

## 'Immigrants as 'Others': A Postcolonial Analysis of the Novel *Home Boy*

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### Abstract:

*The present paper analyzes 'Immigrants as 'Others': A Postcolonial Analysis of the Novel Home Boy by H.M Naqui. In addition, it examines the other issues faced by immigrants after 9/11 incident. The study is modeled around the postcolonial concept of Otherness theorized by Edward Said in Orientalism. The nature of the research design is qualitative. The focus of this research is an analysis of 'Otherness' that the characters of the novel experienced after 9/11 incident as Pakistani immigrants. The findings show that soon after the fall of World Trade Center, American attitudes towards Muslims reminded of the behavior and treatment of Britishers with Indians (colonizers with colonized). Through the characters of this novel, Shehzad, Ali Chaudhry and Jamshed, the condition of American Muslim immigrants, after 9/11 attacks can be associated with that of Muslim soon after the war of independence 1857 where the Indians faced the same problems. Findings further revealed that the Otherness is one of the most important elements of post-colonial theory that is dominant in the novel Home Boy. After 9/11 incident, Chuck feels that he is Other from rest of the people in New York and Other means not fully humans for Americans and American changing attitudes made him diaspora. This study may be helpful and guide to the aspirants of United States and other European countries and this research accumulate discussion and encourage further researchers in this domain.*

**Keywords:** Home Boy, Orientalism, Otherness, Diaspora, Identity, Hybridity.

### INTRODUCTION

Immigrants' problems as Others in Naqvi's novel *Home Boy* through the post-colonial concept of 'Otherness' theorized by Edward Said in orientalism. In his novel, the characters faced the problem of Otherness in many ways. The Study shows the place of Muslim immigrants and Muslim countries in the eyes of Americans after 9/11 incident. Chuck, (Shehzad) Jimbo, (Jamshed) and A.C (Ali Choudhry) are the three characters of the novel as post-colonial subjects speak to the condition of the Muslims, colonized by Europeans. In America their method for living speaks to them half and halves, who, leaving their local culture receives the way of life of another nation. 'Other' is the most significant component of postcolonial hypothesis found in the novel. "So lemme get this straight: you all aren't Indian?" asks the Bombmaster, tending to the three heroes. "We are excessively attractive, mate! You can call us Metrostanis! Good health! Skål! Adab!" (14), answers Chuck, blaming the Orientalist speculation that all dark colored cleaned individuals are either Indian or South Asian. Consistent with their self-announced Metrostani picture, Naqvi vests his lead characters with different epithets that continually disrupt their apparent ethnic portrayal. Now and again, he turns around this strategy by crediting false names to white American characters that bear indications of a "psychological militant", as on account of the white Bombmaster.

What's more, the novel's first-individual storyteller, Shahzad, holds an "apparently all-American name sobriquet" (193) that is incidentally educated by his newborn child quirks in Pakistan and his "legendary hunger for mother's milk" (193). Summoning the phonetic interpretation of the sucking clamor, he clarifies, "they called me Chuck and it stuck" (3). A self-broadcasted cosmopolitan, Chuck touches base in New York City from Karachi to go to school four years preceding the setting of the plot, gladly reporting that "I'd since asserted the city and the city had guaranteed me".

The other protagonist, Ali Chaudhry, known as AC, is a "charming rogue, an intellectual cool, a man of theatrical presence. AC is particularly well known for his "rhetorical jujitsu" (41), interspersing intellectual remarks with random lines from rap songs. Admittedly, a strange blend of "on-and-off-again doctorate and studied debauchery" (3) and a knack for rap composing had brought him closer to America's "black" culture than his own South Asian folk. The third hero, Jamshed Khan (Jimbo) is an alternate feline inside and out, as he was brought up in Jersey City, one of the biggest American centers of Arabs and Muslims. He fills in as "DJ cut maker, always refining "the post-disco-proto-house-neo-soul ordinance in his structures" (5), melding parts of legends into an accumulation of "world" music: "Beginning downtempo mind, say, a track from a cooing Portuguese parlor vocalist, he'd at that point kick it with some pounding Senegalese pop, consistently, easily, as though the last were a natural expansion of the previous" (4–5). After 9/11 incident Chuck, Jimbo, and A.C feels that 'other' means not fully human. Americans' changing attitude makes them diaspora. Before the fall of World Trade Centre, they never remembered their home. As a Pakistani (other) Chuk was forced to leaving job comes back to Pakistan. "No phone call, no lawyer, no nothing. And if you are lucky, someday we will put you on the plane--- a one-way ticket back to Bumfuckistan". (HB. 107).

Contemporary Pakistani authors like Kamila Shamsi, Mohsin Hamid and H.M. Naqvi talk about the character emergency Pakistani travelers endure in America. Pakistani writing delivered as of late focus on the move from an American – 'half and half' character' to a Muslim personality and how the nonexistent country which filled in as a space (both geologically and mystically) to naturalize characters before 9/11, in the consequence in the long run turned into a danger for their security. The outcome is that the talk dependably makes a second-rate Other for control and self-realization. An unrivaled, cultivated and levelheaded self is differentiated against a mediocre, uncivilized and silly Other. When the relationship of intensity is made and set up, the amazing can colonize and imperialize the flimsier. Drawing upon Antonio Gramsci's Identification of authority as a basic idea for any comprehension of social life in the modern West, Saeed considers a similar authority at work in an "aggregate thought of Identifying "us" European as against all "those" non-Europeans" (Orientalism 7).

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Many researchers have worked on islamophobia, political discourse, identity crisis, and terrorist discourse in Naqvi's novel Home Boy and found discrimination, racism and identity crises, but in this novel the researchers have been given less consideration to the concept of Otherness. The researcher has to investigate the Otherness in Naqvi's selected novel, how the Americans considered the Others those who were not native Americans in the multicultural world.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The scholarship of researchers, reviewers, authors and writers on Naqvi's work particularly *Home Boy*. In this section, we will look at how different researchers, reviewers and authors analyzed and commented on this novel and what are the important issues portrayed by Naqvi, on which various critiques have given their opinions. Shanthi, while referring Bhabha, argued that, the Pakistani individual after the 9/11 assaults is concentrated to a pioneer subject and a cognizant pilgrim talk which 'advises the digressive and political practices of racial and social hierarchization' is established. The learning looked for from this account just drives Chuck to look for comfort in his religion. "Islam" turns into a method for opposition for the damaged individual, "After 9/11, Muslim cabbies bore American. I wished I had something to clutch at that point" (p 74). The epic which winds up with Shaman's melancholy valorizing him as a legend likewise indicates us about Chuck's change (5).

Mansoor described the novel *Home Boy* as a picture of post 9/11. She discovered a portion of the characters in the novel confronting personality emergency and scanning for a spot where they could live in harmony. Shehzad a.k.a Chuck, the hero of *Home Boy*, is a Pakistani exiled person living in America who needs to endure the immediate impact of the fall of the Twin Towers as his authority over building his personality wavers. The absolute first sentence of the novel starts with a thought of the Self.

Asseri depicts the parallels, made by U.S in this bit of work *Home Boy*. The Muslims especially those of Pakistan are the neo-Orients. New doubles have been set up this time between the U.S. furthermore, the Muslim world. Presently Muslims are depicted as generalizations with negative racial qualities and are the objective of social prejudice. Being 'others', they are under consideration of FBI and different offices as reflected in Naqvi's novel (78).

Zubair talked about the vulnerability and doubts among Pakistan and U.S. As indicated by her investigation character is a continually reshaped and altered procedure in the contemporary talk. She has connected the American government and Pak-US connection with question and uncertainty, which assumes a predominant job in the character legislative issues of the Pakistani workers in US (65-68).

Spivak stresses at the otherness in submit-colonial jargon and she argued that, in evaluation with the notion of the "different of Europe" in publish-colonial jargon, this terrorist may be said to be the 'different of the us'. Spivak then stated Said, writing in 1994, seven years before the fall apart of the dual Towers, Said widened upon this Otherness almost about Operation barren region hurricane in subculture and Imperialism (24).

In step with Muhammad Waqar Azeem, after Sept. 11, Pakistani Muslims in the US have confronted a renewed racial discrimination (Othering) extended by means of legally notable safety interventions in their private and social lives. Discussing the reviews of protagonists in three publish-9-11 novels, specifically, Naqvi's *Home Boy* (2009), Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007), and Shaila Abdullah's *Saffron desires* (2009), I advise that the law of exception has converted already racialized subjects into terrorist suspects and thereby into Homo Sacer. Moreover, I hold that double narrative technique in those novels resists the imperial narrative of American exceptionalism (75-76).

According to Naqvi himself argues that how hard to live in America post 9/11. One can agree that life in America became unsettled after 9/11. America has changed in a fundamental way. Of course, America like Pakistan and India for that matter is vast

and diverse." "As a Pakistani denizen, I felt uncomfortable being implicitly related to the perpetrators of the crime. after all, the terrorists were Arab - Saudis, Egyptians and a couple from the Gulf. Why must I have to answer for them?" Naqvi stated (199-201).

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

The researcher shedding a light on outcomes and key findings that have emerged in the investigation and analysis, The primary aim of our research was to explore Otherness, Diaspora and American Imperialism through the concept of Orientalism theorized by Edward Saeed in his book Orientalism 1978. In this book he has given the concept of Orient and Occident, East and West, self and other. Using Orientalist tactics of othering, the Westerns always portrayed Easterns as inferior, backward, barbarians and violent.

Naqvi's novel Home Boy has become an effective medium through which Said's concepts can be explored in response to 9/11. Furthermore, the novel has provided a relevant description about how 9/11 has become a point of reference for interpretations around the world. The Home Boy have integrative tendencies in the beginning regarding their residing in America. These feelings move to a provoking outburst against the United States after experiences of othering, hybridity, stereotyping, diaspora and discrimination after 9/11 incident. This novel deals with different themes such as trauma, family, identity crises, diaspora, hybridity, abusing through media, and the conflict between Islam and the West.

## **HOME BOY AS POST-COLONIAL NOVEL**

The current study associates the situations of protagonist "Chuk" and other characters of the novel Home Boy with the colonized nation. The Study shows the spot of Muslims and Muslim nations according to Americans after 9/11 occurrence. Chuk as postcolonial subject connotes the condition of the Muslims, colonized by Europeans. In America the method for living of the characters speaks to them cross breeds, who, leaving their local culture acknowledges the way of life of another nation. 'Other' is the most significant component of postcolonial hypothesis found in the novel. After 9/11 occasion, the characters of the novel 'Home Boy' feels that 'other' signifies not totally human.

Americans' changing frame of mind makes them diaspora. Before the attacks on World Trade Center, they always forgot their home. Shehzad (Chuk) hero of the novel, as a nativist he manhandled the police orally and after that relinquishing his profession returns to Pakistan. In addition, explore portrayed the qualities and requests of the Muslims who were very much settled in America since long. The paper additionally centered around the unexpected changing demeanor of Americans to Muslims after 9/11 incident.

## **OTHERNESS AS POST-COLONIAL ELEMENT**

Otherness as Post-colonial element represents discarded people. Colonizers considered the other people diverse; that's why they kept them away from them. They treated cruelly as nevertheless they would be poorest creature of the world. They could not join their company and even their entrance was not allowed in their colonies and hotels. EM Forster writes in 'A passage to India' that Indians and dogs were not allowed in their colonies and clubs. The same situation founded in the novel Home Boy, where the protagonist Chuk and two other characters are treated as Others. Residing in America

but they are not feeling Americans because they are not enjoying the same rights as an American do. When they were in jail, they asked for a phone call but this is the reaction of police officers. “This is silly. I want to call someone. I know it’s my rights’. But the officer reply, ‘You are not Americans! You got no fucking rights” (HB 107).

After 9/11 incident the characters of the novel (Chuk, Jimbo and A.C) realized that they were ‘Others’ for Americans. They are the hybrids who are stuck between the binary of east/west. The country for which they were working, the people to whom they were profiting and the contemporaries to whom they considered their friends at all sudden they had become indifferent to them and everything is devastated. This is the reaction of Duck, the close friend of Jimbo shouts on him. “That’s foolish to me, she said, just crazy. You people are here for some time, like seasonal birds, homeboys, whatever, but when you people go back to your country, you became different and conservative” (HB 73).

### **OTHERNESS IN PUBLIC PLACE**

In the novel ‘Home Boy’ Naqvi represented the otherness in Public places such as city streets, neighborhood streets and parking lots, turned into threatening places after threatening verbal or physical hostilities with outsiders. In the novel the protagonist Shehzad faced the issue of Othering in public places. “From the corner of my eye, I fixed a woman silhouetted in a doorway pick up a child and whisk him inside as if to protection him from the ugly changes of the world” (HB 103).

Then he has another panic attack in public space, Central Park, when a police officer merely walks towards him. He identifies himself to be trapped in the grip of a “psychosomatic psychosis, like the hysteria in fin-de-siècle Vienna...the authorities gave me the heebie jeebies” (HB 250). They were abused physically well as mentally in public places and treated them as non-human. “The next-door neighbors, an elderly lady with pink curlers in her hair, covered her mouth as I passed by. In bitter times, she might have been yawning” (HB 103). Naqvi has represented some of the least-protected areas in American society from prejudiced acts even women. Naqvi portrayed the hostile looks or “gazes” as they moved through public places. The public places of the subway fill Shehzad with discomfort, uneasiness and dread. Otherness is one of the most important elements of post-colonial theory that is dominant in the novel Home Boy. During the analysis of the novel, the researcher finds out that, Naqvi wants a moderate identity. The way he propagated the real face of Islam, the concept of Jihad and Muslim immigrants. There was a routine on daily basis, where the Muslim immigrants faced racism and religious violence living in America that has nothing to do Al Qaeda or any other extremist group.

### **OTHERNESS IN WORK PLACE**

Otherness in work places, we can find the discrimination in work places, on which Naqvi stressed several times at several occasions. Naqvi’s debut novel features, a young Pakistani protagonist who studies literature at an American university and then joins an investment banking firm. In this work Naqvi also focused on the Otherness and discrimination in work places, faced by the protagonist of the novel. In this case, the modern finance novel turns to the racialization and stresses a lurking connection between finance, criminality and terrorism. Naqvi shows that the moral panic of finance and the fear of terrorism. I completed my degree last year and become an

investment banker. So, you are a banker? Not anymore, sir. I was fired in July. I am a cabbie driver.... (HB 115).

Naqvi lightens the inner details of low-wage livery work and Otherness in work places after 9/11 incident. When the protagonist of the novel is rapidly fired from his first job and he leaves rising on the ladder of success. In its place, he starts driving a cab in New York City as a form of stable employment. The graduate student of literature, job holder in well-known firm, Chuk now driving a taxicab. Naqvi shows the enormous risk of Shehzad's downward movement and the precarity of his anti-work dilettante.

## **DIASPORA**

Naqvi depicted Chuk as a diaspora. Chuk is doing job in America (New York) and his family is in Karachi and he is supporting his family. After the 9/11 attacks on World Trade Center, Chuk realized that he was actually a diaspora, separated from his homeland. Before the 9/11 incident, Chuk was living peacefully. He was enjoying his life and job with his friends. He always focused on his work and his busy life schedule never let him remember his family and country. He believed that America was his country and its people were his fellow citizens. He never supposed that he would unexpectedly be strange in the country with which he loved a lot and where he desired to live forever. ...the FBI officer said, your visa is going to be expire, you will be illegal in a week here in America, obey what we say, otherwise lock you away for a long time--- the FBI official cautions them that of long time jail. no telephone call, no legal counselor, no nothing. What's more, on the off chance that you are fortunate, some time or another we'll put you on an arrangement - a single direction ticket back to Bumfuckistan. We can will expel you. poo poop, I thought... ... "(HB 107).

## **AMERICAN IMPERIALISM AND WAR ON TERROR**

Naqvi, he also indicates towards the concept of American imperialism after September 11 incident. The Americans were following the same strategies as they used before since 18th century, just to spread their political, economic and military power across their borders. After the 9/11 it seems that the world was going towards different direction. The Americans started a new propaganda of negative representation of Muslims and their religion based upon their look. They started a geographical discrimination and created a conceptual difference.

Naqvi portrayed that the focus on Muslims as enemy is centuries old perception. Edward Saeed also discussed the concept of Orient and Occident in detail in his book *Orientalism* that still exist in European countries where the Westerns considered Easterns as a barbarian, uncivilized, inferior, and non-human even the worst creature of the world. Americans considered that the Muslims are extremist and terrorist but their own attitudes and mind-set contains extremism and fundamentalism. A clear example of such extremism is the War on terror which is universally understood as Islamic terrorism. Naqvi shows the real face of Islam and explains the teaching of Islam and the real meaning of Jihad. "You have a feeling that you are doing God's work, great deeds, well-meaning plans and particularly useful for other people, making paradise on earth, the genuine jihad, this has been forever my jihad (HB 54).

It seems that the perceptions of Islam are shaped by European dominant political forces. They associated the Islamic jihad with terrorism but the real jihad in

Islam is something different. As Naqvi defined the real meaning of Jihad is struggle, struggle to make this world as heaven, struggle within to make yourself perfect. But they considered, Islam is a religion that is ideological opposite. “the term (jihad) translate to “Struggle” particularly the struggle within, to remain moral and charitable acquire knowledge, if someone struggles within, with his/her own self, worldly desires, this is the real meaning of jihad in Islam (HB 54).

## CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this research was to analyze the portrayal of Othering and other issues of immigrants in the novel Home Boy. The scenes and dialogues reflecting Otherness in public spaces work places, government policies and constitutional amendments in America. The procedure of analysis showed that, in the novel Home Boy Otherness and the other issues faced by Immigrants such as diaspora, discrimination, hybridity were the main issues in the novel. the status of immigrants has been ruined and their love, devotion and services for the country for years are good for nothing. The core of exoticism and foreignness attached to the Muslim world has grown into hatred and prejudice against the Muslims and Islam and Muslims were associated with terrorism. Muslim immigrants were assigned a lower position throughout the novel.

The researcher’s findings are that, soon after the fall of World Trade Center, American attitudes towards Muslims remind us the behavior and treatment of Britishers with Indians (colonizers with colonized). Through the characters of this novel, Shehzad, Ali Chaudhry and Jamshed, the condition of American Muslim immigrants, after 9/11 attacks can be associated with that of Muslim soon after the war of independence 1857 where the Indians were faced the same problems. The research tells that, in a way 9/11 has changed the current viewpoint of the American melting point, the text reliably proposes that, you can either be a good person or a Muslim but cannot be both at the same time. During data analysis I noticed that the immigrants were treated as inferior and the poorest creature in the world. The social behavior towards immigrants was racist and biased and particularly after 9/11 the Muslim immigrants were considered as terrorists.

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