their grandmother who is seen momentarily watching the four others with great distaste. Mansoor introduces his family saying that his parents are even bigger aficionados of music than the two brothers, but their grandmother is opposed to them singing as she is "religious." Despite her reservations, Mansoor and Sarmat's grandmother does not have the power to prevent them from pursuing their career as musicians; however, the younger brother Sarmat finds it difficult to resist another voice of skepticism that grows progressively louder.

Sarmat comes under the influence of a cleric who embarrasses him about his comfortable relationship with the "West" by representing music as an "un-Islamic" and hence a "Western" import. Maulana Tahiri, a cleric at the Wazir Khan Mosque in Lahore, is consumed with hatred for the "West" and "un-Islamic practices." He criticizes Nusaret Fateh Ali Khan, the Sufi singer also mentioned in Aslam's *Maps For Lost Lovers,* for pandering to "Westerners." He adds that if Muslims have to be respected in the "West" they cannot be singing before "Westerners" but need to be accepted on their own terms. Tahiri categorically declares that there are countless hadith that prove Prophet Muhammad's hatred for music even though, as I discuss above, there is no scriptural consensus about the legitimacy of music in Islam. Sarmat does not know any better, and several other clerics he meets confirm Tahiri's interpretation. Shoaib Mansoor juxtaposes several circular tracking shots to represent Sarmat's indoctrination by Tahiri, suggesting that Sarmat's mind is hemmed in by propagandistic discourse. Rather than feel

claustrophobic, he capitulates to Tahiri's rhetoric and, much to the dismay of his elder brother and parents, gives up music completely. Sarmat comes to resemble the very individuals who attacked his concert earlier for considering music to be un-Islamic. Over the course of the film under the influence of Tahiri, Sarmat starts to eliminate "foreign" objects and influences from his home and the public spaces in Lahore. This duality between music and Islam is challenged in two crucial scenes in the film.

Interreligious Cosmopolitanism and Scriptural Sanction

Mansoor's performance in Chicago is the finest embodiment of religious cosmopolitanism as practiced in the subcontinent, despite the likes of Maulana Tahiri. In Chicago, Mansoor introduces himself to Janie as a Pakistani Muslim, and the instructor introduces Mansoor's song as "music of Pakistan." However, Mansoor's composition "Neer Bharan Kaise Jaaon" ("How Do I Go to Fill the Water") sung in Brij (a dialect of Hindi) is a story about the Hindu mythological God, Krishna. The lyrics of the song are:

> How do I [the cowherd girl] go to fill my pot with water?
>
> My friend there is a naughty kid [Krishna] on my path, how do I go fill my pot?
>
> This naughty kid does not listen to my pleas,
>
> Oh friend, How do I go fill my pot? [17]

At the surface level, this narrative about Krishna seems removed from any religious context. It merely refers to the popular lore about Krishna as a playful and flirtatious God who would play the flute. The religious interpretation is that Krishna tells the gopi to pray

[17] I thank Megha Subramaniam for her translation and explication of these lines.

to him first before she does her daily chores. He exhorts her to take the name of the Lord and not forget that he is present in this water and the pot. In that case, Mansoor's song could be read as a prayer to a Hindu God and a violation of the injunction against polytheism in the Qur'an as in verse 4:48 for instance. [18] However, Mansoor's unselfconscious entry into otherness brings out the wide gulf between scriptural and lived traditions. Notwithstanding attempts by Muslim and Hindu purists (like Tahiri) to deemphasize cultural contacts, Islam has been shaped by and has shaped other religions in South Asia. Mansoor is an inheritor of a tradition where Muslim poets composed songs in praise of Hindu deities. The seventeenth century Muslim poet Salbeg's compositions are still sung as prayers to Lord Jagannath; the late-sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century poet Muslim Abdur Rahim Khankhana composed poems in praise of Lord Rama; the sixteenth century Muslim poet Raskhan wrote poems in Braj in praise of Lord Krishna ("Peace Facts"). Art and film critic Chidananda Dasgupta writes, "North Indian classical music is such a thorough blend of Hindu and Muslim cultures developed over 500 years, that no amount of orthodoxy in either religion can unscramble it" (qtd. in "Peace Facts"). Mansoor's entry into otherness during this performance occurs at two levels—a Muslim singing about a Hindu God and a Punjabi giving a performance in Brij. Though his performance occurs in Chicago, it is clear that Mansoor first learned this song about Lord Krishna in his hometown, Lahore. The more explicit critique of Maulana Tahiri's condemnation of music as "haram" occurs towards the end of the film.

[18] An excerpt from the Quranic verse 4:48 reads: " . . . to set up / partners with Allah / Is to devise a sin / Most heinous indeed."

The film's trial scene with competing testimonies from Maulana Tahiri and Maulana Wali emphatically drives home the point that music is not a "Western" import but wholly consistent with scriptural Islam. There is little doubt where the director's sympathies lie. Tahiri is overweight with narrowed eyes, whereas Wali, on the other hand, sports a distinguished look with a long, flowing white beard. Unlike Tahiri who speaks in a rustic accent and lives in a gloomy-looking cave, Wali speaks impeccably chaste Urdu and lives in a room with pictures on the wall and music playing in the background. Also, during the trial session, while Tahiri is asked to refrain from giving speeches and using the court as a soapbox, Wali is greeted very cordially and consistently gains nods of approval from the presiding judges and other court attendees. Tahiri repeats his message to Sarmat in court saying that painting and music are forbidden in Islam. Maulana Wali responds by saying that he has voluminous evidence to prove music's compatibility with Islam, but he confines himself to three particularly telling examples:

> God gifted four prophets with miracles: Prophet Muhammad received the Koran, Moses could part the seas with his stick, Jesus could resurrect the dead, and Prophet Dawud (David) was endowed with music. Dawud had such a melodious voice and such a command over melody and musical instruments that mountains accompanied him during his performance. Birds all over would be intoxicated. If you look at the Book of Psalms, there is a precise description of the instruments that Prophet Dawud used while singing praises of Allah. Would God have endowed Dawud with a vice to sing his praises? Would the Prophet consider music a vice and yet

> tell his wife Aisha, 'Have you sent singing girls along with the wedding procession of the Medinans?' Would the Prophet consider music as vice if he praised the companion, Abu Musa al-Ashari for his rendition of Qur'an and told him that it appears as if Dawud's harp has been placed in your throat. (*Khuda*)

In his anecdote about David/Dawud, Wali refers to verse 17:55 from the Qur'an that mentions how prophets received various gifts:

> . . . We
> Did bestow on some Prophets
> More (and other) gifts
> Than on others: and We gave
> To David (the gift
> Of) the Psalms.

The translator and commentator, Abdullah Yusuf Ali's gloss corroborates Wali's testimony: "David was given the Zabur, the Psalter or Psalms, intended to be sung for the worship of Allah and the celebration of Allah's praise." Wali's commentary about Aisha refers to hadith 940 from Al-Tirmidhi: "I had a girl of the Ansar whom I gave in marriage, and Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said, "Why do you not sing, Aisha, for this clan of the Ansar like singing?" Wali's mention of Prophet Muhammad's admiration of Abu Musa for his Qur'anic recitation is a direct riposte to Maulana Tahiri's dismissal of Sarmat's melodious call to prayer as an indulgence for street girls. Wali's testimony that draws on sacred figures and religious scriptures leaves Sarmat deeply anguished at how easily he was swayed by Tahiri's arguments. The fictional character

Wali has to convey his message to characters in the film's diegesis and a cross-section of Pakistani society watching Mansoor's film.

Wali's critique of parochialism is completely grounded in Islamic scriptures to make it acceptable to Shoaib Mansoor's primary audience. In *The Wasted Vigil,* the young, assertive schoolteacher Duniya contests Casa's distorted reading of the Qur'an by suggesting that prayer for him was rooted in fear and not delight (Aslam 235). She is the only practicing Muslim in Aslam's book, but she does not anchor her arguments in Qur'anic verses or by referring to any hadith. In fact, as I noted, Aslam's treatment of Islam's founding text is uneven. Shoaib Mansoor, on the other hand, works with a mass medium in a country where high levels of religious intolerance. In a television analysis of *Khuda Kay Liye,* Dr. Moeed Pirzada, a progressive journalist, said that Maulana Wali's testimony has "shock value." All this meant that Shoaib Mansoor had to counter Tahiri's dogmatism with liberal readings of the Qur'an. While Wali is obviously a sympathetic character, Shoaib Mansoor's representation of Muslim fundamentalism is problematic in its one-dimensional nature. As a member of the liberal, elite, Pakistani upper middle class, he does not offer compelling backstories of Tahiri or his disciples. This is also seen in Shoaib Mansoor's subsequent film *Bol* (2011) where the male patriarch, Hakim, has no redeeming aspect to him. While Tahiri's insistence on rejecting music for its corrupting influence is untenable, the director makes it too easy for his viewer to pick sides. To sum up this section, Maulana Wali's testimony gives religious sanction to a young Muslim like Sarmat to inhabit a foreign culture in a Pakistani city. In the subsequent section, I analyze how characters are cosmopolitan at home in America and how this sensibility becomes a challenge to the American government's abuse of power after September 11.

Cosmopolitanism and Parochialism in Chicago

Sarmat's older brother Mansoor's opening performance at Chicago before his cohort—which I discussed in the earlier section as an instance of religious cosmopolitanism in Pakistan—also creates a space for Americans to enter otherness at home. Mansoor's performance takes the form of call and response as his classmates spontaneously join in with their own musical instruments. The instructor who gives the nod to Mansoor's Caucasian classmate to respond to the "Pakistani" melody is African American. The instructor's predominantly white students too are unselfconsciously entering otherness at two levels; they are working with a form that has African roots and responding to a melody that has South Asian origins. This makes America a site for engendering unmanaged diversities. Just like *The Wasted Vigil,* this reading shows how while travels abroad lead to cross-cultural pollinations, they aren't a necessary prerequisite to cultivate a cosmopolitan mindset. On the flip side, this moment also posits a certain utopian multiculturalism as inherently cosmopolitan, ironing out racial tensions in pre-9/11America. These xenophobic tendencies surface after 9/11 when the space to engage with the Muslim "other" becomes constricted, and harboring a sympathetic attitude towards Islam is seen as un-American. This is the vitiated atmosphere in which Mansoor and his American classmate Janie fall in love. To bring out how Mansoor and Janie were going against the prevailing sentiment in the United States, the director Shoaib Mansoor uses the figure of the late-seventeenth- and early-sixteenth-century iconoclastic Sufi poet, Baba Bulleh Shah. Before I analyze the significance of Bulleh Shah, I examine how Mansoor positions himself as a Pakistani Muslim in his interaction with Janie.

Mansoor does not have any inhibitions about the "West," but when he goes to America he is represented more as a cultural ambassador for Pakistan and Muslims and less an individual interested in engaging with a foreign culture. Mansoor becomes a vehicle through which the director constructs Pakistan's distinctive identity to emphasize its difference from its neighbor, India. Mansoor's fluency in English enables him to confidently strike a conversation with Janie and present a history of Pakistan in her first language:

> Mansoor: Hi! Can I sit here?
>
> Janie: Why here?
>
> Mansoor: What can I say? I am spoilt. I can't eat alone.
>
> Janie: OK! So where are you from?
>
> Mansoor: Pakistan.
>
> Janie: Is that a country?
>
> Mansoor: It is. And the UN agrees.
>
> Janie: Never heard of it.
>
> Mansoor: Well I am not surprised because Americans are the worst when it comes to general knowledge. They think the world starts and ends in America.
>
> Janie: So where is your country on the globe?
>
> Mansoor: Pakistan is my country's name.
>
> Janie: Right! Pakistan! Where is Pakistan on the globe?

Mansoor: Well! Let's see. I'll just show it to you, OK? This is Iran. That's Afghanistan. That's China. That's India. And we are in the middle. Pakistan is in the center.

Janie: Oh! So you are India's neighbor. I know India. They have the great Taj Mahal. I love that story.

Mansoor: Well thank you. We made it.

Janie: Made what?

Mansoor: The Taj Mahal. You see Shah Jahan made Taj Mahal in memory of his loving wife, Mumtaz Mahal, and he was a Muslim just like me.

Janie: But why did you put it in India?

Mansoor: Well! India and Pakistan were the same country at that time. We ruled India for like a 1000 years. And we ruled Spain for like 800 years.

Janie: I wish the American Embassy knew about that. They wouldn't have let you in.

Mansoor: Why?

Janie: Because 800 years is the minimum you stay. [Janie gets up and hands him a Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan CD.] I have something for you.

Mansoor: Thank you! (*Khuda*)

This exchange raises several interesting points about how Mansoor positions himself in the "West." At home Mansoor and his parents wear their patriotism and religious identity very lightly on their sleeves, and they are deeply distressed at Sarmat's turn to fundamentalism. On one occasion, Mansoor tells Sarmat that you don't have to be a Muslim to know that gambling, drinking, and thievery are vices. However, when

Mansoor travels overseas, he explicitly announces his identity as a Muslim and a Pakistani.[19] This self-definition takes on an antagonistic turn in Mansoor's account of the Taj Mahal, which spells out the contribution of Muslims to the history of the subcontinent but is also nostalgic about Muslim rule in South Asia. Whereas this conversation establishes Mansoor's identity as a Pakistani-Muslim who is capable of confidently inhabiting the West, it is not a reflection of his openness to other cultures. In fact when Janie gives Mansoor a CD of Nusaret Fateh Ali Khan—the Sufi musician who Maulana Tahiri despises—it seems that she knows more about Pakistan than her conversation with Mansoor might suggest. Janie's subsequent actions also bear out her cosmopolitan outlook.

Baba Bulleh Shah's Heresy and Janie's Dissent

The late-seventeenth-century Sufi saint Baba Bulleh Shah's heretical worldview, crystallized in a song called "Bandya Ho," serves as a catalyst for Janie's entry into otherness. Once their friendship develops, Mansoor and Janie put together a medley of the song "Bandya Ho," which is about Bulleh Shah's relatives protesting against his audacity in transgressing caste boundaries:

> Bulla's sisters and sisters-in-law came to him,
>
> To make him see some sense.
>
> 'Listen to us, Bulla,' they said.

[19] The slippage between the terms "Muslim" and "Pakistan" can be traced back to the founder Mohammad Ali Jinnah's conflicting visions for Pakistan. Farzana Shaikh notes, "By leaving open until the very moment of independence the question of whether Pakistan would serve primarily as a homeland for Muslims without excluding others or whether its sole purpose was to exist for Muslims *over* all others, Jinnah contributed to the ambiguity of the new state" (46). This has had particularly devastating consequences for religious minorities in Pakistan. However, for a wealthy Muslim from Lahore like Mansoor, there is no difficulty in reconciling these contradictions.

Leave the hands (company) of wanderers and wayfarers.

You're from the proud clan of Nabis (a tribe),

Why then are you tarnishing its name?

Those who call us beautiful and worthy,

Often have dirty motives behind their smiles [Refrain]

Here and there, everywhere,

Even God makes some mistakes.

You discarded those who were your own.

And have embraced outsiders.

If it is only gardens and flowers that you seek,

Go become a slave to wanderers and wayfarers!

Nobody will ask which race or clan you're from,

Go become a slave to your desires! [Refrain][20]

In this song, Bulleh Shah's relatives urge him to distance himself from his teacher, who belonged to the gardener's caste. As proud members of the "Nabi" clan, they regard "outsiders" like wayfarers and wanderers, like Bulleh Shah's teacher, with contempt. In "The Life of Bulleh Shah," J. R. Puri and T.R. Shangari write, "All of Bulleh Shah's compositions are suffused with love and gratitude for his Master. In this love he identified his Master, Inayat Shah, with the Lord." Owing to his iconoclasm, Bulleh Shah had "to suffer the taunts and ridicule not only of men of his religion, clan and caste, but

[20] These lyrics have been translated from Punjabi by Mahan Singh Sekhon.

also of all members of his family." Commenting on Bulleh Shah's place in the history of the subcontinent, writer Kartar Singh Duggal notes, "What seems to have irked Bulleh Shah, and for that matter his contemporary mystics the most, was the widening gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims of the day." Consequently Bulleh Shah emerged as a fierce critic of custodians of religion and their hypocrisy. His contempt for peddlers of morality is summed up in an excerpt from an unnamed poem attributed to him:

> Lumpens live in the Hindu temples
>
> And sharks in the Sikh shrines.
>
> Musclemen live in the Muslim mosques
>
> And lovers live in their clime. (qtd. in Duggal)

In another poem attributed to Bulleh Shah, he urges his listeners to discard "rituals and ceremonies" saying, "Burn the prayer mat, break the water pot, / Quit the rosary and care not for the staff" (qtd. in Duggal). Janie may not be aware of Bulleh Shah's background, but her willingness to sing along with Mansoor and, more significantly, commit herself to a long-term relationship with a Muslim in post-9/11 America suggests that she embraces Bulleh Shah's iconoclastic worldview.

Just like *The Wasted Vigil,* in *Khuda Kay Liye* the arts are a catalyst for individuals that are ostensibly meant to be civilizational foes to come together in the domestic space, only to be tragically separated. Despite the fact that Janie encounters anti-Muslim propaganda on the streets and that she runs into Mansoor's anxieties about their cultural differences, she remains committed to their relationship. A few days after September 11, during Janie's first visit to Mansoor's apartment she brings a pamphlet

that reads, “It is written in the Koran: Christians and Jews cannot be trusted. Do jihad and kill them” (*Khuda*). Janie confronts Mansoor with the pamphlet, asking him if it is true:

> Janie: I just thought that is why you were avoiding a commitment.
>
> Mansoor: No. It’s not the religion. It’s the culture. The fact is maybe that I have more feelings for you than you have for me. But I don’t say them because there is no point. We are two different people from two very different cultures.
>
> Janie: So what? The mixing of two different wines could result in a very beautiful new flavor. What’s the problem in looking ahead for a change?
>
> Mansoor: I am. I am looking ahead. You are the one who is not. . . . . look Janie, I know. You don’t say it, but I know. You stopped drinking. You’ve quit smoking because of me. And who knows tomorrow, you may cover your legs. This chain of compromises is going to go on and on and on, and one day you will just get sick of me.
>
> Janie: And what if I don’t? Suppose I am that crazy girl who thinks that nothing is more important than compromising for your relationship. I hate that phrase, ‘I am like that. Take me or leave me.’ I think it is ‘shit.’ Nothing would make me happier than doing what I could for the one I love. Unless of course I thought my man was taking me for a ride. Then I would kill him.
>
> Mansoor: What about kids? Won’t we have kids?
>
> Janie: Of course. As many as you like.

> Mansoor: Yes, but what would be their names? Muslim names or Christian names? What culture would they belong to? And most importantly, what faith would they follow? Christian faith or Muslim faith?
>
> Janie: But you forgot something. When they die, would they be buried the Muslim way or the Christian way? . . . . And when they go to heaven? No, our kids would never go to heaven. When they go to hell, would it be a Muslim hell or a Christian hell? . . . . You have no right to insult my feelings and feel like I am begging you to marry me. I am not. (*Khuda*)

Mansoor's awareness of the difference between cultures holds him back. Although he initiates Janie into the pluralistic traditions of the subcontinent, he spells out its real-world limitations. Janie, on the other hand, seems more open to uncertainties that inevitably come along with new experiences. She understands that marriage requires compromise and is willing to meet Mansoor halfway to make their relationship work. Janie's personal choice also has political ramifications as she refuses to accede to the demands of the American nation state. After Mansoor is captured by secret police in the middle of the night, there are shots of Janie protesting outside with a few other people holding placards. These brief shots speak volumes about Janie's willingness to resist post-9/11 Islamophobia and the director's awareness of how all Americans are not complicit with empire. Cara Cilano offers an incisive reading of the protest scene arguing that it is a critique of the transformation of the American public sphere. "The absence of dialogue" and Janie "throwing down her sign" for Cilano is a "fundamental breakdown of democracy" (Cilano 209). This makes "post-9/11 US as a self-colonizing state, replete

with the authoritarian and patriarchal power that has historically made Western colonial endeavors" (Cilano 210). My analysis shows that the germ for these protests in *Khuda Kay Liye* begins in the private sphere.

Islamophobia in America

Despite Janie's principled stance against Islamophobia, she finds little sympathy among some of her fellow citizens. Janie's sympathetic view of a cultural "other" is in contrast to the attitude of Maninder, Mansoor's Sikh neighbor, who is in deep anguish over the murder of another member of his community, Balbir Singh Sodhi. This is particularly disconcerting given that Mansoor and Maninder's first encounter as Punjabi-speaking men has been one of camaraderie with a strong current of a shared *Panjabyat:* "This term of recent coinage, roughly translated as Panjabi identity, refers to the cultural heritage, the social practices, the values shared by all Panjabis, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, Indians, Pakistanis, and increasingly the diaspora. It is heavily loaded with nostalgia for pre-partition undivided Panjab [sic], idealized as a unique space of communal harmony" (Moliner). However, after 9/11, Mahinder's affection for a fellow-Lahore native evaporates as he shares the visible markers of Muslim identity, a beard and a turban. One evening, Maninder launches a tirade against Mansoor in Punjabi: "You do terrorism, and we pay the price. What was the fault of Balbir that he had to be killed for being mistaken as a Muslim? He was a dear friend. What was his fault? That he sported a beard! They tell us to shave off our beards. Why should we shave off our beards and give up our religion?" (*Khuda*). When Janie implores Maninder to stop, he turns around and says, "You are innocent lady. You don't know anything. He is one of those terrorists while he is enjoying his life with you. Is this American justice? He is fu$%ing

Americans, and Americans are f^&king us" (*Khuda*). A neighbor who witnesses this altercation promptly calls the federal authorities, who whisk Mansoor away in the middle of the night. This visceral fear of Muslims finds an institutional counterpart in the response of the American security state.

The film portrays the post-9/11 heightened fear of the Muslim "other" in how Mansoor is systematically broken down by his interrogator.[21] The earliest introduction to the interrogators makes their dominant position very clear as we only see shots of their trousers and shoes. This dominance is accentuated by their ability to break into Mansoor and Janie's home unchecked and whisk him away in cuffs. The first interrogation room is shot in high contrast with a green light to create an intimidating atmosphere. Apart from the dimly lit rooms, the interrogator's accomplices have expressionless faces and are dressed in black. The atmosphere of secrecy is heightened in the second, undisclosed location by tracking shots of a barbed fence and jail bars. Shot in extreme close-ups to indicate his mental and physical trauma, Mansoor feels terribly disoriented through all these proceedings as he is shoved around and shouted at for reasons he completely fails

[21] Shoaib Mansoor's representation of Mansoor's torture is borne out by the actual treatment of detainees in Guantanamo. Joseph Marguiles writes that "the detentions were never meant to produce criminal charges. Any given interrogation may have produced evidence of a crime, but that was not their primary purpose. The detentions were preventive. As a result, the great majority of prisoners were held for months but never charged with any wrongdoing" (24). The model of a successful interrogation contemplated "prolonged, potentially permanent incarcerations, characterized by isolation. . . secrecy. . . .and control" (Marguiles 27). This indefinite detention was fueled by intense pressure by an American administration keen to produce results. In the National Geographic documentary *Inside Guantanamo Bay*, George W. Bush administration official Bradford Breneson said, "I think everybody believed there were other attacks on the way, and so there was really desperate effort to gather intelligence as quickly as possible and to learn of it beforehand." Furthermore, this was unfamiliar territory for the interrogators given their ignorance about Islam and Muslims. Donald Woolfolk, who supervised the interrogators in 2002, said, "What we were getting into the detention facilities were individuals totally different background, culturally different background whose languages we don't speak and don't understand. We'd get in guys who are religious fanatics, motivated by a religion that most of us didn't study, didn't appreciate, didn't have a background in" (*Inside)*.

to understand. While the interrogator is self-assured in his role as a protector of the state, Mansoor is shackled and looks deeply petrified at the comments and questions being bombarded at him. The complete breakdown of communication between the American state and Muslims is seen in the interrogator's inability to read signifiers of Muslim identity. Mansoor, like other Muslims, wears an amulet that encloses a piece of paper containing Koranic verses. The act of wearing an amulet—called "Taweez"— in Islamic is a debatable subject. The Taweez consists of a large square or rectangle which is further divided into little squares with each square having either a part of Quranic verses in Arabic or alternatively Quranic verses converted into their "Abjad numerical value." The interrogator sees the grid-like pattern as a model of a city and the number 9 and 11 as proof of Mansoor's complicity in September 11. He also cannot come to terms with the fact that Mansoor can read Arabic without knowing what it means. The interrogator and Mansoor read signs very differently; for one it forms a link to his home and for the other it signifies a threat to his own. Mansoor's religious identity suffices for the officer to brand him as a threat.

Shoaib Mansoor also draws parallels between Mansoor's American tormenters and Maulana Tahiri's henchmen. One of Mansoor's interrogations in an American prison ends with him being slapped across the face and the interrogator saying, "You kill in God's name! And you lie in his name too. Bastard" (*Khuda*). The film then cuts to cries of "Allah O Akbar," and we see Maulana Tahiri goading young men to do jihad. The parallel between the interrogator and Tahiri is even more obvious at the end of the trial scene. At the same time that Mansoor is being tortured, Sarmat is beaten up by Tahiri's

disciples. In both cases, the civil liberties of young Muslim males are usurped by ostensible custodians of the law.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that in Nadeem Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil* and Shoaib Mansoor's *Khuda Kay Liye* a cosmopolitan act is constructed as heresy by religious fundamentalists who follow orthodox practices. Aslam in *The Wasted Vigil* and Mansoor in *Khuda Kay Liye* both use Sufi figures who were either establishment figures or iconoclastic at the time in their formulation of a resistant religious idiom. The Sufi painter Bihzad and the Sufi poet Baba Bulleh Shah play key roles as important figures who remind Aslam and Mansoor's audiences respectively that Islam was characterized by openness and dissent against orthodoxy. While fundamentalists are nostalgic about a pristine past, by representing tradition as a contested terrain, creative writers show the messiness of the past. My reading of Aslam's novel and Mansoor's film extends the argument advanced by Black, Mohanty-Talpade, and Spyra that cosmopolitan actions couched in a religious idiom can manifest at home. In my section on *Khuda Kay Liye,* I analyzed how Janie publicly dissented against the arbitrary arrest of Mansoor by her government. This act of political antagonism, seen briefly in the film, will become more central in my subsequent chapter, particularly in my analysis of Kamila Shamsie's novel *Burnt Shadows* (2009).

Chapter 3: The Global South and the American Empire in Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows* and Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I interrogated the commonplace assumption that travel is a prerequisite to cosmopolitan encounters. Through my analysis of Nadeem Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil* and Shoaib Mansoor's *Khuda Kay Liye,* I demonstrated how individuals in rural and urban centers in Afghanistan and Pakistan are either as cosmopolitan or as parochial as those living in Chicago or London. Also in my reading of these texts, I focused on how characters' engagement with otherness antagonizes religious neo-fundamentalists wedded to orthodox Islamic practices. In this chapter, I do a comparative analysis of two novels, Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows* (2009) and Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007). This chapter too focuses on characters that connect across geographical and cultural divides, but these connections defy the parochialism of empires rather than that of religious neo-fundamentalists. In *The Wasted Vigil,* Marcus Caldwell's journey from Afghanistan to England and back disrupts the conventional trajectory of characters from "third-world" metropoles to "Western" cosmopolitan centers. My attention to cosmopolitanism in this chapter also challenges this unidirectional movement of characters; however, I give more emphasis to journeys between and within locations in the "global South." This chapter argues that in *Burnt*

Shadows and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist,* key characters that begin by engaging with otherness mostly out of self-interest or in the service of power end up forging relationships within the Global South that antagonize empires.

Empire and the Global South

The first section of Shamsie's book is set in Nagasaki as the Japanese Empire[22] is in decline. In the portion of the novel set in Karachi, Hiroko compares the Islamization of Pakistan to wartime Japan where "devotion" was a "public event, as national requirement" (Shamsie 147). The American empire[23] features more obliquely in *Burnt Shadows* as Shamsie critiques the step-motherly treatment of Third Country Nationals (TCNs) by American-based military contractors. Her view of "the American Empire" can be gleaned from her essay titled "The Storytellers of Empire." Shamsie comments that many South Asian and South American countries have faced U.S.-backed coups and sanctions and have had their countries treated as client states. She writes, "America may not be an empire in the nineteenth century way which involved direct colonization. But the neo-imperialism of America was evident to me by the time I was an adolescent and able to understand these things." The American Empire features explicitly in Hamid's

[22] One of the key influences in legitimizing Japanese imperial rule from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries was the nativist "kokugau" (National School) of Tokugawa times. The "kokugau" believed that the "Japanese imperial family was due the highest rank above all the rulers of the world, since only they had descended from the (Japanese) divinities as described in the old sources" (Antoni 56). This led to an ideology of Japanese Exceptionalism—"kokutai" (national essence)—to forge a united "folk state out of a heterogeneous populace," create grounds for "expansionism," and "frighten off potential internal or external opponents." This "mystical, mythical community" would be projected onto "the figure of the emperor as the father of the national extended family" (Antoni 58).

[23] See introduction for detailed discussion of this term

The Reluctant Fundamentalist as the character-narrator Changez spells out that finance[24] is "the primary means by which the American empire exercised its power" (Hamid 156).

In the inaugural issue of the journal *Global South,* Alfred J. Lopez articulates his understanding of this term:

> What defines the global South is the recognition by peoples across the planet that globalization's promised bounties have not materialized, that it has failed as a global master narrative. The global South also marks, even celebrates, the mutual recognition among the world's subalterns of their shared condition at the margins of the brave new neoliberal world of globalization. . . . . [C]entral to any understanding of the global South is the idea of a global subaltern that increasingly recognizes itself as such. Such a project calls for a postglobal discourse that offers a glimpse into the marginalized subjectivity and agency of, in the terms of Mariano Azuela's classic novel of the Mexican revolution, "los de abajo"—those who have experienced globalization from the bottom. The global South, in short, is about those who live under what [the economist Joseph] Stiglitz rightly calls 'global governance without global government': people far removed from the machinations of power and wealth, people who are

[24] In his book *When Corporations Rule The World,* David Korten writes that predatory capitalism has diluted the influence of governments and strengthened that corporations and financial institutions. The sweeping power of large U.S. corporations makes them "dominant governance institutions on the planet" penetrating governments and policy circles (Korten 60). Tellingly, Korten traces this predatory character of gigantic corporations to large "merchant companies of 15th and 16th century England and Holland" (60). These companies were "limited liability, joint stock companies to which the crown granted charters that conferred on them the power to act as *virtual states* in dealing with vast foreign territories" (60, emphasis mine).

> impacted by the policies of world organizations but have no chance at all to respond and be heard. (Lopez 21)

Lopez defines the Global South less as a geographically contiguous location and more a shared condition of oppressed peoples. Lopez's sweeping critique of globalization as a complete failure overlooks how it is leveraged by groups to escape their marginalized status.[25] Furthermore, he does not adequately observe the tensions between different communities within this rubric. In his article in the same issue titled "Global South: Predicament and Promise," Arif Dirlik cautions against the romantic idea of imagining an undifferentiated Global South without its inner divisions. Dirlik notes that the entanglement of the North and the South and vested interests in the latter impede "autonomous development" within the confines of "global capitalism" (16). Dirlik's note of caution is particularly relevant to my analysis of Shamsie and Mohsin's works that contain points of contact between "subalterns" without glossing over the class, linguistic, and geographical particulars that make it challenging to achieve solidarity. In case of *Burnt Shadows,* the Global South includes war-time refugees[26] and third-country

[25] In his article "Two kinds of Globalization," the Indian historian Ramachandra Guha contrasts modest, middle-class Indian youth who benefited from the IT revolution in Bangalore with mineworkers in Bellary (also in the state of Karnataka) who are paid less than the minimum wage for working in iron mines that yield extraordinary profits to mining lords. Another group of vocal supporters of globalization in India are dalit (low-caste) intellectuals like Dr. Narendra Jadhav and Chandraban Prasad. In a lecture titled "Markets and Manu: Economic Reforms and Its Impacts on Caste in India," Prasad argues, "Capitalism, like caste, is a social order and therefore uniquely qualified to subvert and destroy the caste system from the inside, as opposed to the State, which is a political order and intervenes in the caste society from the outside" (2). He goes on to argue that the market is "essentially a cultural package which is capable of confronting and dismantling old cultures. The market culture ushers in a new regime of aspirations" (Prasad 16). Guha and Prasad's claims, of course are arguable, but they certainly complicate Lopez's assertion that globalization is a failed narrative.

[26] The United Nations High Commission for Refugees website reads, "Pakistan hosts over 1.6 million registered Afghans, the largest and most protracted refugee population in the world. Since March 2002,

nationals that travel in inhumane conditions,[27] whereas in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* it refers to workers in "developing nations" rendered poor or jobless through globalization and victims of America's war on terror. These are clearly groups with distinct concerns, and I do not wish to downplay their differences. At the same time, my analysis of their representation by Shamsie and Hamid will reveal sufficient overlaps so as to include them under this term.

The Global South features in contemporary debates on "cosmopolitanism from below." In his article "Guru English," Srinivas Aravamudan writes that the reputation of cosmopolitanism suffered sometime after 1968 owing to the "decline of internationalism" and its repudiation as a "bourgeois, Western, or delocalized aesthetic aspiration, outmoded and tone-deaf to contemporary realities" (19). After a spell of extreme relativism, there was a strategic compromise between globalization and localization leading to a "'glocalization' of uncertain consequence" (Avaramudan 19). This led to a "newly cautious cosmopolitanism" that attempted to "rebuild and pluralize cosmopolitanism from below,"[28] which has since acquired different labels (Avaramudan

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UNHCR has facilitated the return of almost 3.8 million registered Afghans from the country. As of October 2012, UNHCR had assisted over 62,000 refugees to return to Afghanistan in 2012."

[27] In a superb piece of investigative journalism in *The New Yorker* titled "The Invisible Army," Sarah Stillman tracks women from Fiji who were initially promised jobs in Dubai by a local recruiting agency but in reality "were bound for U.S. military bases in Iraq . . . . The expansion of private-security contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan is well known. But armed security personnel account for only about sixteen per cent of the over-all contracting force. The vast majority—more than sixty per cent of the total in Iraq—aren't hired guns but hired hands. These workers, primarily from South Asia and Africa, often live in barbed-wire compounds on U.S. bases, eat at meagre chow halls, and host dance parties featuring Nepalese romance ballads and Ugandan church songs. A large number are employed by fly-by-night subcontractors who are financed by the American taxpayer but who often operate outside the law" (1).

[28] One of the earliest theorists to have taken this direction was Arjun Appadurai. In "Cosmopolitanism From Below: Ethical Lessons from the Slums of Mumbai," which builds on his earlier works, Arjun Appadurai writes about the alliance of housing activists in Mumbai and their global networks. Their cosmopolitan practices are seen in events that combine "festivity, learning, dialogue and solidarity-building

19). Avaramudan writes, "This grassroots version of cosmopolitanism—one that migrant workers,[29] tourists, and refugees[30] participate in as equally as transnational executives, academics, and diplomats—exists alongside die-hard cosmopolitanisms of the old kind, featuring Kantian projectors, World Bank economists, and religious universalists" (Avaramudan 19). This chapter advances the current conversation on "cosmopolitanism from below" by analyzing characters whose entry into otherness starts off by being nonthreatening—which in some cases includes complicity with empire—and culminates in solidarity that threatens power.

I situate this chapter in the context of Harleen Singh's essay "Insurgent Metaphors: Decentering 9/11." Singh argues that while popular representations of the "terrorist" tend to be reductive, 9/11 Pakistani texts like *Burnt Shadows* and *The*

[where] women (and men) from different cities and regions encounter each other." Their discussions include "hopes about domestic space, their experiences with different building materials and techniques, their practices of savings and credit, and more generally their hopes for permanent housing and political security in their streets and cities" (Appadurai 38). Though these activists have roots in Mumbai they evolved a "collaborative relationship" (Appadurai 33) in the early 1980s and 1990s they "developed links with an important movement of slum-dwellers in South Africa as well as in Nepal, the Philippines, and Thailand" (Appadurai 33).

[29] In "Working Class Cosmopolitans and the Creation of Transnational Ethnic Worlds," Pnina Werbner demonstrates how it is possible to be "a working-class cosmopolitan" (20). She gives the instance of the "Gulf highway" as one along which "many different nations, meet and interact, getting to know one another in the intimate context of work side-by-side" (23). Physical labor creates "close encounters between people from different nationalities, and results in an *esprit de corps*, a collective sentiment of interdependency" (23). This in Werbner's view is more than just a transnational culture as "technical know-how, cultural knowledge and the forging of cross-national social relationships are acquired on site, in the relatively neutral context in which almost everyone is a foreigner" (23).

[30] Peter Nyers floats the concept of "abject cosmopolitanism" that he defines as the "emerging political practices" and "enduring political problematics" of refugees and immigrant groups that resist their situation. Nyers asks what does "situated universalism" mean for "abject migrants" given that their "situatedness" is displacement (1072). Nyers complicates Bonnie Honig's argument in *Democracy and the Foreigner* that foreigners can play a vital role in creating political communities. Their wide civic participation would lead to a democratic cosmopolitanism that would "widen the resources and energies of an emerging international civil society to contest or support state actions in matters of transnational and local interest" (qtd. in Nyers 1076). Nyers points out that Honig excludes from consideration the "abject-foreigner" ("the deportee, the failed asylum applicant, the overstayer") etc. Nyers asks can these abject foreigners also contribute to the cosmopolitan character of democratic spaces in the global north and if so under what circumstances.

Reluctant Fundamentalist rearticulate this figure through nuanced depictions of "the disempowered refugee, the disenchanted immigrant, and the dissident citizen" (26). Singh writes that the character Raza Ashraf, the son of Hiroko Tanaka-Ashraf, in *Burnt Shadows* and the character-narrator Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* reject "first-world" privileges, like American citizenship for instance, by "rooting or rerouting" through the "postcolonial nation" (42). It is this "national consciousness" about their Pakistani identity—and not "nationalism" a.k.a. Frantz Fanon—that gives characters in Shamsie and Hamid's texts "an international dimension" (Singh 40-41). In the first section of this chapter, I further Singh's argument about Shamsie's nuanced depiction of certain "third-world" migrants in *Burnt Shadows* by focusing more directly on the character of Raza. I depart from Singh's reading of *Burnt Shadows* as an example of cosmopolitanism rooted in national consciousness and suggest instead that unlike Hiroko Tanaka-Ashraf, her son Raza has no sense of belonging to a fixed place—his "situatedness is displacement" (Nyers 1072). This is crucial as Raza's statelessness makes him both more threatening and vulnerable to Empire. In my analysis of Hamid's novel, I highlight his use of the Gothic genre and Changez's unreliable narration more than Singh does. Changez's unreliability, I suggest, is key to understanding the limitations of his transformation from a well-heeled Pakistani immigrant in the United States to an ostensible threat to the American Empire.

I focus on Changez's trajectory not only because it is central to Hamid's novel but also because it has strong parallels with Raza's journey in *Burnt Shadows*, a point that Singh does not develop in her essay. Changez, a recent college graduate, is about four years older than Raza when he runs away from home to join the mujahedeen. Changez

lives the American Dream, and Raza too is briefly under the impression that he will have a shot at an American university education. While Changez and Raza are both comfortable inhabiting other cultures, each one has an epiphany that his cultural competence has been coopted by powerful "first world" institutions that create divides in the "third world." Subsequently, both Changez and Raza give up their privileged connections and join ranks with individuals that, broadly speaking, constitute the Global South.

Burnt Shadows

Kamila Shamsie's novel *Burnt Shadows* is bookended by the bombing of Nagasaki on August 9, 1945 and the war on terror after September 11, 2001. Shamsie charts multiple trajectories of two families that are forcibly displaced through these and other seismic events. She uses Prophet Muhammad's flight from Mecca to Medina as a recurring motif to tell a tale of cross-cultural friendships and betrayals. The novel is set principally in four different locations, namely Nagasaki, Delhi at the time of undivided British India, Karachi, and New York City. The principal focalizer of the cataclysmic moments in the novel is a peripatetic Japanese-Pakistani Muslim woman, Hiroko Tanaka-Ashraf. The novel begins by sketching Hiroko and her German lover Konrad's brief romance in Nagasaki during the Second World War. Their affair comes to a tragic end on August 9, 1945 with the dropping of the second atomic bomb. After a brief sojourn in Tokyo, Hiroko moves to Delhi to live with Konrad's sister Elizabeth and her brother-in-law, James Burton. Hiroko and Elizabeth cultivate a lasting friendship, and during a trip to Mussoorie in the Himalayas she marries her Urdu teacher, Sajjad Ashraf. A couple of years later, the partition of British India prevents Hiroko and her husband, Sajjad Ashraf,

from settling in Delhi, after which they move to Turkey and eventually settle in Karachi, Pakistan. Thirty-five years later, Sajjad reconnects with Elizabeth and James Burton's son Harry, who is working covertly with the CIA. The joy of this reunion is also short-lived. Sajjad is killed by a rickshaw driver, who, owing to his association with Harry, suspects him of having links with the CIA. After Sajjad's death, both Hiroko and her son Raza leave Pakistan for America. Before this departure, Raza embarks on an adventurous journey to the mujahedeen camps with his friend, Abdullah, who is a refugee from Afghanistan living in camps in Karachi. Although at first Raza passes as a member of Afghanistan's minority Hazara community, his identity is eventually discovered, and he is forced to leave the camps. He is plagued with guilt at the thought of betraying Abdullah. Two decades later Raza and Harry find themselves working side by side for a private military contractor along with third-country nationals. Raza is wrongly implicated in Harry's murder in Afghanistan by his superior Steve, who suspects Raza of being close to the Taliban. Meanwhile, Raza is contacted by his friend Abdullah's brother, who wants him to find a way of getting Abdullah out of the United States. Raza manages to prevail upon Harry's daughter Kim, a structural engineering student at NYU, to smuggle Abdullah from New York City to Canada. Once Raza realizes that he is a marked man, he endures a hazardous trip by land, sea, and air so that he can reconnect with his mother in Canada. The novel ends with Raza meeting Abdullah and helping him successfully flee while turning himself in to law enforcement authorities. The novel's epigraph suggests that Raza is captured and detained in a Guantanamo-Bay-like facility.

In the opening section of the novel, Shamsie reveals how cosmopolitanism is a source of anxiety for votaries of the Japanese Empire. Hiroko falls in love with Konrad

chiefly owing to her extraordinary felicity with languages. Their professional relationship in which she helps him translate Japanese letters for a book on Nagasaki's "cosmopolitan world" soon blossoms into a romance (Shamsie *Burnt* 12). One of Konrad's pleasures is lending Hiroko books in German and English from his library and seeing the different expressions of delight with which she greeted different writers and poets. Once Germany starts to lose in the Second World War, Hiroko and Konrad's romance starts to threaten functionaries of the Japanese Empire. Despite being fired from a school that saw no need for children to learn "a foreign language," Hiroko continues to be open about her love for Konrad (Shamsie *Burnt* 14). Unsurprisingly, one of the consequences of the August 9 bombing of Nagasaki is the demise of language. Shamsie inserts a blank page after the bombing to convey the impossibility of describing the horrific scenes after the bomb falls. Hiroko reveals history's wounds first to her Urdu teacher and soon-to-be husband Sajjad at the Burtons' residence several months later after she flees to New Delhi. After refusing Sajjad's hand in marriage, she reveals the burns on her back:

> She had stepped out of the shadow of the roof's overhang and into the harsh sunlight so there could be no mistaking the three charcoal-coloured bird-shaped burns on her back, the first below her shoulder blade, the second halfway down her spine, intersected by her bra, the third just above her waist . . . .
>
> "You can read this diagonal script, can't you? Any man could. It says 'Stay away. This isn't what you want.'" (Shamsie *Burnt* 92)

The "three charcoal-coloured black-shaped burns" (Shamsie *Burnt* 92) has an analeptic reference to Konrad's purple notebooks containing accounts of Nagasaki's

cosmopolitanism. Just as Japanese and German cemented Hiroko and Konrad's ties in Nagasaki, Urdu lessons frame her romance with Sajjad. The scorched birds on Hiroko's back, which have the potential to sever their relationship, are symbolic of the demise of cosmopolitan worlds owing to the violent actions of belligerent states.

The Need to Belong

Raza inherits his mother Hiroko's penchant for mastering languages, but unlike her antagonistic relationship with the Japanese Empire, Raza's ability to inhabit many worlds is initially non-threatening. Raza too displays his mother's talents. Once after Hiroko asks Raza what he wants to do, he replies, "I want words in every language . . . I think I would be happy living in a cold, bare room if I could just spend my days burrowing into new languages" (Shamsie *Burnt* 148). At that point, Hiroko thinks to herself, "To her, acquiring language was a talent, to her son it was passion" (Shamsie *Burnt* 148). A few moments before Raza confesses to Hiroko he sees a billboard with a message in Urdu that he instantly translates into four languages—"a reflexive response to any piece of writing he glimpsed as he drove through the city's streets" (Shamsie *Burnt* 148). During Raza's first meeting with Harry, another polyglot, he responds in English to Harry's question in Urdu and with a sense of "muted pride" tells his surprised guest that he is fluent in Japanese, German, Urdu, and Pashto. When Raza accedes to Abdullah's request to teach him English, he fondly reminisces how "all the tenderest of his recollections of childhood were bound up in his mother's gift of languages to him—those crosswords she set for him late each night when he was growing up, the secrets they could share without lowering their voices, the ideas they could express to each other in words particular to specific languages" (Shamsie *Burnt* 203). Raza's ability to explore

many worlds through languages is circumscribed in the familial space and so is not a threat to power.

Despite Raza's ability to blend in, unlike Hiroko, he is marked as "other" owing to his mixed heritage with the result that he downplays his linguistic competence. Once after boarding his school bus in Karachi, Raza does not call out to his Japanese mother, "sayonara," unlike his other friends. He thinks to himself, "Why allow the world to know his mind contained words from a country he'd never visited? Weren't his eyes and his bone structure and his bare-legged mother distancing factors enough?" (Shamsie *Burnt* 141). When his schoolteacher compliments him for fitting in easily in a class of older boys, he attributes it to his "studied awareness" of how to "downplay his manifest difference" (Shamsie *Burnt* 141). Only after Raza flees with Abdullah, an Afghan refugee in Karachi, to the mujahedeen training camps does Hiroko realize the magnitude of her son's identity crisis. Although Raza displays a "hunger to possess the languages of different tribes, different nations," she fails to understand "her son's need for belonging" (Shamsie *Burnt* 226). Ironically, Raza's cosmopolitanism ironically makes him terribly lonely, and he speaks Japanese in the "privacy of his home" (Shamsie *Burnt* 141).

While Hiroko's historical consciousness binds her to the victims of September 11, being thrust into history alienates Raza from other Pakistanis. Besides Raza's hybridized identity that makes him a misfit, he is also singled out for being the son of a "hibakusha"—a surviving victim of the atomic bomb. After her marriage to Sajjad, Hiroko suffers a miscarriage in 1948; she is terrified of what "her radiation-exposed body would do to any children she tried to bear" (Shamsie *Burnt* 135). The narrator vividly describes Hiroko's struggle with her past:

> In the first years after Nagasaki she had dreams in which she awoke to find the tattoos gone from her skin, and knew the birds were inside her now, their beaks dripping venom into her bloodstream, their charred wings engulfing her organs.
>
> But then her daughter died, and the dreams stopped. The birds had their prey.
>
> They had returned though when she was pregnant with Raza—dreams angrier, more frightening than ever before, and she'd wake from them to feel a fluttering in her womb. But then Raza was born, ten-fingered and ten-toed, all limbs intact and functioning, and she had thought he'd been spared, the birds were done with her. (Shamsie *Burnt* 226)

These lines speak to Hiroko's trauma years after a virtual dismemberment of her body. Though she feels she has moved on, the radiation poisoning caused by the atomic bomb has consequences for Raza. His girlfriend Salma rejects his hand in marriage out of fear over his "deformity" (Shamsie *Burnt* 226). To Raza's despair, Salma remarks that although he seemed physically fine, his children could show signs of radiation poisoning. She advises him to "go to America" and not tell "anyone there the truth" (Shamsie *Burnt* 192). Although Hiroko chooses to be an iconoclast, no one questions her link to Japan; for Raza, on the other hand, laying claiming to his Pakistani heritage proves elusive. Raza thinks of himself as a "failure" and a "bomb-marked mongrel" (Shamsie *Burnt* 199). Sajjad expects Raza to become a lawyer, but relations between father and son become strained after Raza fails his Islamic studies paper twice. His momentary hopes of studying in America are dashed after he realizes that Harry, who is visiting them in

Karachi, cannot guarantee him admissions to American universities as he initially thought.

Escaping from the Past

Raza's subsequent friendship with Abdullah, an Afghan, is shaped by his need to escape his past. There are two layers to Abdullah and Raza's relationship. At one level, Raza and Abdullah's relationship is about an urban-middle class Pakistani teenager who makes friends with an Afghan nomad living in slum, and at another, it is about a Pashtun-Afghan who welcomes a Hazara[31] into his life. Abdullah lives in Sohrab Goth, a village on the outskirts of Karachi that houses nomads from Afghanistan. Over time it becomes Karachi's "informal sector" with laborers and smugglers contributing the bustling port city (Shamsie 198). When Raza first goes to Sohrab Goth to get a good deal on a radio his consciousness of being a middle-class teenager entering a slum is apparent. His "fastidiousness" almost makes him turn around as he makes his way "gingerly through the narrow unpaved lanes and the stretch of a rivulet of water [that] announced itself as sewage" (Shamsie 199). He wonders about the "sanitation" of the place as a man walks past him with "two buckets filled with brackish water" (Shamsie 199). Raza's middle-

[31] "The Hazaras are one of several ethnic groups inhabiting Afghanistan. Today they may be found living in regions throughout Afghanistan, although the majority still inhabit[s] the areas of Central Afghanistan traditionally inhabited by them and known as the 'Hazarajat.' . . . . They are Muslim and Shi'a in the majority. They speak Farsi, though with their own particular accent known as 'Hazaragi' dialect. Their ethnic origins are as yet uncertain and under debate, despite their obvious *Turko-Mongloi* features [emphasis mine]." Though they are the second largest Afghan ethnic group "as a consequence of the discriminatory and segregationist policies of ruling Afghan or Pashtun governments, they remain politically, economically, and socially the most underdeveloped group in Afghanistan society" (Mousavi xiii). In *Hazaras: Afghanistan's Outsiders,* Phil Zabriskie traces the outsider status of the Hazara community to the 1890s: "Armed with fatwas from Sunni mullahs who declared Hazaras infidels" a Pashtun king named Abdur Rahman launched "anti-Hazara pogroms in and around Hazarajat" driving thousands of Hazaras away from their homes (3). Subsequent Pashtun rulers left the Hazaras "physically and psychologically" confined (3).

class gaze comes through as he perceives bare wires in the slum as "fissures in the sky, revealing the darkness beyond" (Shamsie 199). His only way of navigating the "maze of homes" either of mud or jute or sackcloth is to repeat "Abdullah . . . the truck with the dead Soviet" (169). At one point in their conversation, Abdullah surprises Raza by asking him if he went to school because "it had never occurred [to a middle-class Pakistani boy] that someone might imagine him to be uneducated" (Shamsie 200). Despite these initial reservations, Raza feels accepted by the inhabitants of Sohrab Goth. Before his departure for the mujahedeen camps with Abdullah, his Afghan students present him with mementos, including "handwritten notes in English, a tiny Quran, a pair of woollen socks, a clump of soil from Afghanistan, a decorative porcelain shoe" (Shamsie 216). Despite the genuine affection that Raza feels towards Abdullah, the fact is that he assumes a false identity while befriending Abdullah. With the trickling in of Afghan refugees into Pakistan at the time of the Soviet-Afghan war, Raza is mistaken for being a Hazara. Though he gets singled out for his "foreign looks" by his peers in Karachi, he blends right in when he steps into Sohrab Goth, also stumbling into a doppelganger (Shamsie 199). Abdullah is initially skeptical of Raza and wonders, "Since when are Hazaras and Pashtuns brothers?" (168). Raza wins him over when he says, "Since the Soviets marched into our house and we both had to escape through the window, that's since when Hazaras and Pashtuns are brothers" (168). Raza can keep up his masquerade as Abdullah has sworn to reveal nothing about himself until he drives the last Soviet out and Abdullah's tacit understanding that Raza would do the same. Notwithstanding the deep animosity between Pashtuns and Hazaras, an unsuspecting Abdullah welcomes Raza into his life. Once when he returns to the slum after an eight-week hiatus, he is

greeted without "recrimination from Abdullah" and "only a broad smile of delight" (213). Over the course of several months, Raza is content to live a dual life with his Afghan persona, where he goes by Raza Hazara, compensating for the failures of his Pakistani-Japanese life, where he is known as Raza Ashraf. The revelation of Raza's true identity coincides with the death of his anxiety-stricken father, Sajjad. Raza holds himself responsible for the betrayal of Abdullah and the death of his father. Subsequently, to escape his father's memory and his mother's grief, Raza flits from one location to another, learning several languages on the way.

Cosmopolitanism and Militarism

Raza's attempt to escape his past leads to his indirect complicity with power, specifically the militarism of the American Empire. Nearly nineteen years after Sajjad's death in Karachi, Raza finds himself working for a private military corporation in Pakistan under Harry Burton—the son of Elizabeth and James Burton—amidst Third Country Nationals (TCNs) from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka translating from Urdu to Bengali to Tamil. Raza takes on the alias of Raza Konrad and becomes an enigma for the TCNs he converses with as they are unable to identify his nationality. He works directly under Harry Burton, who, like Raza and Hiroko, is also a polyglot; however, despite his outward charm like Christopher Palantine and James Palantine in *The Wasted Vigil*, he is a loyal vassal of the American Empire. Harry joins the CIA in 1964 driven by an ideological hatred for Communism. He admits to himself that while he still cares about America's victory it has very little to do with justice or poetry (Shamsie 176). The narrator notes, "In Harry's mind, there was a map of the world with countries appearing as mere outlines, waiting to be shaded in with stripes of red, white and blue as

they were drawn into the strictly territorial battle of the Afghans versus the Soviets in which no one else claimed a part" (Shamsie 206). After Raza's father Sajjad is killed, Harry feels surprised by his guilty feelings, considering he is able to shrug off "other things" that fly in the face of "standards of ordinary, little-picture morality" (Shamsie 246). When at one point Raza asks Harry if he felt certain lines could not be crossed during torture, Harry replies, "What wouldn't I do if it was effective? . . . Almost nothing. Children are out of bounds, rape out of bounds, but otherwise . . . what works, works" (Shamsie 289). He adds, "When I'm dead, Raza, and my daughter asks you what kind of man her father really was, don't tell her I said that" (Shamsie 289). After Sajjad's death, "Harry Uncle" serves as Raza's surrogate father. And even when Raza sees through the private military company's inhuman practices, Harry prevails on him to stay on.

Raza witnesses the ugliness of empire when he is thrust on the other side of the war on terror (Singh 36). The xenophobia of empire is seen in the deep contempt with which Harry's colleague, Steve, regards third country nationals (TCNs). Steve comments to Raza: "But [unlike the other TCNs] you don't need the pay-cheque, Raza Ashraf of Karachi and Hazara. You're not *one of the grunts* who know their positions can be filled by a million other *desperate rats* if they mis-step even slightly" (Shamsie *Burnt* 310, emphasis mine). Besides, Steve consistently misreads malevolent intentions into actions that he does not grasp. Once when Raza is driving in a Humvee past a mosque the sight of the blue sky makes "him get out of his Humvee and prostrate himself on the ground as the muezzin's call wheeled across the plain" (Shamsie *Burnt* 266). Steve, who is flying overhead in a helicopter, notices this and later expresses his alarm to Harry, asking, "It really doesn't bother you—in this time, in this place—that he's found religion?"

(Shamsie 286). Steve's misreading of signs is also seen when Harry is killed by an unnamed guard when he is playing cricket with the TCNs, including Raza. Raza simply holds his hand for a ball that Harry is about to toss, but Steve reads this as Raza signaling an unnamed gunman to shoot. Overnight, the "translation genius" turns into yet another suspect who is in bed with America's enemies (310).

Raza and The Global South

Raza becomes a potential security threat once he establishes ties with foreigners on the "wrong side" of the war on terror. Hiroko tells Raza at one point that as he was responsible for taking Abdullah to the mujahedeen camps he should locate him and get him out of there. In Afghanistan, Raza's efforts to reconnect with Abdullah puts him in contact with a former ally turned foe of the American Empire, a mujahedeen commander. When Raza learns that Abdullah was living illegally in America he asks Harry's daughter Kim to get him out of the country. Unknown to Raza, Steve learns about some of these developments and accuses him of not having any allegiance to anyone and colluding with the Taliban. Raza realizes that one call from Steve would suffice for his name to enter "data banks" with the "markers of his daily life" used as incriminating evidence (Shamsie 314). Despite Steve's threats, Raza quits the private military contractor, Arkwright and Glenn, and is determined to make up for what he perceives to be his betrayal of Abdullah.

This experience turns out to be a literally and symbolically transformational one for Raza as he turns his back on his duplicitous life and learns to embrace his identity as the son of Hiroko Tanaka-Ashraf. In his book *Other Worlds,* John Timmerman writes that the pattern of birth and rebirth is "symbolized in literature by a descent into a cave or tunnel of the earth" (27). This archetype, according to Timmerman, suggests a "dying to

this world in order to regain clear insight of an absolute reality which will give new direction and patterns for growth in the temporal world. By undergoing the mythic rebirth, the individual is radically changed or reborn" (Timmerman 27). Raza leaves the Afghan compound through a "narrow and musty" tunnel and emerges an hour later into a roofless structure. Moments later, he discards both his passport and green card that make him "legal" and feels the "terror of unbecoming" (Shamsie *Burnt* 314). This action could also be read as Raza's commitment to a condition of non-statehood. Though Raza tactically avoids crossing the border into Pakistan for fear of being caught by the CIA and their friends in the Pakistani intelligence, this action also suggests that his country of origin (or his adopted homeland) cannot provide him with succor when he most needs it. Timmerman writes that the idea behind this pattern of birth and rebirth is "by seeking a primitive origin one finds the place of true beginning and thereby is born" (27). Though Raza destroys all vestiges of his connection with Pakistan and America, he is determined to reconnect with his mother: "It was as if everything in this world had disappeared in a flash of light and only she remained—a beacon, a talisman, a reason to *run somewhere instead of just running*" (Shamsie *Burnt* 328, emphasis mine). The phrase "flash of light" suggests a parallel with Hiroko's own journey to Delhi after she lost Konrad in the Nagasaki bombing; however, while she flees her birthplace, his journey is precisely to fill the vacuum of home. After Raza's escape when a policeman mistakes him for a Hazara, Raza immediately corrects him saying, "No. I'm not Afghan" (Shamsie *Burnt* 324).

At the time of Raza's ensuing journey with the destitute away from the gaze of the American Empire, he develops kinship with other characters in the Global South. Raza travels by road, water, and air from Afghanistan to Pakistan, Pakistan to Iran, Iran

to Muscat, and Muscat to Canada, where he hopes to meet Hiroko. The leg of the journey from Iran to Muscat pushes Raza to the precipice as he is squeezed into a "tiny space between one man and the next and his voice was part of the sigh—of hopelessness, of resignation—that rippled through the hold" (Shamsie *Burnt* 342). Raza's transnational journey as a fugitive from the American Empire is a clear example of what cosmopolitanism signifies for different classes of individuals. As an employee of a private military contractor, Raza can comfortably use his skills to be at home in the world, but while undertaking "the journey of the destitute" (Shamsie *Burnt* 336), he is afraid to open his mouth, as he would gag from the stench around him. At one point, Raza thinks to himself that while he had effortlessly entered conversations with TCNs around campfires in Afghanistan, "it had never occurred to him how much wretchedness they each had known" (Shamsie *Burnt* 343).

On this occasion, he engages in deception out of a selfless motive to help Abdullah. After reaching Canada, when Raza gives himself up to save Abdullah, he shows both an undiminished capacity to enter otherness and recognition of another's need to belong. Raza's first action after the long journey is to secure an air passage for Abdullah to Afghanistan, so that he does not have to travel under wooden planks in the ship. Abdullah is struck by this, and he comments, "your first thought when you reach safety is how to help a friend you haven't seen in twenty years, and this is the part of your story you say the least about" (Shamsie *Burnt* 357). Raza makes an even bigger sacrifice in posing himself as Abdullah after Harry's daughter Kim sends police officers after him. After the police capture Raza, he forbids Kim from disclosing his identity. Though Raza's move turns out to be a miscalculation—in the book's prologue Raza is seen in a

cell—his capacity to atone for his earlier betrayal of Abdullah at the cost of his personal freedom makes him a deeply admirable character. Despite his worthy actions, Raza realizes that his actions are more pragmatic than heroic (Shamsie *Burnt* 363), and he deflates romantic notions of exile. In "Reflections of Loss," Edward Said lays this out very eloquently:

> Exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience. It is the unhealable rift forced between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted. And while it is true that literature and history contain heroic, romantic, glorious, even triumphant episodes in an exile's life, these are no more than efforts meant to overcome the crippling sorrow of estrangement. The achievements of exile are permanently undermined by the loss of something left behind forever. (137)

Hiroko the Moral Center

I'd like to conclude the section on *Burnt Shadows* by examining Hiroko's perspective on empire, as she is the moral center of Shamsie's novel (Singh 34). In *Before Reading,* Peter Rabinowitz notes that writers create expectations about characters at the start of the narrative through particular devices. For instance, characters' physical and verbal characteristics stand for their moral qualities. Readers assume that, in the "absence of evidence to the contrary" one moral quality is linked to the "presence of another that lies more or less contiguous to it"—be it trustworthiness, kindness, or meanness (Rabinowitz 89). Shamsie establishes Hiroko as the novel's moral compass in the opening pages itself. The first clue about Hiroko's high ethical quotient is her observation that war changed Nagasaki by distilling or distorting everything into "its

most functional form" (Shamsie *Burnt* 7). Shamsie builds the reader's trust in Hiroko by showing her sensitivity to the brutal reconfiguration of the landscape through war. In the absence of any signal to the contrary, this puts the reader in a frame of mind to accept her judgments on other individuals and institutions.

Hiroko's judgments on empire, just like on war, have an axiomatic status in *Burnt Shadows.* Hiroko is unsure what to expect when at Raza's behest she has to meet Abdullah. She cannot find the boy who drew her son into a "life of violence" but only a "man who understood lost homelands and the impossibility of return" (Shamsie *Burnt* 319). A few moments later, when Abdullah and Hiroko are walking on the streets of New York City, he "bodily lift[ed] up a drunk who was weaving towards Hiroko and [set] him down again, out of her path, with a quick pat on the shoulder" (Shamsie *Burnt* 320). Hiroko "sees his entire character in that gesture," probably that he is gentle even towards someone who wishes to cause bodily harm (Shamsie *Burnt* 320). Abdullah's backstory of separation and goodbyes with his loved ones makes her want to cry. In this context, Hiroko and Kim have a testy exchange after she turns Abdullah over to the police for suspecting him of being a terrorist. As Kim transports Abdullah to Canada in the back of her truck, their conversation on the way takes an uncomfortable turn. The breaking point occurs when Abdullah says that all those who kill infidels in Afghanistan are martyrs. When Hiroko confronts Kim over her actions she says, "I'm sorry, but it wasn't Buddhists flying those planes, there is no video footage of Jews celebrating the deaths of three thousand Americans, it wasn't a Catholic who shot my father. You think it makes me a bigot to recognize this?" (368). Hiroko retorts,

> Should I look at you and see Harry Truman? . . . You just have to put them in a little corner of the big picture. In the big picture of the Second World War, what was seventy-five thousand more Japanese dead? Acceptable, that's what it was. In the big picture of threats to America, what is one Afghan? Expendable. Maybe he's guilty, maybe not. Why risk it? Kim, you are the kindest, most generous woman I know. But right now, because of you, I understand for the first time how nations can applaud when their governments drop a second nuclear bomb? (Shamsie *Burnt* 369-70)

Kim's sense of heightened suspicion towards people of a certain religious and ethnic background is characteristic of a sentiment that was and continues to be shared by a section of mainstream American society after 9/11. The most disturbing aspect of her behavior, as Hiroko points out, is how she rushes to judgment about someone whom she barely knows. Hiroko does not castigate her for disagreeing with Abdullah, but for dehumanizing him on the basis of sketchy knowledge. In "The Storytellers of Empire," Shamsie comments on how people who questioned their government were considered un-American:

> September 11 brought this question: why do they hate us? It's hard to remember this now, but it was a question asked loudly and genuinely, maybe not everywhere, certainly not by everyone, but by enough people. It was asked not only about the men on the planes but also about those people in the world who didn't fall over with weeping but instead were seen to remark that now America, too, knew what it felt like to be attacked. It was asked, and very quickly it was answered: they hate our

> freedoms. And just like that a door was closed and a large sign pasted onto it saying, "You're Either With Us or Against Us." Anyone who hammered on the door with mention of the words "foreign policy" was accused of justifying the murder of more than three thousand people.

The Reluctant Fundamentalist

In Mohsin Hamid's novel *The Reluctant Fundamentalist,* the character-narrator Changez Khan narrates the account of his journey to an unnamed American from Lahore to New York City and back. Straight out of Princeton, the twenty-two-year-old Changez lands a job with a prestigious valuation firm called Underwood Samson and dates an attractive American woman named Erica. His brilliant performance in the company is noticed by his superiors, most notably by the managing director, Jim. Changez soon rises up the corporate ladder and literally and figuratively has the world at his feet. On his first day at work, the view from the offices of Underwood Samson in midtown New York affords him tremendous power, and he thinks of himself "not as a Pakistani, but as an Underwood Samson trainee" (Hamid 34). In the immediate aftermath of September 11, Changez is able to keep his professional life distinct from ongoing political events. However, once the war on terror begins he starts to resent America for its invasion of Afghanistan and its support for India and hostility towards Pakistan. A business visit to Valparaiso, Chile, seals his disenchantment with the world of global finance as he begins to see how it often provides the economic muscle for American belligerence overseas. After September 11, his relationship with Erica also starts to falter as the attacks bring back memories of her former lover Chris. Despite several attempts to bring Erica around and after abruptly quitting Underwood Samson, Changez returns to Pakistan to galvanize

young Pakistanis to stand up to acts of American aggression. The unnamed American narratee's identity is withheld, but there are suggestions that he is an emissary sent to warn or even kill Changez after he publicly condemns America over Afghanistan and Iraq. The book's ending hints at a violent confrontation between the narrator and the narratee without clarifying either one's precise motives. At the start of this chapter, I referred to the American Empire and corporate empires as distinct entities, but in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* the line between the two blurs.

The narrative structure of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is the key to understanding the author Mohsin's view of Changez's transition from a pro-establishment to an anti-establishment cosmopolitan. Changez is looking back on events in his life in the United States that occur in the inner frame from his vantage point in Lahore in the outer frame. I would suggest that Changez's narration has at least two purposes. The first is to articulate his conflict between seeking kinship with the cosmopolitan elite on the one hand and the Global South on the other. The second objective is to unsettle his unnamed narratee. Furthermore, Mohsin Hamid's purpose in constructing Changez as an unreliable narrator is to examine the limitations of his antagonism to the American Empire. I first examine the conflicting cosmopolitanisms in the novel.

Changez's intellect and eloquence make it possible for him to comfortably inhabit elite circles in the United States, but coming from a family with declining fortunes he is conscious of being an outsider. Changez is among "the best and brightest" of Pakistani society studying in Princeton on complete financial aid (Hamid 4). He distinguishes himself at Princeton with straight A's and is on track to graduate *summa cum laude.*

Changez's interviewer, and soon-to-be mentor at Underwood Samson, Jim, notes how he is "polished and well-dressed" with a "sophisticated accent" (Hamid 8). As his girlfriend, Erica's "official escort," he comes to believe that he was destined to "[rub] shoulders with the truly wealthy in such exalted settings" (85). Although his love for Erica is genuine, when he comments that "Erica vouched for my worthiness," he also seems to consider her as a badge of honor (85). At the same time, Changez, like Mansoor in *Khuda Kay Liye,* belongs to an elite section of Pakistani society with declining fortunes. Changez is conscious of the relative affluence of his classmates and "quietly . . . [held] down three . . . jobs—in infrequently visited locations" on campus (11). He resents how "freely" his classmates part with their money and have an air of "self-righteousness" about them (21). Changez's perceptive boss, Jim, notices this when the new recruits are driving in a limousine to his house in the Hamptons and remarks, "'You are a watchful guy. You know where that comes from? . . . It comes from feeling out of place'" (42). Hamid also signals his narrator's position as an outsider poised to realize the American Dream by giving a nod to F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby.* Changez conveys his impression of Jim's property by remarking, "The party was being held at Jim's house in the Hamptons, a magnificent property that made me think of *The Great Gatsby*" (43). In his essay on the genesis of the novella, "My Reluctant Fundamentalist" Hamid writes that he wanted to tell a story that "for the first one third" was "deceptively familiar, a tale of the . . . American Dream."

Cosmopolitanism and Global Finance

Changez seamlessly blends into America's corporate world, which he sees in hindsight is superficially diverse. Changez has an epiphany about Underwood Samson's controlled diversity:

> Two of my five colleagues were women; Wainwright and I were non-white. We were marvelously diverse . . . and yet we were not: all of us, Sherman included, hailed from the same elite universities—Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, Yale; we all exuded a sense of confident self-satisfaction; and not one of us was either short or overweight. It struck me then—no, I must be honest, it strikes me *now*—that shorn of hair and dressed in battle fatigues, we would have been virtually indistinguishable. (Hamid 38)

It speaks well of Underwood Samson's meritocratic culture that some differences do not matter, but particulars are effaced to the point of rendering the other identities invisible. Changez also hints at a connection between the militaristic and economic wings of Empire, thereby suggesting that the corporate world also demands conformity in service of a particular goal. In an article in *The Harvard Business Review* entitled "Cosmopolitan Corporation," Pankaj Ghemawat offers detailed strategies on how companies should immerse themselves in foreign cultures on a sustained basis to respond to local needs. At the same time, he points out that it is significant to be able to manage diversity as the mere addition of "foreigners" will not make a company more cosmopolitan, and "unmanaged diversity" has negative effects on group performance. For Ghemawat openness to foreign peoples and cultures is not a virtue in itself but needs to be developed in service of furthering profit. This managed diversity is noted by Jennie Molz, who

argues that competition among cities to attract global capital creates a "homogenized heterogeneity" where "cultural differences are identified and appreciated, but then appropriated in ways that diminish those differences or marginalize them in relation to global modernity" (Molz 39).

Consciousness of Difference

During his trip to Manila in the Philippines, Changez finds that he has to choose between his loyalty to his financial corporation and developing links with the Global South. As a Pakistani employee of Underwood Samson in the Philippines, Changez develops different relationships with locals. Changez is "terribly excited" to fly first-class to Manila and thinks of himself as a "veritable James Bond—only younger, darker, and possibly better paid" but feels less smug when he sees that Manila with its "glittering skyline" and "walled enclaves for the ultra-rich" is wealthier than Lahore or Karachi (Hamid 64). He compensates for this perceived inferiority by acting and speaking more like an American, particularly by avoiding his deferential tone towards his Filipino seniors to gain his "share of that respect" (65). Besides his assignment, to value a recorded-music business, makes him feel "enormously powerful . . . knowing [that his] team was shaping the future" (66). Changez's performance of a "first-world" corporate identity by escaping his "third-world" background is not always successful. Once while driving in a limousine Changez encounters a hostile stare from a Filipino jeepney driver. When Changez turns to answer his unnamed American colleague, he grows conscious of how "foreign" his colleague looks. Though he forgets this incident after one night, in that moment he feels close to the Filipino driver rather than his American colleague. The jeepney driver belongs to the same class as the workers whom Changez's team might fire

to downsize the company. Though Changez cannot fully identify himself with his American colleague, he is resented by a member of the Filipino working-class for his visible proximity to power.

The aftermath of September 11 and America's step-motherly treatment of Pakistan make Changez conscious of his difference with the result that he asserts his identity as a Pakistani Muslim over collective allegiance to his corporation. In the above paragraphs, I discussed Changez's consciousness of being an outsider. Though Changez appreciates the meritocracy at Princeton and Samson Underwood and American society at large, he resents the haughtiness he sees among some of the Americans he meets. At a dinner with Erica's family, her father asks, "But the elite has raped that place well and good, right? And fundamentalism. You guys have got some serious problems with fundamentalism" (55). Changez bridles at her father's comments, which are true but said with "its typically *American* undercurrent of condescension" (55). This is why on 9/11 Changez smiles at the sight of a superpower being brought to its knees. He is unable to sympathize with the victims of the tragedy and can only "feign shock and anguish" (74) that he sees on the faces of his American colleagues. For a while he ignores the "partisan and sports-event-like coverage" [32] of the war in Afghanistan (99) and the rumors of

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[32] The consumption of war as entertainment by American audiences has been widely commented on. This first occurred with Operation Desert Storm during the first Persian Gulf war following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. In her article "Watching the War: Viewers on the Front Lines," Caryl Rivers talks about her viewing experience: "The technology of entertainment television has blended with the techniques of news coverage to the point where they are virtually indistinguishable. At least two of the network war logos, with their desert sand colors, look at first glance like the one for 'Lonesome Dove,' the CBS mini-series. Once, as we switched away from the real good-guys-bad-guys drama to a rerun of 'Miami Vice,' the similarity was obvious. The action show and the networks' quick-shot montages, with jets roaring and missiles firing and crewmen running across the deck of a carrier, had exactly the same pace."

Muslim profiling in the weeks and months after the attacks (95). However, once American troops invade Afghanistan he finds himself rooting for his neighbor and fellow Muslim country. This anger grows after his trip to Pakistan at the time of the Indo-Pakistan nuclear standoff, [33] and Changez is angry at his inability to do anything for his country. He also shares the sentiments of his fellow Pakistanis who resent America for not taking their side against India. Peter Morey notes that *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is about "the impossibility of maintaining [a] globalized, post-political identity position as the forces of resurgent nationalism develop" (143). Consequently though Changez does not recall his "precise motivations" for sporting a beard when he returns to America, he knows that he does not wish to "blend in with the army of clean-shaven youngsters who were [his] coworkers" (Hamid 130). Changez's action has invited diverse commentary. Morey remarks, "He *does* undergo a political awakening, but this has nothing to do with some atavistic hostility to modernity, instinctive recoiling from western materialism and immorality, anger at global capitalism, or any of the other default positions attributed to Islamic radicals by western politicians and media" (139).

[33] This is a highly abbreviated account of a more complex chain of events that was immediately provoked by an attack on the Indian Parliament on the morning of December 13, 2001. Changez does not exaggerate the magnitude of the Indo-Pakistan nuclear standoff when he says how it dominated the conversation at his family banquet. In a lengthy article in *The New Yorker* titled "The Stand Off," veteran journalist Steve Coll sums up the crisis: "some Indian and Pakistani military officers and civilian officials I spoke to say that the 2001-02 war scare was their Cuban missile crisis—a confrontation that came so close to catastrophe that it shocked both sides into a new approach to nuclear deterrence, one that is grounded in military restraint, political patience, and negotiations about underlying grievances." Changez's point about the Pakistani feeling of having been let down by America is also borne out by Coll. Coll writes, "[The Pakistani president] Musharraf and his generals felt that the United States was treating them unfairly after the January 12th speech. As Colonel David Smith—[the US Army attache in Islamabad] recalled, the generals would complain, 'We are the only ones that [America] can rely on in order to get these guys in Afghanistan—you can't do it without our help, and we're helping you in every way we can. You're putting tremendous pressure on us, and you're doing nothing on the Indian side.'" For a more detailed account of the various players and their diplomatic machinations see Coll.

Echoing Morey, Matthew Hart and Jim Hansen suggest, "[Changez's] commitment, such as it is, is not to a religion but to the fundamentals of shame and anger . . . The politics that emerges from these emotions is basically nationalist" (509). I would add to these insights by saying that Changez's beard is a symbolic protest against the tribalism he encounters in the American workplace, cloaked in the veneer of cosmopolitanism.

Changez and the Global South

Changez's symbolic protest is followed by a realization of his complicity in the nexus between American corporatism and militarism that has wrought havoc on the Global South. Changez's encounter with Juan-Bautista, a Chilean poet, reminds him of his complicity with the "officers of the empire" (Hamid 152). Changez does not have to downplay his Pakistani identity to strike a friendship with Juan-Bautista. In fact, the Chilean poet looks up Changez's uncle's name in an anthology available in Spanish after learning that he was a poet in Punjab. Juan-Bautista narrates the history of the janissaries to Changez: "They were Christian boys . . . captured by the Ottomans and trained to be soldiers in a Muslim army. . . They were ferocious and utterly loyal: they had fought to erase their civilizations, so they had nothing else to turn to" (151).

Juan-Bautista also observes what Erica appreciates about Changez, that he is conscious of his roots. He says, "The janissaries were always taken in childhood. It would have been far more difficult to devote themselves to their adopted empire, you see, if they had memories they did not forget" (151). Juan-Bautista's words strike a chord with Changez because they speak directly to the confusion and turmoil that he is going through. By helping him draw links between the disruption caused by global capital and the war on terror, Juan-Bautista helps him see what he had already begun to see, namely

that his work as an analyst did not afford him a 360-degree view of the world. Instead by forcing him to look at minutiae, it created a compartmentalized worldview. Once Changez returns to the offices of Underwood Samson, he is "unconstrained by the academic's [or] "professional's various compulsions to focus . . . on parts" and instead takes in the whole (157). Juan-Bautista's words force him to confront the truth that he was on the wrong side of the global divide. He says to himself, "Of course I was struggling! Of course I felt torn! I had thrown in my lot with the men of Underwood Samson, with the officers of the empire, when all along I was predisposed to feel compassion for those, like Juan-Bautista, whose lives the empire thought nothing of overturning for its own gain" (152). This sentiment also connects Changez with groups he felt no particular sense of connection earlier. Changez's return from an outpost of empire makes the hierarchies in the "first world" clear. Once he goes through airport security he sees how "traditional" empire looked with "armed sentries" manning check posts and "a charioteer [from the] serf class" to presumably transport his luggage (157). He thinks of himself as no more than an "indentured servant" who was dependent on his employer. This is at complete odds with Changez's earlier sentiments where he imagines a world of horizontal links. Hart and Hansen are therefore only partly right when they say that *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* exposes "the limits of cosmopolitan space" (507). Instead, I have argued that Mohsin privileges "cosmopolitanism from below" over a cosmopolitanism that is complicit with power.

Changez's experience at Valparaiso is also significant as it exposes the hollowness of rootless cosmopolitanism with no allegiance to a particular people or community. At Juan-Bautista's behest, Changez visits Pablo Neruda's home located in a

poor neighborhood with a "compact and beautiful" home "reminiscent of a boat jutting out over the bay" (Hamid 146). Though geographically removed, in spirit Changez feels that it is "an imaginary caravan ride " away from Changez's hometown, Lahore. Neruda's home symbolizes permanence and fixity, which Changez comes to realize he lacks at that point. He attributes his failure to communicate with Erica owing to the lack of "a stable core"—"I was not certain where I belonged—in New York, in Lahore, in both, in neither—and for this reason, when she reached out to me for help, I had nothing of substance to give her" (148). Though Changez is conscious about his past, he downplays aspects that potentially inhibit his entry into the mainstream. In the days and months after September 11, Jim notices Changez's agitated state of mind rightly guessing, ". . . it's your Pakistani side. You're worried about what's going on in the world" (120). Changez gets instantly defensive: "'No, no,' I said, shaking my head to dismiss any possibility that my *loyalties could be so divided*" (120, emphasis mine). Changez's desire to maintain an outward loyalty in his professional workplace leads to a denial of his self. At the end of his encounter with the Filipino driver, Changez says, "I felt I was play-acting when in reality I ought to be making my way home, like the people on the street outside" (67). Changez's masquerade to further his career spills over to his relationship with Erica. Despite her silence, he is so overcome with his desire for her that he takes on the identity of her dead lover, Chris and annihilates his being. If "Underwood Samson has the initials US" and "Erica [is] a symbolic correlative of her country – Am/Erica" (Morey 140), then it could be argued that Changez's need to be accepted in America comes at the cost of his Pakistani identity. The trip to Valparaiso, Chile, has two related consequences for how Changez situates himself in relation to the rest of humanity.

He feels kinship with individuals from the global South and, after visiting Neruda's home and being reminded of Lahore, develops a heightened consciousness of his Pakistani identity.

Changez's decision to leave Underwood Samson and advocate for Pakistan's autonomy is much like Raza's departure from Arkwright and Glenn (Gamal 10). Though Changez and Raza both feel safe in their borrowed identities, these do not insulate them from prejudice, be it at airports in case of the former or in a private organization in case of the latter. More importantly, both of them see that their compromises require them to negate their innate identities. Raza and Changez's dissent from the American Empire is borne out of their need to reclaim what Changez calls a "stable core" (148).

Global and National Consciousness

Changez's agitation for greater Pakistani independence in domestic and international affairs is an extension of his sense of global solidarity with the world's dispossessed layered with national consciousness (Singh 40-41). Changez connects the dots between the invasion of Afghanistan, the war in Iraq, and America's pro-Indian tilt as events that advance a small "coterie's concept of American interests" (Hamid 178). Changez's anguish at the death of Pakistani civilians extends to Iraqis and Afghans, all of whom are "collateral damage" in what he refers to as state-sponsored terrorism (178). Besides, Changez's consciousness of war as inflicting collective suffering is evident when says that between the aborted Indo-Pak conflict and the invasion of Iraq "humanity's respite was brief" (178). This anger at the suffering of the victims of war propels Changez to advocate Pakistan's disengagement from the United States and, more generally, "greater independence in Pakistan's domestic and international affairs" (179).

Notably this is not consistent with the position of the Pakistani state. Changez's call for his countrymen to disengage from America is contrary to Pakistan's official position. His first demonstration against the American ambassador is broken up by the Pakistani police, and he is forced to spend the night in prison. Though he is extremely popular among his students, he receives "official warnings" on more than one occasion. He observes how one of his students allegedly involved in a murder plot to kill an American aid worker disappeared "in some lawless limbo between your country and mine" (182). Despite the statist response, the mobilization of national consciousness for the sovereignty of Pakistan appeals to a cross-section of Pakistani society. Changez's one-line description of one significant protest speaks to the highly diverse character of the crowd that shares a common platform. It includes "thousands . . . of all possible affiliations—communists, capitalists, feminists, religious literalists" (179). This diversity informed by complex national and international sensibilities is lost on the "foreign" media. The foreign press simply labels this crowd "anti-American" as it is sufficiently large to be newsworthy (179). Changez is vocal in his criticism of American foreign policy before an international news network and by his own admission gets carried away. Changez's confrontational rhetoric makes its way to a war-on-terror footage transforming him from a janissary to a target of empire.

Unsettling the American Empire

This brings me to the second objective of Changez's narration, namely to unsettle his unnamed narratee through Gothic tropes. As potential threats to the American Empire both Raza in *Burnt Shadows* and Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* are likely to be under surveillance. This certainly turns out to be true for Raza, who gives himself up

to let his friend, Abdullah, escape to Afghanistan. In *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, the threat to Changez remains ill-defined. Hamid uses the ambiguous nature of the threat to Changez to invert Gothic tropes typically used to construct the "terrorist other." In his essay "Terror Effects," Robert Young notes how terror and terrorism in "first world" novels has typically been linked to Gothic fiction where "terror" takes on the "form of the Gothic experience" (310). Young notes that the war on terror is "about trying to counter a thoroughly Gothic fear" where "the content rarely has significance in itself, for content is merely the vehicle for producing terror" (310). The decontextualized use of Changez's interview in a montage on war on terror is a good example of how the purpose of invoking terror in the audience trumps the meaning of his words. Young is critical of the use of the Gothic in certain fictions of terrorism as they seem to anticipate the post-9/11 rhetoric that terrorism is a perennial threat to the "first" world. In a recently published essay, Nina Liewald has argued that creation of fear in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* has been created by the use of some elements of the Gothic. These include matter-of-fact descriptions of gloomy settings; ambivalence that leaves the identity of the predator and prey unclear; misunderstandings in the plot; and the use of disguise (Liewald 254). She adds that Hamid's novel employs the Gothic to grapple with "the increasing insecurities of the twenty-first century, which is troubled by terrorism, the problems of multiculturalist societies and a growing rift between rich and poor" (255). Liewald starts to make connections between the Gothic genre and Hamid's politics, but she does not develop this line of argument.

Changez's attempt to unsettle his unnamed listener—which constitutes the text's outer frame and occurs after the release of the above footage—can be read as resistance

to empire by the Global South through a strategic redeployment of Gothic tropes. The silent narratee's lack of power is obvious in the opening line as Changez's opening comment to him is "Ah, I see I have alarmed you. Do not be frightened by my beard: I am a lover of America" (Hamid 1). The American's alarm at the narrator's beard—a common sight in Pakistan—signals right away that he is out of place when he is away from home. Peter Morey notes, "Lack of local knowledge here translates into lack of power as the American is baited about his exposed and lonely position" (141). The "Orient," which in this case is the city of Lahore, is terrifying with flying bats, sinister-looking waiters, and power cuts the norm. However, rather than being able to dominate, restructure, and have authority over the "Orient," the "Westerner" in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is unable to interpret the signs he encounters in Lahore (Said 3). The many elaborate comments on Pakistani cuisine or the setting are overtly about Lahore's hospitality but covertly warnings to confuse the narratee. For instance, after ordering dessert, Changez says, "After all, one reads that the soldiers of your country are sent to battle with chocolate in their rations, so the prospect of sugaring your tongue before undertaking even the bloodiest of tasks cannot be entirely alien to you" (Hamid 138). A little earlier the electricity goes off and comes on, Changez remarks, "It was nothing more than a momentary disruption. And you—to jump as though you were a mouse suddenly under the shadow of a hawk!" (61). This is what Graham Huggan calls "strategic exoticism," which is a way to refer to moments "when the postcolonial writer knowingly includes exotic elements and descriptions, in a way that draws attention to the publishing and reading practices which recycle such essentially Orientalist images" (qtd. in Morey 142). The best instance of Changez's deliberate intent to confuse his listener

occurs in his account of a waiter's apparent dislike for the American. After saying that the narratee should ignore the waiter, he says, "his tribe merely spans both sides of our border with neighboring Afghanistan, and has suffered during offensives conducting by your countrymen" (Hamid 108). The episode with the waiter calls to mind the protest scene that serves as leveler in Pakistan's highly stratified society in that while Changez is from Lahore, he can identify with the sentiments of an individual who is a member of the working class and ostensibly belongs to Pakistan's North West Frontier Province. While Changez's mixed messages are a tool of resistance, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* would have been a lesser novel if Changez was solely a critic of the American Empire.

Autocritique in The Reluctant Fundamentalist

These moments are also subject to auto-critique as Mohsin Hamid signals the limitations of Changez's antagonism to empires through his unreliable narration. Changez's unreliability has been commented on (Morey 136), but the precise nature of unreliability yet remains to be studied. In *Living To Tell About It* (2005), James Phelan notes that there are six types of unreliability: misreporting, misreading, misevaluating, underreporting, underreading, and underregarding. "Unreliable reporting occurs along the axis of characters, facts, and events; unreliable reading (or interpreting) occurs along the axis of knowledge and perception; and unreliable regarding (or evaluating) occurs along the axis of ethics and evaluation" (50). Phelan's attention to different kinds of unreliability is crucial to understanding Hamid's critique of Changez.

Hamid signals Changez's unreliability in interpreting events by likening him to Kurtz and Ichabod Crane. Towards the end of the novel Changez, now a former employee of Underwood Samson, remarks, "I was warned by my comrades that America

might react to my admittedly intemperate remarks to intimidate me or worse. Since then I have felt rather like a Kurtz waiting for his Marlowe" (Hamid 183). The parallels between Marlowe and Kurtz as seafarers and believers in Empire make them doppelgangers in Conrad's text and while Changez likens himself to Kurtz, it is Marlowe who is the narrator in *Heart of Darkness* creating multiple signifiers of identity. Therefore Changez's comment is as much a warning to his listener as his admission of fear. While this accounts for Changez's communication to the narratee, there is also another layer of engagement between Hamid and his readers. Just as Changez is a liability to Underwood Samson, in *Heart of Darkness,* Kurtz becomes a liability to the Belgian ivory trading company when he becomes a law unto himself. The manager of the company expresses his disapproval of Kurtz for his inability to proceed cautiously and use of "unsound" methods. The direct witness to Kurtz's actions, the harlequin, remarks how Kurtz came to the natives with "thunder and lightning," following which they "adored" him (Conrad 70). The comparison with Kurtz brings out the contradictions in Changez. His transformation after rebelling against Empire is admirable as it leads to greater empathy with the other. On the other hand, like Kurtz he starts to function as a law unto himself and starts to lose his grip on reality. There is a narcissistic quality to Changez's resistance in the way he consistently places himself at the center of all actions, be it in his capacity as a teacher or as a prisoner "nursing a bloody lip" and "bruised knuckles" (Hamid 179) or the star of the montage in the war on terror (182). The most glaring evidence of his delusions of grandeur is when he says after his angry denunciation of US foreign policy, "I had, in my own manner, issued a firefly's glow bright enough to transcend the boundaries of continents and civilizations" (Hamid 182).

Changez's fear of the other is reinforced through the parallel with Ichabod Crane in Washington Irving's "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." In the closing pages, Changez asks his unnamed narratee, "Are you familiar with *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*? . . . One cannot but join in the terror of poor Ichabod Crane, alone on his horse, in that moment when he first perceives the presence of the Headless Horseman. I must admit, I am sometimes reminded of the sound of those spectral clip-clops when I go for nocturnal walks by myself. How they make my heart pound!" (Hamid 172). In Irving's story, the narrator notes how Crane had both "small shrewdness" and "simple credulity." His "appetite for the marvelous, and his powers of digesting it" had been increased by "his residence" in "a spell bound region." Before his ill-fated encounter with the headless horseman, Ichabod is treated to supernatural tales by people of the Sleepy Hollow. Given this frame of mind and the absence of company, it is difficult to prove the veracity of Ichabod's encounter with the headless horseman. Changez's fears are also fueled in part by his comrades' warnings that he could be killed. Though readers would be sympathetic to his critique of American militarism overseas, his state of mind also suggests that his fears may at least be exaggerated.

Hamid also signals his narrator's unreliable reporting at two crucial moments in the narrative to signal how the line between critique of American foreign policy and Pakistani nationalist propaganda can blur. On Changez's second major assignment for Underwood Samson, Changez is required to value a failing company in New Jersey to downsize it for his client. Needless to say, he and his team are received frostily by the employees of the company, and on one occasion, Changez is a victim of racial abuse. Changez remembers, "[The man] made a series of unintelligible noises—'*akhala-*

malakhala,' perhaps, or '*khalapal-khalapa*'—and pressed his face alarmingly close to mine" (117). Changez's angry riposte—"Say it to my face you coward"—seems entirely justified in response to what is an obvious case of Islamophobia (117). However, a few lines later Changez confesses not knowing enough details about the attacker:

> What did he look like, you ask? Well, sir, he . . . . But how odd! I cannot now recall the man's particulars, his age, say, or his build; to be honest, I cannot recall many of the details of the events I have been relating to you. But surely it is the *gist* that matters; I am, after all, telling you a history, and in history I suspect you—an American—will agree, it is the thrust of one's narrative that counts, not the accuracy of one's details. Still, 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. (118)

It is perplexing that Changez is unable to hazard even a vague description of a man with whom he had such a close encounter. Changez's justification of his ostensible lapse in memory is even more telling when he says that "the accuracy of details" is unimportant. He claims the right to misreport events in the interest of furthering a particular agenda and further justifies it by saying that he is merely mirroring an "American" practice. The veracity of Changez's narrative is called into question yet again in Chile when he meets Juan-Bautista. This is a life-defining moment for Changez, so it is strange when he adds,

> But your expression, sir, tells me that you think something is amiss. Did this conversation really happen, you ask? For that matter, did this *so-called* Juan Bautista even exist? I assure you sir: you can trust me. I am not in the habit of inventing untruths! And moreover, even if I were, there

> is no reason why this incident would be more likely to be false than any of the others I have related to you. Come, come, I believe we have passed through too much together to begin to raise questions of this nature at so late a stage. (151-2, emphasis mine)

The giveaway in this excerpt is the phrase "so-called." This seems to be yet another instance of Changez's contempt for details, only to a much greater degree. Changez's hasty attempt to close this seam in his narrative is a subtle reassertion of his power over the narratee. Changez's contempt for details is disconcerting considering that he is a university lecturer. On both these occasions, Changez is forced by the narratee to clarify details, but he refuses to do so. On the one hand, Changez's evasiveness, like his "strategic exoticism," is yet another strategy to leave the narratee disoriented. On the other hand, it suggests that in taking liberties with fact Changez is at the very least guilty of overreach.

Hamid's critique of Changez's rhetoric when it slips into uncritical anti-American sentiment resonates with the position of the progressive Pakistani media. In a detailed analysis of tortured Pakistani-American relations, journalist Nadeem Paracha connects the most recent wave of anti-Americanism in Pakistan to the ineptness of the Bush administration. However, he adds that the critique that comes with it "is largely rhetorical and at times, rather obsessive-compulsive." Paracha writes,

> Whereas there was a prominent streak of individualism and romantic rebellion associated with the anti-Americanism of Pakistani leftists during the Cold War, nothing of the sort can be said about the widespread anti-Americanism found in Pakistan today. In fact, the present-day

> phenomenon in this context has become an obligatory part of populist rhetoric in which American involvement is blamed for everything — from terrorist attacks, to the energy crises, to perhaps even the break of dengue fever!

Though Paracha may be somewhat guilty of caricature, his impulse to criticize elements of Pakistani society living in self-denial is consistent with concerns raised by other progressive voices in the Pakistani media.

Conclusion

Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows* and Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* represent how solidarities "from below" are antagonistic to the militarism of empires. Raza Ashraf and Changez both begin by using their ability to blend in with foreigners in the service of empire. Raza can escape from the past and Changez can climb the corporate ladder only by denying their particular identities. Their refusal to be cogs in the wheels of empire thrusts them on the other side of the global divide with the world's dispossessed. These actions lead to serious consequences as they find themselves on the wanted list of intelligence agencies. While Raza is detained in a Guantanamo-Bay-like facility, Changez's fate remains uncertain. In chapter 2, I analyzed how Nadeem Aslam and Shoaib Mansoor's texts privilege the openness of cultural practices of Muslims that are anathema to Islamic fundamentalists. This chapter looks at how votaries of empire privilege those forms of openness that lead to conformity over others that cannot be managed or categorized. Religious fundamentalists and empires are equally fearful of spontaneity of human interaction or cultural expression that subverts the status quo. While there is considerable overlap in Shamsie and Hamid's political commitments, their

critiques of empire take on different forms. In *Burnt Shadows,* the novel's moral center is Hiroko Tanaka-Ashraf whose historical consciousness shapes her collectivist worldview. Unlike the character Kim, she cannot think of human tragedy in compartmentalized ways. In *The Reluctant Fundamentalist,* Mohsin Hamid creates an unreliable narrator, Changez, who while also invested in global solidarity is less skeptical of the idea of nation than Hiroko. Though his global and national solidarities complement each other, Mohsin is critical of Changez's tendency to sound like a zealot. Shamsie and Hamid are both committed to critiquing power, whether wielded by individuals or groups, despite these differences in narrative technique. In the subsequent chapter, I turn to H.M. Naqvi's novel *Home Boy* and Joseph Castelo's film *The War Within* to ask whether fictional characters have lost the capacity for entering otherness. If they cannot hold on to their humanity like Mansoor in *Khuda Kay Liye* or Raza in *Burnt Shadows,* what path do they choose?

Chapter 4: Gangsta Rappers and Suicide Terrorists in H.M. Naqvi's *Home Boy* and Joseph Castelo's *The War Within*

Introduction

In the third chapter, I argued that key characters in *Burnt Shadows* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* that begin by engaging with otherness mostly out of self-interest or in the service of power end up forging relationships within the Global South that antagonize empires. In this chapter I examine characters who, despite their capacity to engage with difference, end up distancing themselves from or completely rejecting a cosmopolitan worldview. Unlike Marcus in *The Wasted Vigil* or Mansoor in *Khuda Kay Liye* or Raza in *Burnt Shadows,* Hassan in Joseph Castelo's *The War Within* is unable to feel empathy for strangers after being brutally tortured in a prison cell. Likewise after being humiliated by the police, Chuck in H. M. Naqvi's *Home Boy* detaches himself from New York City where he once felt at home. In this chapter, I argue that *Home Boy* and *The War Within* expose the limits of empathy as the protagonists, Chuck and Hassan, are transformed from cosmopolitans into potential or actual religious fundamentalists seeking violent retribution against America's belligerence overseas.

The turning point in both Chuck and Hassan's lives is their physical abuse in a clandestine prison system, which has roots in America's post-1945 global overrreach. In his book *Does The Constitution Follow The Flag?: The Evolution of Territoriality in American Law,* Kal Raustiala defines extraterritoriality as a way to "control and manage

the interests of Western powers in foreign lands" (20). In lieu of direct conquest and colonization, Western powers before the Second World War used extraterritoriality "to foster their trade and protect their citizens" from allegedly "barbaric and bizarre legal systems" abroad (Raustiala 20). In the postwar era, the United States exercised extraterritoriality by creating a "permanent military global presence" and extension of its domestic laws to "overseas acts and actors" (Raustiala 22). This led to "special extraterritorial rights for its armed forces stationed overseas" and deployment of "[American] law enforcement officials abroad" (189). This extended to America's treatment of potential threats to America, as even before 9/11 the executive branch sought and gained unfettered access by supreme court rulings to "arrest, detain, and interrogate foreign nationals offshore" (Raustiala 189-190). A notable, but less popular, voice of caution against executive and Congressional overreach was Judge Hugo Black who as far back as 1950 felt that the court was "fashioning wholly indefensible doctrine if it permits the executive branch, by deciding where its prisoners will be tried and imprisoned, to deprive all federal courts of their power to protect against a federal government's illegal incarcerations" (205). Black's views, however, made even less sense to an unrestrained executive after September 11. Starting in 2002, the CIA has built overseas prisons—sometimes called "black sites"—in Afghanistan, Thailand, and parts of East Europe to insulate operatives from the "risk of prosecution within the United States" and because the Bush administration was concerned over the "legal impact of its actions" (Raustiala 207). The offshoring of prisons and the extraordinary rendition program[34] by the United

[34] Kal Raustiala writes that offshore prisons and extraordinary rendition are distinct: "Rendition was, as the

States was also facilitated though its existing network of bases and allies from the Cold War years (Raustiala 207). Raustiala keeps American extraterritoriality distinct from empire. I would argue that extraterritoriality is not accompanied, as was the case most recently in Iraq, with the messianic rhetoric of liberty from tyranny, but it is nonetheless a covert form of control over other sovereign nations. Although extraterritoriality is not an act of "formal annexation," I would argue that it nonetheless leads to "informal domination" (Doyle 20) of foreign spaces by the United States. This provides the context to pivotal moments in *Home Boy* and *The War Within.*

Home Boy

H. M. Naqvi's novel centers on three Pakistani characters, the narrator, Shehzad a.k.a. Chuck, Ali Chaudhury a.k.a. A.C., and Jamshed Khan a.k.a. Jimbo. The trio "slummed in secret cantons in Central Park" "weren't rich but weren't poor" "drank everywhere, some more than others . . . among the company of women, black, Oriental, and denizens of the Caucasian nation like" (Naqvi *Home* 2). Every other Monday night, Chuck and his friends find themselves in a bar-restaurant-and-lounge called Tja! After the September 11 attacks, the cracks in the American melting pot begin to appear at a bar when they get assaulted for being "A-rabs" (Naqvi *Home* 30). Alarmed at their friend Mohammad Shah a.k.a. the Shaman's disappearance the three of them drive to Connecticut in Abdul Karim's rented cab. Though the Shaman is not present in his apartment, the three of them get in. The sight of their parked cab outside the Shaman's

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New Yorker writer Jane Mayer provocatively put it, a strategy of 'outsourcing torture.' The black-site prions were instead a strategy of offshoring, in which the interrogators remained American but the interrogation (and perhaps torture) occurred within another jurisdiction" (206).

apartment arouses the suspicion of a neighbor who calls federal authorities. The feds are convinced that the three of them are terrorists and have them arrested. After being tortured for around ten days, Chuck and Jimbo are released while AC's fate remains uncertain. Deeply humiliated by his treatment Chuck returns to Pakistan despite securing a job days before his immigration status is about to expire and being in love with Jimbo's sister Amo. In the meanwhile, Jimbo reconciles with his father who accepts his American, girlfriend Dora a.k.a. the Duck. The book ends with an obituary of Shaman who was in one of the towers on 9/11. At the start of the book, Chuck catalogues an eclectic mix of texts including the *Times,* the *Post,* the *Voice*, *Tight, Big Butt,* the Russians, the postcolonial canon, contemporary American fiction, nature documentaries, variety shows, Indo-Pakistan cricket matches, and Knicks games. Their musical repertoire includes the Doobie Brothers, Dizzy Gillespie, and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. In an interview to Elatia Harris, Naqvi says,

> Chuck is an everyman, like me, like you. He is bright and sensitive, curious and interested in making sense of himself and the world around him. The voice is characterized by his context, by Americana. Consequently Whitman and Salinger and McInerney are invoked, as is Springsteen and Erik B. and Rakim. There is hip-hop and Yiddish and Spanish and Punjabi in the texture of the prose.

One of the many cultural artifacts of Americana that Chuck and his friends consume as cultural omnivores[35] is N.W.A.'s single "Straight Outta Compton."

A recurring motif in Naqvi's *Home Boy* is N.W.A.'s album *Straight Outta Compton* that pioneered gangsta rap. Eithne Quinn argues that this genre of gangsta hip hop draws on archetypes of the badman and mack that are embedded in the black vernacular culture of the American South to rework "lower-class black expressive traditions in the commercial spotlight" (94). Rather than essentializing black vernacular culture—after all rap music has Afro-Caribbean roots (Rose 2)—Quinn argues that gangsta rappers draw on particularized figures embedded in a distinctive past rather than emphasize cultural borrowings. The N.W.A. turned to the African-American vernacular to express their rage against authoritarian and racist governmental institutions. Though N.W.A.'s enactment of violence occurs at the symbolic level their song "Fuck The Police" led to "widespread and aggressive police and FBI initiatives to ban [its] live performance" (Quinn 108). In the first section of this chapter, I examine how in *Home*

[35] The applicability of this term has been widely debated. In their study titled "How Musical Tastes Mark Occupational Status Groups" (1992), Richard A. Peterson and Albert Simkus coin the term "omnivore" to define a change in "elite taste" from solely appreciating "high art forms" to an appreciation of "the aesthetics of every distinctive form along with an appreciation of the high arts" (169). In a subsequent study, Peterson and Kern note that while "snobbish exclusion" was a class marker in a "homogenous, WASPISH world" "omnivorous inclusion" seems a better way to navigate "an increasingly global world" (906). In "Social Class and Mobility," Michael Emmison builds on Peterson and Kern's study to argue that "the culturally mobile" strategically engage with different cultural forms. Emmison also critiques the neat dichotomy in Peterson and Simkus's study associating elitism with being omnivorous and low-class status with being "univorous" by arguing that both elites and lower status groups tend to be "univores." In her article "Methods of openness to cultural diversity: Humanist, populist, practical, and indifferent," Michele Ollivier offers a sharper critique of Peterson and Simkus suggesting that it is difficult to know whether "omnivores" embody tolerance and flexibility arguing that research on omnivorousness may conflate "socially acquired knowledge of the arts and culture with deeply ingrained attitudes of openness" (125). Ollivier's critique of Peterson and Simkus's model exposing the seam between omnivorousness and openness is significant for understanding the gap between cultural competence and cosmopolitanism.

Boy there is a shift in emphasis from gangsta rap's appeal without its attendant cultural baggage to a virtual literalization of its antagonistic relationship to the law.

I situate my reading of *Home Boy* in the context of Birte Heidemann's article "'We are the glue keeping civilization together': Post-Orientalism and counter-Orientalism in H M Naqvi's *Home Boy.*" Heidmann examines both what she calls the "post-Orientalist" ideologies that haunt the novel's protagonists as "potential terrorists" and the "latent sites" of "counter-Orientalist politics" that enable them to challenge these limiting discourses (290). Heidmann notes that through "rhetorical ploys" that undermine any given "Oriental totality" the three friends in Naqvi's novel find themselves in a "perpetual process of self-invention" (Heidmann 292). Heidmann notes that while prior to September 11, Chuck and co. display an "insular cosmopolitanism" that occasionally accommodated Orientalist stereotypes after 9/11, they articulate a "collective enunciation of shared victimhood" as a form of counter-Orientalist resistance (Heidmann 297). In my reading of Naqvi's novel, I would like to extend Heidmann's reading of Chuck and his friends' trajectory by focusing on their relationship with hip hop.

Desi Hip Hop: Appropriation or Solidarity

The appropriation of rap music by Caucasians has been met with different degrees of skepticism on the grounds that it blunts its oppositional value, but all cross-cultural and racial appreciation need not be appropriative. In her seminal work *Black Noise* (1994), Tricia Rose notes that rap music's appeal to white teenagers is in keeping with "the history of black music in America" like blues, jazz, and early rock 'n' roll. At the same time, Rose notes that while "fascination with African-American culture is not new" the "dynamics and politics of pleasure across cultural 'boundaries' in segregated societies

cannot be overlooked" (5). In "Blackophilia and Blackophobia: White Youth, the Consumption of Rap Music, and White Supremacy," Bill Yousman echoes Rose's word of caution. Yousman argues that it is far too easy for "white youth to adopt the signifiers of Blackness when they do not have to deal with the consequences of Blackness in America" (387). Though the South Asian-American community too is in a minority, its relation to the dominant culture is very different than that of the African-American community. In his seminal work *The Karma of Brown Folk,* Vijay Prashad argues that in its desire to conform to the myth of the model minority there is a tendency on part of certain South Asians to "celebrate those who succeed in terms set by white supremacy" (158). This leads to anti-black racism prevalent among sections of the South Asian diaspora in the United States. At the same time, there are those "desis" (individuals from South Asia) who have forged cross-racial alliances by developing a shared historical consciousness.

A cosmopolitan sensibility lies at the heart of the interracial solidarities of desi hip hop artists. In *Hip Hop Desis,* Nitasha Tamar Sharma notes that desi artists don't negate their "South Asiannness," but instead resemble "sliding signifiers" (Sharma 108). Desis identify with "the ideological aspects of Blackness that emphasize oppositional politics as an alternative to normative discourses," but in "crafting racialized desiness" they supplement this with information from South Asia" (Sharma 110). This makes them what Renato Rosaldo has referred to as cultural citizens in his essay "Cultural Citizenship in San Jose, California." Rosaldo defines "cultural citizenship" as the "right to be different (in terms of race, ethnicity, or native language) with respect to the norms of the dominant national community, without compromising one's right to belong, in the sense

of participating in the nation-state's democratic process" (57). One of the significant consequences of this sampling—"patching together and rejecting of various influences" (Sharma 12)—is that desi hip hop artists draw "historical, cultural, spiritual, musical, and political linkages" between "South Asians and Blacks" (Sharma 118). There are two, related specific links that have particular bearing on my analysis of *Home Boy.* Sharma notes how desi artists rap about "police brutality" (Sharma 127). Also, after September 11, some "desi" emcees have personally experienced the heavy-handedness of the American police state. Sharma gives several instances to demonstrate how hip hop artists "attribute their harassment to the same mechanisms of surveillance, incarceration, and state-sanctioned violence" (131). Sharma eloquently sums up the bonds between desi hip hop artists with their "Black peers" and "international communities" that were strengthened after September 11 as follows: "While [desi artists] are committed to their ethnic communities on their own terms, they also continue their work as culture brokers *across* constructed color lines by producing racialized hip hop" (136).[36] This sense of solidarity with an African American musical form is one of the many cultural scripts that shape the characters in Naqvi's novel. Specifically Chuck and friends are fond of old-school gangsta rap and spontaneously break into songs from N.W.A's album *Straight*

[36] Sharma's study is a good fit for the characters in Naqvi's novel given their predominantly secular character. For an excellent study of interracial solidarity through hip hop among young South Asian Muslim believers, see Rabi Kamal's recent dissertation titled "Reimagining Islam: Muslim Cultural Citizenship in the Post-9/11 American Public Sphere" (2012). In her chapter "American Muslim Cultural and Racial Border Crossing: Immigrant-Indigenous Collaboration Through Cultural Production," Kamal notes how in the aftermath of September 11, South Asian American Muslim youth turned to African-American Muslim leaders and cultural expression (284). In another study, "Muslim American youth and secular hip hop: Manifesting "cool piety" through musical practices" John O'Brien demonstrates "the active and specific ways that youth interact with rap music to manage the cultural tension between secular music and religious practice and in so doing project a cool piety" (102).

Outta Compton. This isn't an incidental reference as Naqvi incorporates certain thematic and structural elements from the gangsta genre in *Home Boy.*

Gangsta Rap: Archetypes and Commercialization

The consumption of gangsta rap by Pakistani youth in Naqvi's novel has to be studied in the context of the politico-aesthetic dimensions of the genre and its complicity in the very institutions of capitalism it seeks to undermine. Quinn writes that central to gangsta rap are some of the "most controversial archetypes and stories of the African American vernacular tradition" and the "elaborate use of personas" (22). There are two principal archetypes—"the badman" characterized by "stylishly violent, emotionally inarticulate, politically insurgent, and socially alienated personas" and the pimp/trickster that represents the "more socially mobile and verbally dexterous hustler" (93). Quinn claims that the speaker of N.W.A.'s *Straight Outta Compton* fits the badman archetype. "The black characterization of badmen as 'bad' derived from their association with a kind of secular anarchy peculiar to the experience of free black people [in the American South]'" (Roberts qtd. in Quinn 95). The influence of this lore on contemporary rap music includes performers who indulge in "verbal sparring, macho posturing, and heightened insistence on self (and group) naming and reputation" (97). As breaking the law constituted the 'central event' in badman folklore, gangsta songs tapped into "an antipolice cultural legacy" (Quinn 108) and cared little for black middle-class morality (Quinn 112). Though the badman is seen to be occupied predominantly with action rather than contemplation and the pimp is given to verbal dexterity, the lines between the two are blurred (115). Unlike the badman, "the pimp . . . privileges style over substance, image over reality, word over deed" emphasizing the "substantiveness of style and the

performativity of language" (Quinn 117). Quinn adds that the pimp figure has been associated with the trickster in African American vernacular traditions linked through "persuasive power, verbal skill, and emphasis on simulation that link the two" (117). Quinn also writes, "For the pimp-identified gangsta rapper, the dual activities are often verbal and sexual: it is through verbal skill (the rhetorical performance) that he establishes the sexual prowess (the performance within the narrative)" (124). These "folklore typologies" were never "watertight" became more porous in gangsta rap," and gangsta rappers have worked through "diverse and complex combinations of physical and verbal potency" (Quinn 115).

Though gangsta hip hop traditionally was opposed to dominant culture, its "commodifiable brand of youth and race rebellion" (Quinn 23) has made it acceptable to the mainstream. "Both inertia and antiradicalism are part and parcel of gangsta rap, and are at least as politically salient as the music's many resistive pronouncements" (Quinn 30). Therefore "gangsta rap was necessarily deeply implicated in the structures it exposed" (Quinn 38).

Rebelling Against Mores

Just like the badman archetype, Chuck and his friends rebel against middle-class mores by resisting essentialist identities linked to the construct of the model South Asian minority. All three protagonists opt for "non-professional careers" unlike the well-trod career paths by model minorities in engineering, medicine, and law: Chuck has a degree in English Literature, AC works intermittently on a dissertation in intellectual history and substitutes at a "rough and tumble" (Naqvi *Home* 41) Bronx school, and Jimbo works as a "DJ slash producer" (Naqvi *Home* 3). Jimbo's vocation estranges him from his father,

and after Chuck loses his job in a finance company he secretly works as a cabdriver to avoid embarrassment in middle-class Pakistani circles. AC's verbal dexterity combined with debauched lifestyle also makes him an embodiment of the pimp archetype. Chuck characterizes AC as a man of "threatrical presence" who would stride into a room and demand "attention, an audience" (Naqvi *Home* 2). At the Tja! bar restaurant, he'd "chat, chant, dance burlesquely, flirt amiably" (Naqvi *Home* 6). AC's rhetorical performances in public places often culminate in debauchery. On one occasion, AC manages to have a threesome with two girls from Georgia after which he makes out with a heavyset girl on the fire escape of his building smoking authentic weed from Pakistan. At the same time, AC is more than the badman or the pimp archetype. Towards the end of the novel as Chuck is waiting in a hospital after Jimbo's father has been admitted for a heart attack, he speculates that had AC been present:

> By now he would have smoked a fatty in the men's room, banged a nurse, played hide-and-go-seek with the kids in the waiting room, disposed of Mullet Man, and shared the murky and potent contents of his pewter hip flask with the lonely man in the adjacent bed. Moreover, he would have negotiated a private room for Old Man Khan [Jimbo's father], the penthouse or presidential suite, and filled it with tiger lilies, tulips, and gardenias because that's the way he was—charming and roguish, thoughtful and unhinged, a man of incongruous and incommensurable qualities. (221)

AC is not without humanity or not incapable of connecting with others. He and his friends simply refuse to be defined by the mores of the model minority.

Not unlike the personae of gangsta rap, Chuck and his friends also resist easy categorization by the dominant culture by adopting multiple signifiers. AC is "a cryptonym" (Naqvi *Home* 2) that is easy on the American tongue. He refuses to be identified as a member of the visible South Asian group when asked if he isn't Indian. Instead, he identifies himself as a "Metrostani" (Naqvi *Home* 14, 99) and throws his listeners off by greeting them in three different languages, "Cheers! Skal! Adab!"(Naqvi *Home* 14, 99). Birte Heidemann writes, "True to their self-proclaimed Metrostani image, Naqvi vests his lead characters with various nicknames that constantly unsettle their perceived ethnic characterization" (Naqvi *Home* 291). In Heidemann's view, to counter the "post-Orientalist" attitude where every "ethnic signifier" draws suspicion, "Naqvi's characters represent the sort of opaque, slippery, at times outrageously cosmopolitan swag – from nomenclature to psychological traits – that is required for a counter-Orientalist rhetoric" (Naqvi *Home* 291). Though I am in agreement with Heidemann's point about Naqvi's masterful use of slippery signifiers, she inflates the scope of counter-Orientalist rhetoric. While Chuck says "institutionalized racism was only a few generations old and latitudinally deep," he also adds that "in New York [before 9/11] you felt you were no different from anybody else" (Naqvi *Home* 20). Heidemann herself observes later in her essay that this opaque slipperiness is an instance of "insular cosmopolitanism" (Naqvi *Home* 297). Though Chuck and his friends are politically informed, they are not directly affected by the xenophobia and racism that N.W.A. raps about. In other words, the initial performances of gangsta hip hop archetypes are moments of youthful rebellion rather than conscious acts of resistance against post-9/11 straitjacketing of the Muslim other.

N.W.A. and September 11

The lyrics of the N.W.A. progressively start to acquire real significance after the events of September 11. The second reference to N.W.A., just after a bar fight in the days following 9/11, is politically charged. In Jake's bar, AC expresses outrage at the attacks on New York City saying, "Those bastards . . . they've fucked up *my city*! THEY'VE FUCKED UP EVERYTHING!" (Naqvi *Home* 29). This attracts the attention of two brawlers, one of who calls them "A-*rabs*" leaving Chuck badly shaken: "Repeating the word in my head, I realized it was the first time it spoken that way, like a dagger thrust and turned, the first time anything like this had happened to us at all. Sure, we'd been in donnybrooks before but for bumping into somebody in a foul mood or not letting go of a cue stick. This was different" (Naqvi *Home* 30). After the three of them get thrown out of the bar, AC cries out lyrics from *Straight Outta Compton's* title track: *"Niggaz start to mumble/They want to rumble/Mix 'em and cook 'em in a pot like a gumbo . . ."* (Naqvi *Home* 31). This iteration of N.W.A.'s 1988 anthem suggests a greater identification with its themes and brings out AC's attempt to come to terms with their "othering" by the dominant group. AC's outburst in the bar is partly owing to their friend, named Mohammad Shah a.k.a. the Shaman who has gone missing since 9/11. AC coaxes Chuck and Jimbo to check on Shaman who lives in Connecticut. Chuck, who has lost his job and is now driving a cab, obliges, and the three of them take a ride from New York City to Connecticut with Chuck's former drunk boss in the passenger seat. At one point, they run into a roadblock with cops. The officers turn instantly suspicious at the sight of Chuck wearing glares at night, the cab's meter not running, and, as Chuck thinks to himself, "*a bunch of brown men in a car, the night of heightened security in the city*" (Naqvi *Home*

97). While Chuck is tongue tied, AC manages to fib their way out of the situation. Just like the pimp archetype, he uses his famed "rhetorical jujitsu" to convince the police officers that they were a bunch of bankers celebrating a "two-hundred-million Eurobond offering at a strip club" (Naqvi *Home* 97). After this second, closer run in with the law AC and Jimbo break into N.W.A's more frontal attack on law authorities titled "Fuck Da Police": *Fuck tha po-lice comin' straight from the underground/Young nigga got it bad cuz I'm brown . . . I'm not the other color, so police think/They have the authority to kill a minority*" (Naqvi *Home* 99). Naqvi uses the final reference of N.W.A. to draw a link between racial profiling of young Muslim males and terrorism. Though the Shaman is missing, the three friends make themselves home in his house. In the wee hours of the morning, they are visited by two FBI officers who have been alerted by neighbors about a parked cab. Chuck and Jimbo try cooperating with the officers, but AC remains defiant. In response to their queries about "Mr. Mo-hammid Shaw," AC invokes *habeas corpus,* the American constitution, and left-wing anarchists. The FBI's request for cooperation might seem innocuous, but Chuck's treatment in the prison cell by his interrogating officers suggests otherwise.

Though Chuck's immersion in a countercultural phenomenon initially affirms his sense of belonging to the mainstream, his experience in the prison cell unearths gangsta rap's real-world antagonism against the criminalization of African-American males and pushes him to the precipice of being radicalized. To begin with, none of the three Pakistani men in *Home Boy* wears his religion on his sleeve. Though Chuck is initially attracted to Jimbo's sister Amo, he feels that the two of them would not be on the same page as the hijab (headscarf) thing "weirds him out" (Naqvi *Home* 68). And while Amo is

proud of her faith, it turns out that she only started wearing the hijab in senior year of high school to avoid being hit on by guys. Also, the much feared term "jihad" is delinked from its popular association with religious violence by Jimbo's father. He refers to it while taking about his gardening hobby, saying that his jihad is like making "heaven on earth" (Naqvi *Home* 67). Chuck brings up "jihad" again when he has to abandon Amo in the hospital with Jimbo's father and says that his "jihad had stopped short" (Naqvi *Home* 194). If Chuck does not wear his religion on his sleeve, AC is a "vigorous atheist" with "extensive culinary latitude" (Naqvi 2). At the Shaman's home when G.W. Bush is heard saying *"[Islam's] teachings are good and peaceful"* AC interjects, "Islam is not a good and peaceful religion . . . It's a violent, bastard 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. . . .I am a self-respecting Muslim atheist just like any, ah, non-practicing Christian, secular Jew, or carnivorous Hindu" (Naqvi 123). It is highly ironic then that AC and Chuck are criminalized for committing violence in the name of Islam. Chuck faces a barrage of questions that are meant to ostensibly help his interrogators understand "why Muslims terrorize" (147). He is eventually released after his interrogator, named by Chuck as Grizzly, crosschecks his background; however, this is not before he is subjected to humiliating treatment. He remarks, "It seemed routine, the invective, the casual violence, the way things are, the way things are going to be: doors would open, doors would close, and I would be smacked around, molested, hauled back and forth between interrogation sessions" (142). As Chuck mulls over his fate anger wells within him, he thinks to himself, "If AC really was a terrorist, why hadn't he enlisted me in the cause?" and says out loud "Fuck the Police" (138). N.W.A.'s anthem starts to make

sense to him for the first time—"The anthem's resonance was no longer mere novelty or a boyish sense of affinity with the hood; no, it put things in perspective" (Naqvi *Home* 138). The only way Chuck can respond to dehumanization is by desanitizing N.W.A.'s antagonism to the mainstream.

While Chuck feels distant from a city he felt had claimed him, Naqvi does not essentialize America as an intolerant place with no scope for intercultural understanding. After learning that their friend, Mohammad Shah had died in the twin towers Chuck says a prayer to Allah in his New York apartment before departing for Karachi for good. Though this is far from a violent manifestation of his faith, Chuck prays within the four walls of his home. Unlike the frenetic opening, this could be read as his quiet withdrawal from New York City's public sphere. A little earlier he tells his mother over the phone, "I'm I feel like a marked man. I feel like an animal. It's no way to live. Maybe it's just a phase, maybe it'll pass, and things will return to normal, or maybe, I don't know, history will keep repeating itself . . . I want to come home, Ma" (Naqvi *Home* 262). Despite Chuck's disillusionment, not all Americans single out Muslims. There is a copy of Mohammed "Mo" Shah's obituary on the novel's penultimate page titled "No Friend of Fundamentalism." A coworker of Shah, named Michael Leonard says, "Everybody thinks all Muslims are fundamentalists . . . Mohammed wasn't like that. He was like us, like everybody. He worked hard, played hard" (Naqvi *Home* 270). Unlike the previous instances, Leonard does not mispronounce Shah's name or attempt to Americanize it. Though Chuck feels out of place in his adopted homeland, voices like Leonard's suggest that America still affords scope to enter otherness. While Chuck is drawn to Islamic fundamentalism just as a passing thought, the protagonist of Joseph Castelo's *The War*

Within is convinced that that is the only way to atone for the humiliation of the Muslim "ummah" (community).

The War Within

In *The War Within,* the protagonist Hassan is picked up in France as his brother Mustafa was allegedly planning something in Pakistan. Though Hassan claims innocence he is badly tortured in an offshore prison facility and subsequently becomes radicalized. In prison, he meets Khalid and he becomes determined to avenge the wrongs committed on him and other Muslims by the American empire. When he travels to New York City after this transformational experience, he blends with the local population but is deeply hostile to "the Western other." Hassan's cosmopolitanism is sketched out as a prelude and is more pronounced in a relatively more minor character, Dr. Sayeed Choudhury, an immigrant from Pakistan who is a successful doctor settled with his family in a suburb in New Jersey. Though Sayeed visits the local mosque and celebrates the festival of Eid with members of his community, he wears his religion lightly on his sleeve. On the one hand, he resents his sister dating an American, but on the other, he has close friends from diverse backgrounds. He is joined by Hassan who is ostensibly in the United States to find a job with his engineering degree but in reality on a bombing mission. When his initial mission to plant bombs fails, he decides to blow himself up. In the meanwhile, there is an attraction between him and Saeed's sister, Duri, but he resists her overtures and, more generally, the comforts of an American middle-class life. Hassan also has no patience for the armchair politics of fellow Pakistanis settled in America. Hassan takes Sayeed and his family completely by surprise when he reveals his intentions to them. When Dr. Sayeed promptly calls 911 to alert authorities against the possible loss of

human lives, he gets picked up by federal authorities for his association with Hassan. While Duri connects the dots and tries to save Hassan from blowing himself up, she fails and Hassan "succeeds" in his mission.

Castelo's film received good to ambivalent reviews in the American press. In her review, Teresa Wiltz of *The Washington Post* comments on how *The War Within* puts the viewer in an uncomfortable position. Wiltz writes, "*The War Within* never preaches. Instead, bolstered by strong performances, it teases out complex and uncomfortable questions about faith and the impact of American actions on the rest of the world. The filmmakers may not judge Hassan, but they don't let him off the hook, either. Call it a portrait of a mild-mannered zealot, one that seeps under the skin and unsettles the nerves." In a more mixed assessment of the film, while Ty Burr of *The Boston Globe* appreciates Castelo's portrayal of the Pakistani Diaspora in the United States, he finds holes in his depiction of Hassan's motives. Burr writes that the film offers too many shortcuts across the "fiendishly complex topic" of suicide terrorism. In Burr's view, "The idea that terrorists are made from the victims of state reprisals is glib; the script doesn't provide motivations for the other terrorists, nor does it convincingly explain Hassan's transformation in the missing three years between his torture and arrival in New York." Burr is right to say that Hassan's backstory is sketchy, but Castelo's representation of Hassan's motives is at least partly borne out by scholarship on suicide terrorism.

Transnational Suicide Terrorism

Transnational suicide terrorism could be read as retribution by individuals for acts of injustice against kindred groups arguably with a view to become part of an imaginary community. A seminal study on the motivations of suicide terrorists has been done by

Robert Pape in his works *Dying To Win: The Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (2005) and *The Explosion of Global Suicide Terrorism and How to Stop It* (2010), the latter of which he coauthored with James K Feldman. In *Dying To Win,* Pape notes,

> The bottom line, then, is that suicide terrorism is mainly a response to foreign occupation. . . . modern suicide terrorism is best understood as an extreme strategy for national liberation against democracies with troops that pose an imminent threat to control the territory the terrorists view as their homeland. (*Dying* 23)

Additionally, Pape argues against the commonplace connection between religion, specifically Islam, or economic hardship and suicide terrorism. In their subsequent study on transnational terrorism, Pape and Feldman reiterate most of their earlier claims. They add that that transnational terrorists share a desire to "risk their lives for a community other than their country of citizenship and, more specifically, in defense of that kindred community in the face of a military threat to it" (*Cutting* 59). In Pape and Feldman's view, transnational terrorists are drawn to other individuals engaged in local resistance against occupying forces (*Cutting* 59). Pape and Feldman argue that transnational terrorism stems from a version of "primary group cohesion" whereby individuals with shared interests and political grievances interacting closely over a period of time (*Cutting* 61). In his work *Globalized Islam: The Search for A New Ummah,* Olivier Roy's implicit critique of Pape's thesis is that suicide terrorists are lone-wolf operatives who are estranged from their families. The other crucial difference between Roy and Pape's arguments is the place of Islam in the radicalization process. Both Pape and Roy concur that the archetypal suicide terrorist has had a secular upbringing, but while Pape sees

annihilation of the occupying force as the telos, Roy argues that these individuals are "uprooted individuals" who wish to become "imaginary heroes of a virtual *ummah* (community) through their own deaths" (Roy 25). Roy's lone wolf theory is echoed by the Guardian journalist Jason Burke in his influential work *Al-Qaeda.* Burke writes that after September 11 "the language of bin Laden and his concept of the cosmic struggle" (295) has spread among tens of millions of angry, young people. In Burke's view, one of the consequences of this has been an ideological convergence among militants whereby "groups focused on local concerns, now . . . look on all that is *kufr* as their target . . . for many Muslims, the cause of the Palestinians, in a way that has never previously been the case, is being seen along with Kashmir, Chechnya, Afghanistan, and Iraq as one titanic battle" (296). Rather than resolve this debate, I want to suggest that both Pape and Roy offer frameworks to understand Hassan's trajectory from a multilingual engineering graduate to a suicide bomber convinced that he is doing the will of Allah.

Cosmopolitan to Fundamentalist

Castelo establishes Hassan's ability to fit into Western culture through flashback and memory. The film opens with Hassan walking in the Latin Quarter in Paris speaking to a friend over the phone in French about a film he has already seen. Three years later in New York City, Hassan clarifies that he has degrees from the University of Maryland and a French university to Sayeed's friend Gabe Mijenski. This bit of information is revealed when Gabe offers Hassan a temporary position as a cab driver and he is trying to familiarize the Pakistani immigrant with the city. As a cab driver, he is able to comfortably converse with his passengers in English. On one occasion, Sayeed's sister, Duri, reminds Hassan how he would listen to Duran Duran and walk with tapered jeans

and raised collars. Hassan can be assimilated into mainstream United States; however, when he is imprisoned and tortured in an offshore prison facility in Pakistan through the process of extraordinary rendition, discussed above, he becomes radicalized.

Hassan's transformation from a cosmopolitan to an Islamic fundamentalist is connected to his personal history, which too is revealed through flashback. In the prologue of the film after being hauled up in Paris, Hassan is taken to a prison facility in Karachi, Pakistan. Hassan's past is withheld from the viewer, so we share his bewilderment and disorientation as gains consciousness. At all times, there is only one source of natural light and the long shadows create a gloomy mood. Hassan and his Algerian cellmate Khalid's faces are only partially visible and obviously wear resigned expressions. A glass of water and loaf of bread that Khalid passes to Hassan adds to the minimalism of the scene. Khalid's attempt to welcome Hassan to the Muslim fraternity is unsuccessful, and Hassan says, "I have nothing to do with your brotherhood." In their audio commentary, the director Joseph Castelo and the co-screenwriter Ayad Akhtar say that this was a deliberate choice to ground the present in the history of Algeria's colonization and liberation. Though this thread is not developed, one could argue that Khalid's invitation to Hassan to be part of the brotherhood has a nationalist subtext. Hassan's personal connection to past events remains elusive until the first night of his stay at Sayeed's house when the viewer is privy to additional information. After hurling invectives at Hassan, his interrogator asks him to identify a few individuals through their photographs. This sequence ends with a close shot of a photograph of a bloodied man who turns out to be his brother, Mustafa. It transpires that Mustafa was shot while he was protesting against the war on terror in Afghanistan. These prison scenes have low

saturation color and invoke terror in Hassan who barely makes sense of the events around him. The interrogator barks in Hassan's face and spits at him with absolutely no concern about the fact that he lost his brother. Though much is left to the viewer's imagination, there is no gainsaying his dehumanization at the hands of his torturer greatly hardens Hassan.

The subjects in Robert Pape and James Feldman's study have not undergone torture, a point acknowledged by the screenwriter. Ayad Akhtar concedes that while the 9/11 hijackers weren't tortured torture serves as a metaphor in the film for what is being administered at the hand of the state. Also Akhtar points to the case of Al-Qaeda's influential leader Ayman al-Zawahiri being tortured for three years under the reign of the Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. Though torture in the film may not directly correlate with factual events, it is "alchemy" of metaphor and history (Castelo). Owing to torture, Hassan is "constitutionally closed" and does not allow Sayeed and his family members into his world.

Global Ummah

Castelo connects Hassan's motives to a pan-Islamic identity in a scene in which Hassan rationalizes suicide terrorism as the only legitimate tool of resistance to Sayeed's son, Ali. One night, Hassan proceeds to break down a version of Pape and Feldman's thesis for a ten-year old. He presents a hypothetical situation to the gullible ten-year old whereby their neighbors, the Colemans, would forcibly evict them from their home with the assistance of law enforcement authorities:

> Hassan (H): What if the Colemans came to your house one day and said get out of this house; we are taking this house. Go live in the backyard.

Ali (A): They wouldn't. My dad wouldn't let them.

H: But they come with guns. What would you do?

A: They already have a house.

H: Doesn't matter. They want this one. Then one day they come and say, you can't live in the yard anymore. We found oil under the ground, and it's very valuable. We need it. What would you do?

A: I don't know. I don't understand. Somebody would stop them.

H: The Colemans knew the mayor. And the mayor wrote the law, "They could do what they wanted to do." What would you do?

A: I'd fight them.

H: Exactly! [Deliberate pause] This is what they are doing to our brothers and sisters across the world. To little boys like you. To family like it's this family. . . .

A: Somebody took your house?

H: When you are a Muslim. A good Muslim. What happens to your brother it happens to you. This is the rule of Islam. When my brother suffers in the world I suffer also.

Hassan's message is effective owing to its simplicity and its insistence on a response. By creating a scenario where a ten-year old child's immediate world is about to come crashing, Hassan effectively uses fear to rationalize his actions. Additionally, he uses the idea of family to get Ali to rethink his position in the world. Probably for the first time in his life, Ali starts to imagine himself no longer just as the member of his immediate family but as part of the global "umma" (transnational Muslim community).

Hassan's generic description of events in this excerpt conflates at least two watershed moments in the recent history of West Asia, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the invasion of Iraq as part of the war on terror. Hassan leaves out historical particulars partly to drive home his message to a ten-year old Ali, which he promptly regurgitates to his shocked sister, Duri. Castelo also encourages us to make visual connections between the bedroom where Ali is by himself with Hassan and the room in an abandoned building that is the nerve center for terrorists planning on setting off bombs in New York City. Both these rooms are poorly lit and have blue and black backgrounds. The activities in the terrorist cell with the manufacturing of bombs are a logical extension of Hassan's rhetoric on what "good Muslims" should do. While in the terrorist cell, Khalid invokes the idea of martyrdom[37] that remains unspoken in Hassan's spiel to Ali. The intermeshing of related but distinct events from recent world history is consistent with the profile of a certain kind of post-9/11 Al-Qaeda recruit drawn from "society's mainstream" that I summarize above (Burke 296, 297, 305). Hassan's transnational solidarity with Muslims across borders over their collective grievances puts him at a distance from America, which he sees as the epicenter of empire.

Rejecting Cosmopolitanism

[37] In his book *Martyrdom in Islam,* David Cook writes while suicide is strictly forbidden in Islam as per verse 4:29 of the Qur'an, the concept of martyrdom though hard to categorize is a major theme in Islamic scriptures Cook sums up martyrdom in Islam as follows: "The Muslim ideal for a martyr became that person—usually a man—who through his active choice sought out a violent situation (battle, siege, guarding an unstable frontier etc.) with pure intentions and was killed as a result of that choice. Ideally his actions expressed and defiance of the enemy, loyalty towards Islam and the pure intention to please God since the acceptable manner of *jihad* was to lift "lift the Word of Allah to the highest" (Quran 9:41). In general, this type of martyrdom did not involve an extensive process of dying, unlike in Christian martyrologies, but required the martyr to speak out prior to his death. These dying words—sometimes prayers, sometimes a death poem and occasionally general words of defiance—were his immortal contribution to Islam" (30).

The most glaring instance of Hassan's hostility towards spaces that enable cosmopolitan encounters is his choice of target, namely Grand Central station. Grand Central Station gets refracted through several prisms. It first appears as a circle and a cross on a detailed map of the Manhattan area in a terrorist cell where Hassan reconnects with his Algerian cellmate Khalid. In an article on the first extensive gallery of New York City's subway pictures released on the occasion of its 106th birthday, David W. Dunlap writes, "In showing us the subway, they show us ourselves sharing a great underground and elevated common, a leveler of prince and pauper, Bloomberg and Jazzbo, where everyone is entitled — or condemned — to the same experience. There are no business-class subway cars; no wood-paneled IRT Club waiting rooms; no five-star concierge booths for the exclusive use of platinum MetroCard holders." Hassan's choice is consistent with Jason Burke's observation that Al-Qaeda operatives and their affiliates from the mainstream population choose targets that are "representative of the success of integration" (Burke 305). Though Hassan is initially supposed to scout the station himself, Duri who works a few blocks away volunteers to show him around. The grand central sequence, as I call it, begins by establishing Hassan's point of view. The camera begins with a medium tracking shot of Hassan in slow motion with ominous extradiegetic music and the announcer's message, " The [garbled] train will depart from track 32" (*War*). Hassan's subjectivity continues to be foregrounded for the next few seconds through a brief montage of shots of Grand Central to the continual accompaniment of the ominous music. The extradiegetic music gradually fades as Duri arrives and hands him a snow globe containing a miniature of Grand Station with the following words, "You disappeared on me. Here I got this for you." What follows, in anticipation of the school

sequence, is an unsuccessful attempt on part of Duri to make Hassan feel part of the space and her life. The miniature evidently signifies something that is simultaneously beautiful and fragile. When Duri remarks that Grand Central is beautiful, Hassan replies by saying it reminds him of a mosque in Pakistan. Though this would be a perfectly innocuous comment Hassan's earlier reticence makes Duri wonder what happened to the man who loved Western music and culture. Subsequently Duri takes him to the grand central whispering gallery and their conversation hints at a shared, happier past: "Duri: The sound travels up the pillars just like the caves in Dina. Do you remember Hassan? Hassan: Yes I do" (*War*). Hassan and Duri both translate their affective experience in New York City to imaginatively enter other spaces in Pakistan and Belgium respectively. Their observations make the already expansive space that is the New York subway even bigger. The camera then momentarily rests on each one's face, and as they walk towards each other and stand apart. For the next few seconds, it seems that Duri might have got Hassan to rethink his actions. The camera does a circular tracking shot of the couple with the diegetic sounds of the station, and Hassan too gets nostalgic: "You look exactly like I remember you. Exactly the same! I was afraid you weren't going to be here." The enveloping quality of this moment is reinforced by the costumes; Hassan in a yellow shirt and Duri in a black dress blend in with their surroundings perfectly. Just as the viewer thinks that Duri may get Hassan to rethink his decision, he excuses himself saying he has an appointment. As Hassan leaves the scene and Duri looks on the ominous extradiegetic score returns. Duri's point of view shot with her back towards the camera and Hassan a tiny figure reinforces the psychological distance between them. Subsequently to the accompaniment of the ominous track, Hassan is seen in an elevator about to enter the

terrorist cell. The miniature of grand central that he carries and puts in his pocket is now, as Castelo and Akhtar comment, a target to be eliminated. The fact that Hassan is reminded of a mosque and his past with Duri in the heart of a cosmopolitan center suggests, as will the scene at the school, that he can make a home in New York City, but he pulls back asserting his unwillingness to be part of her world.

Hassan's rejection of Duri in this scene is symptomatic of a larger problem where he resists entry into mainstream America by imagining it as place surfeit with hypersexuality. Hassan meets his accomplice Khalid in a strip club called "Sinners" after the initial operation has to be aborted. While Hassan is shocked at the sight of naked strippers in the background, Khalid says, "It is good to taste the freedom that will destroy them" (*War*). Khalid echoes a widely held perception in large parts of the Muslim world about the licentiousness of the West[38] while conveniently partaking of it. When Hassan walks out in a huff, Khalid pins him against the wall and says, "You are forgetting yourself brother. . . . . You are forgetting everything. Don't forget why we are here. You are getting very comfortable. I know about the family. We are for one reason. This is what Allah has willed for us" (*War*). Khalid can ostensibly detach himself from his surroundings, and he senses rightly that Hassan cannot. It is telling that right after the scene with the strippers, the film cuts to a shot of Duri dancing on the occasion of Eid. This suggests that for Hassan to succeed in his mission, he either has to treat Duri as an object of sexual gratification or render it impure in accordance with verse 23:5 from the

[38] A 2011 Pew Research report on the perception of the "West" in Muslim majority countries reads, "When asked whether they associate a series of four positive and six negative traits with people in Western countries, majorities or pluralities among nearly every Muslim public surveyed say Westerners are violent, greedy, fanatical, selfish, immoral and arrogant."

Qur'an. Duri is able to confront Hassan about his reticence when his hand gets burned trying to make a bomb in the basement of Sayeed's home. As Duri tries to establish physical contact with Hassan, he pushes her away by saying, "I cannot be with you because you have been with other men" (*War*). By shying away from contact with the female body, Hassan is forced to deny his own humanity.

Islam and America

Castelo frames a scene in the film with Sayeed's daughter Rashida to show how America can accommodate Islam, but Hassan rejects this moment of inclusiveness. In a school talent show, Sayeed's daughter sings a folk song in Punjabi "Latthay Dee Chaddar" before a diverse audience. Notably Rashida is dressed in a green (the color of Islam) salwaar kameez on stage with the American flag to her right suggesting that red, white, and blue can also accommodate green. The lighting of the room with one artificial light, besides the spotlight on Rashida, resembles that of Sayeed's home suggesting that the family feels secure and accepted in a public space. At the start of the film, as Rashida is rehearsing the song, Hassan says that this song makes him nostalgic as his mother would sing it to him when he was little. The audience's appreciation and acceptance of Rashida's performance in a foreign language could be read as an invitation to Hassan to be part of this space. As soon as Rashida's performance ends and Gabe's son's performance is about to begin, Hassan's walks out of the school auditorium. He resists entering America's multicultural space despite seeing its accommodating character.

Hassan's turns to the Qur'an to convince himself that Islam is at war with America. The morning that Hassan leaves on his first and unsuccessful attempt at blowing himself up he leaves a letter for his host family. He writes that he doesn't expect

them to understand what he is about to do as they are Americans and America has been good to them. Crucially he adds, "The life you live is [unintelligible] from the blood of our brothers and sisters throughout the world. Your government takes actions of which its people are unaware, but ignorance is not innocence" (*War*). He quotes in his letter Qur'anic verse 2:216 that is very close to Abdullah Yusuf Ali's translation:

> Prescribed for you is fighting
>
> Though it be hateful to you
>
> Yet it may happen
>
> That you may hate a thing which is better for you
>
> And it may happen
>
> That you may love a thing
>
> Which is worse for you
>
> Allah knows
>
> And you know not

Yusuf Ali glosses this verse as fighting in the cause of Truth is one of the highest form of charity and an honorable deed, but he is quick to add that aggressors would be censured. Mohammad Asad, whose English translation of the Qur'an is widely read, writes that verse 2:216 has to be read in conjunction with verse 2:190: "Fight in the cause of Allah/Those who fight you/But do not transgress limits/For Allah loveth not transgressors." The limits here mean that women, children, old and infirm men should not become collateral at the time of war. In *The War Within,* Hassan's reference to the wrongs committed against Muslims is grounded in political realities. However, Yusuf Ali and Asad's comments clarify that it is hard to read 2:216 as an unqualified endorsement

of suicide terrorism. Yusuf Ali's gloss on verse 2:190 indicates that a just war does not give license to attack vulnerable individuals. Besides, as noted earlier, verse 4:29 explicitly forbids suicide and verse 4:30 condemns to hell an individual who attempts to take his own life. In short, Hassan reads verse 2:216 outside its hermeneutic context and for seeking divine sanction for taking innocent American lives.

Hassan's uncritical reading of the Qur'an pressed in service of legitimizing violence leads to a denial of the affective and ambiguous dimensions of Islam. Just as Hassan is about to leave on his suicide mission, which he is forced to abort, he gives Sayeed's son, Ali, his copy of the Qur'an and says, "Always be a Muslim. You must never forget that. That means you have a duty to stand up against what is wrong, to stand up for what is right" (*War*). Hassan's message about making the quest for justice central to Muslim identity is an honorable one. However, when Ali says, "My dad said that I should always listen to my heart, that my heart will always tell me what is right" Hassan points to the Qur'an and replies, "This is what is written" (*War*).

Hassan's conviction that the West is "jahiliya" [39] is in contrast with Sayeed's ability to reconcile his Muslim identity and love for America; however, despite Sayeed's ability to inhabit multiple identities he finds himself on the wrong side of the law. In a restaurant scene, after Hassan chastises him for forgetting his heritage, Sayeed says,

> I am not saying things are perfect here, I know things are not perfect. I walk into an airport, I get into an airplane, I see the way people look at

[39] "In English, the word jahiliyya is conventionally translated 'the Age of Ignorance' and taken to refer to the Arabian society of the century or so prior to Muhammad's mission. This also reflects much Arabic usage. In pre-Islamic literature, and to a considerable degree in the Qur'an, however, words from the root j-h-l mean primarily not "ignorance" but something like "barbarism," specifically a tendency to go to extremes of behavior" (Shepard 534).

> me. But look around *yaar.* Look at this restaurant. You have Jews, Christians, Muslims sitting here comfortably. Eating safely. Peacefully. Going to school together. Going to businesses together. What's wrong with that? (*War*)

Sayeed has been a victim of post-9/11 Islamophobia, but he still believes that America affords the space for entering otherness. Sayeed's faith in the American justice system turns out to be misplaced. After Sayeed gets wind of Hassan's plot to blow up Grand Central, he immediately alerts the federal authorities. Sayeed's wife Farida implores him to stay quiet as she realizes at some level the implications of a Muslim family, however respectable and well-off, hosting a suicide bomber. Despite her warnings, Sayeed says, "I can't let all those people die" and calls 911. In the meanwhile, Duri takes off to save Hassan when she guesses his destination. Though Sayeed discloses all the information to the federal authorities, Farida's worst fears are realized when they take him away. The film ends with Sayeed's picture being flashed on the television screen as a possible suspect in the suicide bombing at Grand Central Station. When Sayeed has the choice to perform his duty as a patriotic and cosmopolitan Pakistani-American, he does not shirk away from his responsibilities. While distancing himself from Hassan's actions, with this ending Castello also reminds viewers of the questions that Hassan has about the callousness with which the American state treats law abiding individuals abroad and within its borders.

Conclusion

In the preceding pages, I argued that in *Home Boy* and *The War Within* the criminalization of Muslim males after September 11 inhibits their entry into otherness.

The protagonists of *Home Boy* display a high degree of cultural competence. Their ability to blend in in New York City makes them feel that the city has laid claim to them. September 11 jolts them out of this reverie, and they are made to feel conscious of their background and they are treated as outlaws. In my reading of *Home Boy,* I have demonstrated how Naqvi uses the gangsta rap group N.W.A. to represent Chuck and his friends' shift from a feeling of oneness with to antagonism towards a city they all considered their home. In *The War Within,* the protagonist, Hassan's antagonism towards "The West" takes a significantly more violent turn. Though Hassan too suffers humiliation like Chuck, his anger is also fueled by his heightened religious and political consciousness. Above all, he feels a new sense of kinship with fellow Muslims elsewhere that are treated unjustly by "Western" forces. Though Castelo does not endorse Hassan's actions that are responsible for the death of innocents, by presenting his backstory he helps his audience understand where the resentment towards "the West," particularly America, comes from. Both Naqvi and Castello demonstrate how Muslims don't hate the "West" for its freedoms but in fact are pushed into a confrontational relationship with the spaces they can comfortably inhabit.

Conclusion

In this project, I have argued that after September 11, Pakistani writers and filmmakers have addressed the question of whether Muslims can belong in two related ways. They create fictions and films where Muslim protagonists enter otherness without suppressing or being hyperconscious of their religious identity. This brings out the diverse ways of being a Muslim in Muslim-majority countries and "the West" and destabilizes the idea of Islam as a monolith. Furthermore, the engagement of these characters with difference undermines absolutist positions taken by religious and secular orthodoxies. And despite the fierce backlash by power groups, in all but one of these texts, characters are able to hold onto their humanity. In *The War Within,* unlike the other works, the protagonist Hassan takes revenge on individuals complicit in an unjust system that brutalizes Muslims. This project fills the lacuna in existing studies on the emerging canon of 9/11 cultural expressions that has thus far overlooked the contribution of Pakistani writers and filmmakers. It contributes to an exciting turn in cosmopolitan theory specifically and postcolonial studies more generally to examine the place of religion, particularly Islam, in shaping alternative networks that are mobilized against power. And finally, this project also makes a modest contribution to emerging anthologies and critical studies devoted solely to Pakistani expressive arts. The move to chart an independent terrain for Pakistani writers has been pioneered by Tariq Rehman's *A History of Pakistani Literature in English* (1991). This has been followed by three

anthologies: *A Dragonfly in the Sun* (1997), *Leaving Home* (2001), and *And The World Changed* (2008), all edited by Muneeza Shamsie.

One of the reasons I undertook this project was to convey a heartfelt appreciation of how Pakistani writers and filmmakers have responded to a crisis, related to September 11, through their dual critique of Islamic fundamentalism and the American empire. In this conclusion, I wish to suggest that the fictional responses are an extension of the great churn in Pakistan where certain courageous editors, human rights activists, and everyday citizens are fighting hard to reclaim the democratic space in their country. In the next few pages, I focus on three key Pakistani public figures who are teaching the world what it means to bear the burden of citizenship.

The Press Emblem Council, an independent NGO established by journalists in Geneva, says on its website that Pakistan with ten journalists killed remains the most dangerous country for media work. The Committee to Protect Journalists, another independent nonprofit organization to protect journalists, published a report titled "Pakistan's Endangered Press and the Perilous Web of Militancy, Security, and Politics." A summary of the report on the website reads, "More than 20 journalists have been murdered in reprisal for their work in Pakistan over the past decade. Not one case has been solved, not a single conviction won. This perfect record of impunity has fostered an ever-more violent climate for journalists. Fatalities have jumped in the past five years, and today, Pakistan ranks among the world's deadliest nations for the press." Paradoxically these very difficult circumstances have led to a proliferation of electronic and print media. The Pakistani media has functioned as a check on the corruption and ineptitude of governments, but its independence has also come under scrutiny. The

Islamabad-based columnist, Ayesha Siddiqua, writes while "Pakistan's media has been more vibrant than anywhere else in South Asia" the new media has "structural flaws" hampering its "independence and vibrancy" (1). She adds, ". . . the media [itself] has serious issues of corruption, inefficiency, and lack of professionalism" (1). Without glossing over these realities, there can be no gainsaying that that there are courageous editors and television anchors who speak truth to power.

Najam Sethi

One of the most high profile of these voices is Najam Sethi, the editor of the English weekly paper *Friday Times* and the Urdu news program *Aapas Ki Baat.* A veteran journalist, Sethi has been imprisoned thrice by different Pakistani regimes, including Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Zia Ul-Haq, and Nawaz Sharif. After several threats to his life since January 2012, Sethi runs *Aapas Ki Baat* from his bedroom with the production team operating from a battered Toyota coaster in his driveway (Boone). In a laudatory piece on him in the Pakistani newspaper *Dawn,* Eshwar Sunderasen while noting the dearth of such a voice in the Indian media notes, "[Sethi] is a patriot who is willing to attack nationalism when required, a secularist who will illuminate the transgressions made by secularists, and a pacifist who will support internal and external military agencies whenever he feels that they have a case." Sethi's plain-speak with respect to the rise of the Taliban comes through in a column titled "The truth of Taliban." In this article, he challenges the populist position of the cricketer-turned politician, Imran Khan that the Pakistani-Taliban is popular owing to America's policy of drone strikes in Pakistan. A few paragraphs into his piece, Sethi disputes the widely held notion that Taliban are the product of US intervention in Afghanistan. Instead, he writes, "The truth

is the Taliban are a product of the civil war in Afghanistan in the 1990s in which Pakistan and not America was a real player. When they seized Kabul in 1996, America was not even on the scene. It had nothing to do with their formation and it refused to recognize their regime." The Taliban openly provoked America to intervene in Afghanistan when they sheltered Osama Bin Laden, who "openly claimed responsibility for attacking America on 9/11" (Sethi *Truth*). Though Sethi does not endorse drone attacks, he again complicates the conventional understanding of how America has violated Pakistan's sovereignty. He subsequently notes that the arrival of the Taliban predated the drone strikes by 9 years and they violated Pakistan's sovereignty before America did in the late 2000s. Months before the *New York Times* broke the story, Sethi writes how the Pakistani military establishment "approved of both safe havens for the Taliban and the drone strikes against them." He notes that the Taliban that are antithetical to the idea of Pakistan was created in "three decades of military misadventures and civilian opportunism. And the truth is that this mindset was created and nurtured in a regional context" (Sethi "Truth"). This article appeared in an Indian weekly named *India Today* in English, but Sethi's unflinching honesty is also seen in his Urdu program *Aapas Ki Baat,* which is viewed by a cross-section of Pakistani society.

On August 21, 2011 in an episode of *Aapas Ki Baat,* titled "Pakistan's Top Ten Blunders," with characteristic honesty and incisiveness he lists events that altered the course of Pakistan's history. Sethi is sharply critical of Pakistan's dependence on America that started at the time of its independence. In Sethi's view, Pakistan's first blunder is the strategic relationship between Pakistan's civil-military establishment and the United States. This, he argues, compromised Pakistan's independence and non-

aligned position and after 1954 made it an American stooge in its Cold War against the former Soviet Union (Sethi *Aapas*). He subsequently lambasts President Zia-ul Haq's alliance with President Ronald Reagan as it introduced militarization, fattened generals, Islamization, ushered in Kalashnikovs and drugs, sectarianism in the 1980s. In the last segment of the program, he criticizes the Pakistani intelligence agency, the ISI, for not cooperating with the United States even when it was in Pakistan's interests. Instead of prevailing on the head of the Taliban Mullah Omar to hand over Bin Laden, the ISI head General Mahmood encouraged Mullah Omar to remain defiant. The ISI did this while giving American authorities the impression that it was on their side. These revelations startled the Pakistani establishment and public. A systematic campign was launched against Sethi by other members of the Pakistani media and political demagogues with the result that Sethi had to flee Pakistan with his family (Boone).

Sethi was labeled a CIA agent despite being equally critical of American policies. He is sharply critical of American Congressmen who are pushing Pakistan to do more in return for the huge sums of money given by way of aid. At a talk in the Asia Society, Sethi argues though the so-called war on terror wasn't Pakistan's war, Pakistan decided to go ahead with it and has lost close to 3,000 soldiers fighting America's war. He added that out of the 1.5 billion aid given to Pakistan 70% goes to military hardware, the rest of it goes to budgetary support, namely the equivalent of the federal reserve. Very little goes towards poverty alleviation and infrastructural development with the result that this incoming aid has no "visibility" (Sethi *Asia*). Despite the resistance to his views by a section of the Pakistani society, Sethi's program enjoys immense popularity consistently occupying first or second position in television program rankings. In his piece on Sethi's

run in with the Pakistani spy agency, Jon Boone writes that Sethi was not the only target. The prominent human rights activist, Asma Jahangir was also targeted by officials at the highest level of Pakistan's security apparatus. A pioneer of several women's movements, legal institutions, and a passionate believer in Indo-Pak peace Asma (and her sister Hina Jilani) have been subject to the "constant surveillance of the state since 1996." It is to Jahangir's work against Pakistan's blasphemy law instituted by the dictator, Zia Ul-Haq that I now turn. This piece of regressive legislation was the cornerstone of Zia's Islamization program leading to proliferation of religious seminaries in Pakistan, where the mujahedeen were indoctrinated.

Asma Jahangir

In a paper titled "Unholy Speech and Holy Laws: Blasphemy Laws in Pakistan," Osama Siddique and Zahra Hayat argue that "apart from the "procedural inadequacies of the Pakistani legal system and its special socio-political circumstances, the very form and design of blasphemy laws invite abuse" (305). Their findings demonstrate that "textual lacunae in the law enable its use as an instrument of misuse, hence leading to the argument that the abusive potential of the law exists outside social context." "Their subversive potential is revealed in its entirety" when the blasphemy laws are contextualized within the atmosphere of increasing religious intolerance" (Hayat 305). They add that in the present form these laws cause and continue to cause "miscarriages of justice and are a stimulus for strengthening the negative and highly divisive forces of obscurantism, intolerance, and fanaticism in Pakistani society" (306). Siddique and Hayat conclude by urging policymakers to address the design, drafting, and implementation of the law. Moreover, they suggest that these laws put a question mark on the nation's

"commitment and ability" to be a "progressive, just and fair society" (384).

Siddique and Hayat's fears were borne out by the ghastly assassination of the governor of Punjab in January 2011. When the governor of the Punjab province in Pakistan, Salman Taseer, allegedly criticized these blasphemy laws on 4 January, 2011 he was brutally assassinated by his police guard, Mumtaz Qadri. In "Salman Taseer Remembered," his friend Tariq Ali writes that the assassin was on his way to become a national hero. He was showered with petals by lawyers who agreed to defend his case, and Mr. Taseer's funeral was "sparsely attended" (Ali). Taseer's brutal murder and the lionization of the killer helps us understand the difficult circumstances in which the lawyer and human rights activist Asma Jahangir has challenged the blasphemy laws in a sustained fashion.

In her article "Pakistan's tenets of the faith," Jahangir chronicles some of the pieces of this legislation. In a prelude to the blasphemy law, Zia criminalized the Ahmadiya sect by introducing "harsh penal laws" that banned them from practicing their religion openly. This was validated by Pakistan's courts on the premise that "Ahmadis were posing as Muslims, which in itself was heresy and therefore punishable." He further added to the penal code of Section 295 C, "which prescribes a mandatory death penalty for anyone who, through 'either speech, writing' or other visible representation or by way of 'imputation, innuendo or insinuation, directly or indirectly,' defiles the name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad." Though few convictions were upheld under this law, Jehangir writes how the accused that included religious minorities and other Muslims were murdered before arrest, during trial, or while in prison. A biographical note on Jahangir notes how in 1993 Jahangir "put her own life on line to represent an illiterate 14-

year old sentenced to death for blasphemous graffiti on the side of a mosque." This led to extremists storming the courthouse, attacking Jahangir's car, and raiding her brother's home. (Robert). Asma's battle against blasphemy laws, however, has continued unabated. In its more recent iteration Jahangir took this fight to the United Nations where she was appointed as a special rapporteur on religious freedom. In a press conference, she said, "defamation [of religion] is sometimes stretched to include criticism. If some definitions of defamation are adopted, social norms based on religion could not be debated. Defamation is an issue of civil law, not a violation of human rights." While criticizing blasphemy laws, she noted, "religion can be used as a tool of fear, used against minorities, and to crush internal dissent." Taseer's death and the capitulation of the political establishment to the religious right points to the uphill task for Jahangir and like-minded people like her. Sethi and Jahangir are well-known in Pakistan and among those interested in Pakistani affairs abroad. However, the face of Pakistani dissent that has caught everyone's imagination is one of the 15-year old Malala Yousafzai.

Malala Yousufzai

There is no gainsaying that Malala's determination to seek education and speak out on behalf of young Pakistani girls makes her an extraordinary figure; however, as reflective journalistic accounts reveal, the lionization of Malala also points to complex questions regarding media ethics and the politics of representation. Malala's precocity came to light when she gave an interview in Pashto to the bureau chief of the newspaper *The Dawn.* She was a student in a school called Khushal that her father ran and displayed remarkable curiosity about the world and an extraordinary desire to learn. In her interviews—whether in Pashto, Urdu, and English—she makes a moving case for

education and the importance of knowledge (Interview with Hussain). She also consistently couches her resistance through a religious idiom, be it when she is exhorting others like her to not give up hope (Interview with Reza) or when she thanks Allah for giving her a new life (BBC). I make these points to demonstrate that Malala has agency and is not a mere puppet of progressive Pakistanis or Westerners who champion the cause of "third world" women.

At the same time, Malala's increasing visibility has a political context. After the Taliban's siege of the Swat Valley, particularly their decree against girls' education, journalist Irfan Ashraf from *The Dawn* and the *New York Times* video journalist Adam Ellick from *The New York Times* produced a short video creating Malala Yousufzai as a dissenter par excellence. Malala's father, Ziauddin Yousufzai, did not anticipate the extent to which his daughter would be thrust in the spotlight, but she is clearly the star of the 13-minute documentary "Class Dismissed." After Malala was shot, a guilt-ridden Ashraf wrote in the *Dawn:* "Back then, the exercise was something of a thrill for all of us, so much so that it made me blind to journalistic ethics and to the security of my friend Ziauddin. It didn't occur even once to me that there was a threat in this situation for the then pre-teen Malala. . . . . the fear of having exposed Malala to a dreaded enemy overwhelmed me. The fear turned into guilt as I kept seeing her on television." In his conversation with journalist Marie Benner Irfan Ashraf said, "We made her a commodity. Then she and her father had to step into the roles we gave them." The *Times* journalist, Adam Ellick, also pointed to the apathy of urban Pakistanis before they made Malala an everywoman after the shooting: "I could not get anyone to care. They looked at me like I had a contagious disease—as if I was describing an atrocity in a village in Surinam" (qtd.

in Brenner). Moreover, as Brenner argues the Pakistani political establishment and military responded promptly after Malala's killing as it put paid to their claims that the Swat Valley had been freed from Taliban control. The government did not care until Malala made them look bad. Finally, the attack on Malala by the Taliban and her treatment in a British hospital also fit snugly into the narrative of the helpless Muslim woman brutalized by Muslim neo-fundamentalists and valorized in the "West." Undeniably, few places in Pakistan would be able to give Malala the treatment that she has received in Birmingham hospital, and England is obviously a safer place for her to continue her education. At the same time, Malala's visibility in the "Western media" (she made it to *Time's* 100 most influential list) has echoes of Aesha Mohammadzai's face—the woman who had her nose and ears cut—widely splashed. Also as several Pakistani commentators pointed out, the collaterals of American drone attacks or the war on terror seldom make it to the front pages of newspapers. They remain faceless entities. To reiterate what I said at the start, Malala Yousufzai is remarkable for what she has achieved but her iconic status needs to be put in perspective.

In this conclusion, I extended the scope of my dissertation by putting literature and cinema in context of other progressive voices in Pakistan. Just like the fictions and films, these voices are diverse even though they are animated by similar concerns. They are attempting to chart their country's destiny by fearlessly interrogating power centers at home and abroad. The connection between Pakistan's literary output and its health as a nation was made recently by the author of *Pakistan: A Hard Country,* Antaol Lieven. Speaking on the sideloines of the annual Karachi Literary festival to the *Dawn* news group Lieven said,

What this festival demonstrates among other things is . . . .on the one hand a tremendous richness of Pakistani culture and Pakistani literature, the enormous contribution that Pakistan makes to world literature, including of course literature in English and scholarship. And something about the city, which infuriates me. And which is partly why I have written my book to argue against that Pakistan is a failed state. That Pakistan is collapsing. As a journalist I worked in failed states, in real failed states. You did not have literature festivals in Kabul in the 1990s or in Mogadishu today. So this literature festival is a very positive thing and I hope a very enjoyable thing. (Dawndotcom)

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