

A SHIFT FROM THE MARGINS TO THE CENTER: REINTERPRETING AND RECLAIMING IDENTITY IN KAMILA SHAMSIE'S BURNT SHADOWS

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ABSTRACT

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 have not only demonized and defamed the Muslim Americans but have also labeled the entire community as terrorists and extremists. The attacks have left a negative and detrimental image of Muslim Americans as terrorists, who till today are struggling and combating this stereotype and negative image. This paper explores the concepts of identity and identity crisis as they are communicated through Kamila Shamsie's 'Burnt Shadows'. These two fundamental concepts serve to be constructive lenses in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 9/11, as post 9/11 discourses have for the most part focused on Muslim American identity crisis, negative representation of the Islamic faith as fundamentalist Islam and representing Muslims as terrorists and extremists. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 will be represented as a site of paraxial engagement with both social and individual self-understandings and that representation of various aspects of identity in the aftermath of 9/11 allows for the process of identity negotiation which evolves phases of realization of the need to reinterpret identity and finally moving on to the phase of reclaiming identity. This paper will reveal how the identity crisis faced by the protagonist of the novel leads to an identity confusion surrounding the tragic incident of 9/11 and its aftermath where the convergence of fiction and reality presents the intricacy of defining the incident and of relating the self to the ruthless and inhuman hostility and eventually revealing the loss of a stable identity which leads to the protagonist's struggle for reinterpreting and reclaiming his true identity.

Keywords: *Terrorist attacks, 9/11, identity crisis, the Other, reinterpreting identity, reclaiming identity.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, can be regarded as the worst catastrophe not only upon the United States of America, but the whole world as well. The Twin Towers explosions were the most tragic and painful events, swallowing the lives of almost three thousand people instantly at the

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attack time. The loss was not for America only, it was estimated that citizens from almost 90 countries of the world lost their lives in the attacks on the World Trade Center (U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Japan, 2006). All this loss and sacrifice was turned into nothing when the whole Muslim community was blamed and held responsible for the 9/11 attacks, and Muslim Americans being the immediate available Muslims, were targeted and subjected to worst abuses and inhuman treatment.

Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, Muslim Americans in America have been under blockade. They live under strict observation and nasty laws. The atmosphere for Muslim Americans since 9/11 and even till date is very much similar to the harassments and abuses faced by Japanese in America during the World War II. Muslim Americans are today, held captive and ensnared in the clutches of U.S. security laws, ill-treated on roads and streets, abused at workplaces, threatened by every tom, dick and harry. All this is nothing less than virtual imprisonment and mental colonization. Severe annoyance by law and order officials, vicious and draconian laws intended at restraining freedom to act, speak or even worship, hatred, apathy and lack of concern from public, abuses and negative image building by the media pundits and a listless and indifferent citizenry have all contributed in building virtual and psychological detention camps where the Muslim Americans are virtually detained after the terrorist attacks of 9/11.

As these terrorists belonged to Islamic faith, henceforth Americans targeted Muslims throughout the world and specifically the Muslim Americans, with anger, revenge and hatred. After the attack on the Pearl Harbor carried out by Japanese, a large population of Japanese Americans who were settled on the West Coast was incarcerated in a number of detention camps in America. But after 9/11 terrorist attacks, Muslim Americans were subjected to worst atrocities and the entire United States of America was transformed into a virtual confinement for the Muslim community, even the civil rights extended to them through the American constitution and law, had been cut short (Ghazali, 2021). This situation prevails till today, almost thirteen years later. Even today more than eight million Muslim Americans remain beleaguered and fraught under the transformed U.S. immigrant laws, immigration policies and change in priorities following the terrorist attacks of 9/11 (Ghazali, 2021). It's really disturbing and shocking that America, following 9/11, no longer remains friendly and welcoming to the Muslim community. The situation has worsened to the extent that the Muslim community has now become the major target of American hatred, anger, discrimination and prejudice which was the earlier the fate of other minorities i.e. Native Americans, Japanese American, Hispanics and Afro Americans. Majority of the Muslim Americans have a story

of marginalized treatment and discrimination, it may be a physical assault, a vicious stare, a humiliating comment or calling names, annoyance at work place, or a blasphemous and profane act of burning mosques or the Holy Quran. Muslim Americans have born the ever-growing discrimination and marginalization of their community in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 9/11.

2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

After 9/11, prominent Western writers represented Muslims generally in an unappealing fashion as terrorists or allies of terrorism in the West. Founding their theories on the occurrences and causes that shaped the 9/11 debacle, the Western literati and the masses formed clichéd postulations about Islam as a doctrine that anchors and fosters terrorism. This negative attitude has led to a feeling of insecurity amongst the Muslims, particularly in America. Since Pakistan experienced the severe brunt in the aftermath of the fall of the Twin Towers, many Pakistani expats faced racial harassment both on the streets and by the US government under its Patriot Act of 2001. This sort of harassment and discrimination was then made the theme of a number of Pakistani novels in English. This study will bring into focus an analysis of the ways in which the writer Kamila Shamsie in her novel *Burnt Shadows* has disrupted and challenged the post 9/11 discriminating status quo, struggled for a unified identity and offered prospects leading to the decolonization of the region. These aspects would be viewed through their influence on the life and personality of the protagonist of the novel; Raza.

2.1 Research Objectives

This research paper aims to analyze Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows*, Keeping in view the following research objectives:

1. To analyze the shift of identity from margins to the center in Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows*.
2. To explore the process of reinterpreting and reclaiming identity in the novel.
3. To examine the cultural and historical context in which the shift of identity takes place in the novel.
4. To contribute to the understanding of how literature can be used as a means of challenging dominant narratives and reclaiming marginalized voices.

2.2 Research Questions

I shall endeavor to seek answers to the following questions through a detailed analysis of the Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows*. The impact of 9/11 on the life and personality of Raza Konrad Ashraf, the protagonist of the novel under study will serve as a tool in seeking answers to the following questions:

1. How does Kamila Shamsie represent the shift of identity from margins to the center in *Burnt Shadows*?
2. What are the factors that contribute to the process of reinterpreting and reclaiming identity in the novel?
3. How does the historical and cultural context in which the novel is set influence the shift of identity in the characters?
4. How does *Burnt Shadows* challenge dominant narratives and reclaim marginalized voices through its portrayal of identity?

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Post 9/11 chaos and discrimination reveals the time when America had lost confidence and trust on her Muslim residents. During such a shocking and disturbing situation, Pakistani fiction writers felt the dire need to give voice to the discriminated, marginalized and most beleaguered community of Muslims especially the Pakistani Muslims residing in America. Pakistani fiction writers realized that to defend the rights of Muslim Americans particularly those of Pakistani origin, they have to speak through their text. Definitions of the term identity:

- Identity is "the process of construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute, or a related set of cultural attributes, that is/are given priority over other sources of meaning" (Castells, 2010).
- "Identity, in [this] sociological conception, bridges the gap between the "inside" and the "outside" - between the personal and the public worlds. The fact that we project "ourselves" into these cultural identities, at the same time internalizing their meanings and values, making them "part of us," helps to align our subjective feelings with the objective places we occupy in the social and cultural world'. Identity thus stitches (or, to use a current medical metaphor, "sutures") the subject into the structure. It stabilizes both subjects and the cultural worlds they inhabit, making both reciprocally more unified and predictable" (Hall, 1996).
- "Identity only becomes an issue when it is in crisis, when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty" (Mercer, 1990).

Definition of the term identity crisis:

- Theorist Erik Erikson was the first theorist to use the term identity crisis and asserted that it is one of the most imperative conflicts individuals confront during their development. According to Erikson, "an identity crisis is a time of intensive analysis and exploration of different ways of looking at oneself; a necessary turning point or a crucial moment when development moves to one way or the other, marshalling resources of growth, recovery and further differentiation" (1968).
- Oxford Dictionaries.com defines identity crisis as, ".....a period of uncertainty and confusion in which a person's sense of identity becomes insecure, typically due to a change in their expected aims or role in society."

Identity can be regarded as a social construct and mainly established by the relationship between Self and Other. The Other is normally the individual/entity who is 'different' from the self-i.e. not the 'same'. The notion of 'Otherness' is at large, imposed by the empowered and hegemonic institutes/nations. The concept of Otherness has been used in a number of contexts and paradigms by different theorists including Said, Lacan, Spivak, Foucault etc. However in the postcolonial and imperialistic context, Edward Said in his book *Orientalism* (1985) presents a division between the Orient and the Occident, i.e. the Other and the Self (Moosavinia, 2011). The split between the Other and the Self is main focus of the theoretical framework of post colonialism. The upshot of Orientalism is the construction of a binary division between the Occident and the Orient. Orient is referred to all that the West is not, foreign, wild, ignorant, crude, exotic, hazardous, untrustworthy, to be revealed, conquerable, a risk to the West and unprivileged (Moosavinia et.al 109). Said in his work, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) has also dealt with concept of the marginalization/subjection of the Other within imperialistic paradigm. This subjection was not just political; rather, it engulfed the cultural and literary areas too. This marginalization was an act on the part of the colonizer/hegemonic/empowered of wiping out the culture of the colonized/suppressed/minority which resulted in colonizer's raising of voices against this subjection. Culture, thus becomes a tool for domination as well as resistance. Homi K. Bhabha identifies otherness as "an articulation of difference contained within the fantasy of origin and identity" (2004).

The Other or the binary opposition between the Self/Other has transformed in context of the post 9/11 discourse. As Bressler illustrates, the Other – the "not me" (1999). In the post 9/11 scenario, the Other became the Muslim community of America, targeted by hatred and discrimination rooting

out from chauvinistic American hegemony. This *Other* has been placed at the margins, regarded as the Other of America i.e. the terrorist. American discourse has continued to be mostly apprehensive about the ethnic idiosyncrasies of non-Western and Islamic cultures such as those of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iraq, particularly as they combine in the figure of the terrorist or the Other of America. Thus, in the review of sentiment, remembrance, and the past provoked by 9/11, the manifold and shifting conceptions of the *Other* now congregate to outline a singular being. The figure of the non-Western, Muslim, turbaned, bearded and fundamental jihadi has now replaced the earlier Other, who was presented as non-West, ignorant, crude, exotic, hazardous, untrustworthy, to be revealed, conquerable and colored(black) ((Singh, 2012).

While the media generally builds the image of the terrorist with the indicators of ignorance, fundamentalism, abhorrence and aggression, this image of the terrorist Other, is challenged and dismantled through postcolonial novels like *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid, *Home Boy* by H. M. Naqvi and *Burnt Shadows* by Kamila Shamsie. In his analysis of post-9/11 literature, Johnson (2019) argues that the trope of Orientalism continues to be prevalent in Western representations of Muslim characters. He suggests that writers like Shamsie challenge this trope by presenting nuanced portrayals of Muslim characters who are grappling with complex identity issues in the wake of the attacks. The novel, *Burnt shadows* arbitrates in this crisis of representation resulting in crisis of identity, by adding profundity and reinterpreting the term Other and exposing the truth and meaning that lies, to use Jasbir Puar's phrase, "beyond the ocular" (Singh, 2012).

After going through a number of interpretations of identity, the reality dawns upon us that identity has both the shades, it reflects the feelings of oneness or belongingness on one hand and a sense of being different i.e. individuality on the other hand. Our identity blossoms from our sense of belonging and relationship to certain group or collection because of certain common denominators shared by each member of the group. But at the same time, we come to recognize ourselves as individuals because of the sense of being different from other members of the group as well as other entities. Both these shades of identity blend together to make a human being, an individual as well as a healthy member of the society. Identity stands out to be one of the most imperative--as well as ardently disputed--subjects in cultural and literary studies. As the novel under study deals with identity issue of the protagonist Raza, apart from analyzing his identity crisis, I intend to trace the metamorphosis and the process of construction of a stable identity by highlighting the phase of reinterpreting identity and finally reclaiming identity as these phases reflect the protagonist's struggle to rescue his true ethnic

identity from the turbulence, instability and disgrace into which he had fallen in the aftermath of terrorist attacks of 9/11.

According to Merriam-Webster online dictionary, the term reinterpret means to give a new or different interpretation i.e. to present a new meaning and the term reclaim means to restore to a previous natural state. The protagonist Raza has embarked on the task of reinterpreting and reclaiming his ethnic identities because the Muslim Americans in the aftermath of 9/11 have arrived at a better understanding in terms of the ever-sprouting interactions of Muslim Americans with not only the America but with the global community along with his own notion of identity. Nasar Meer's *Citizenship, Identity and the Politics of Multiculturalism: The Rise of Muslim Consciousness* (2010) is an innovative approach to comprehending the Islamic identity in Great Britain (Araabi, 2011). As escalating consideration is awarded to the Muslim identity issue across the West, Meer's text is an inspiring work that highlights the intricate association between ethnic identity and the notion of *Other* presenting a potent argument against the prejudiced approach that advocated Muslim harassment and discrimination (Araabi, 2011). Araabi further elucidates that Meer employs the Du Boisean notion of "double consciousness" that brings forth a convincing argument that marginal subjectivities, Muslims in this case, are both determined and being determined by the process of racialization. Identity construction and identity crisis occurs in both the psychological and the social spheres and are affected by political advances. Consequently, Nasar Meer's work *Citizenship, Identity and the Politics of Multiculturalism: The Rise of Muslim Consciousness* (2010) is valuable to the present study as it highlights the manner in which the Muslim community in Britain has tried to gain identification and acknowledgement in a society where they have been treated as outsiders. This work offers insight into the discrimination faced by British Muslims, how Muslims are considered to be suspects and their devotion and loyalties are looked with doubt and suspicions (Araabi, 2011). Consequently, the Muslims were forced to reconsider their sense of selfhood, while residing in a multicultural society that has turned out to be become ever more chauvinistic and intolerant. Although this book highlights the Muslim consciousness in Britain following the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and 7/7 in particular, nevertheless it provides solid conceptual clarity for the study undertaken. An in depth analysis of Raza's character highlights the fact that his identity crisis is further exacerbated by the events of 9/11, which lead to a rise in Islamophobia and suspicion towards individuals of Muslim descent. Raza is mistaken for a Muslim and is subjected to racial profiling, which further adds to his confusion and frustration regarding his identity. As noted by Raffia Saleem in her article "Negotiating Identities: A

Study of Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows*," "Raza's identity is under constant scrutiny, and he finds it difficult to reconcile with his multiple identities" (Saleem, 2016). According to Kandiyoti (2017), post-9/11 literature is characterized by a sense of identity crisis among Muslim characters. This crisis is the result of the increasing Islamophobia that has emerged in the West following the attacks. Kandiyoti argues that writers like Shamsie use their fiction to explore the complexities of this crisis and to challenge the stereotypes that have emerged in the wake of the attacks. This identity crisis as discussed by Ali (2018) highlights the fact that Raza Konrad Ashraf's identity crisis is a result of his dual identities as a Pakistani Muslim and a citizen of Japan. The attacks on the United States exacerbate this crisis, as he finds himself caught between two cultures that are now at odds with each other. Ali notes that Raza's struggle to reconcile his identities is a common theme in post-9/11 literature.

Using 9/11 as a focal point for discussion generates a space which allows for identity construction around a "world-historical event" (Habermas, 2003). This discussion further leads to an analysis of how various characters related to the event, Raza in *Burnt Shadows* is represented in relation to it and is finally successful in reclaiming their true and stable identity. In their article on trauma and identity crisis in post-9/11 literature, Lee and Wainwright (2020) argue that the attacks have had a profound impact on the psyches of Muslim characters in these texts. They suggest that the trauma of the attacks has exacerbated existing identity crises among Muslim characters, leading them to question their place in the world. In their analysis of trauma and identity in literature, Dursun and Bayir (2019) also argue that traumatic events like the 9/11 attacks can have a profound impact on people's sense of self. They suggest that trauma can lead to a sense of fragmentation and disconnection from one's identity, which can result in an identity crisis. Dursun and Bayir suggest that literature can be a powerful tool for exploring these complex issues. This point is further substantiated with the views of Edward Said who stands as one of the most leading theorists whose works are really prominent concerning the factors of the Oriental identity being transformed. Said illustrates that the Orient is not only contiguous to the West; it is also the seat of West's oldest, richest and greatest colonies, the basis of its civilization and languages; Europe's cultural competitor and contestant, and symbolizes Europe's most genuine and frequent images of the Other. The Occident created the Orient, or as Said calls it, "Orientalised" the Orient and subjected to alternating degrees of a multifarious hegemony (1985).

Coinciding with Said's 'Orientalism' are the theories of Homi K. Bhabha termed as "Hybridity" and the "Third Space" (Daryoosh, 2011). On representation and identity of the Other, Bhabha in his book *Location of Culture* asserts

[Third Space] though non representable in itself, which comprises the discursive circumstances of diction that guarantee, that the meaning, symbols and signs of culture are not fixed and do not have any prehistoric unity. Even the same signs can be interpreted, translated, appropriated and read anew (2004).

Bhabha further illustrates that, "... the trouble with the Engglish is that their hiss history happened overseas, so they dodo don't know what it means" (2004).

Spivak, an Indian postcolonial theorist states that "to refuse to represent a cultural *Other* is salving your conscience, and allowing you not to do any homework" (1990). Spivak nonetheless considers that essentialism can occasionally be employed deliberately by these community groups to not only make the subaltern voice heard but also make it explicable when a true identity is constructed and recognized by majority groups. Additionally, Spivak condemns those who overlook the cultural others i.e. the subaltern (1990).

Frantz Fanon, an established postcolonial theorist and critic together with Bhabha, Spivak and Said offer the basis for the analysis of cultural influences on the postcolonial theory (Daryoosh, 2011). He asserts that colonial domination tends to eradicate the culture of the colonized and this cultural eradication is made possible by the denial of ethnicity and culture to the colonized by employing legal restrictions introduced by the colonizer, by the deportation of the natives and their traditions to remote areas, by snatching their property and by the organized enslaving of the colonized by the colonizer. He further elucidates that every attempt was made to inferiorize the culture of the colonized and made him admit this inferiority, which had been reduced to innate patterns of behavior, "to recognize the unreality of his "nation," and, in the last extreme, the confused and imperfect character of his own biological structure" (Daryoosh, 2011).

4. METHODOLOGY

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an approach used to analyze discourse that aims to uncover the hidden power relationships and ideological assumptions that are present in language use. Norman Fairclough's model of CDA is a widely used framework that can be applied to analyze Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows*. This research paper aims to analyze how identity is constructed and represented in Kamila Shamsie's novel *Burnt Shadows*, which is set against the backdrop of historical events such as the atomic bombing of

Hiroshima and the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The following is a detailed methodology based on Fairclough's model of CDA that can be used to analyze the text of this research paper.

Corpus selection: The first step in the methodology is to select the corpus of texts to be analyzed. In this case, the corpus will consist of the text of Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows*. The text will be analyzed using Fairclough's model of CDA.

Textual analysis: The next step is to conduct a textual analysis of the corpus. This involves identifying the linguistic features of the text, such as word choice, sentence structure, and discourse markers that contribute to the construction of identity in the novel. This will involve identifying key themes and motifs in the text, such as the use of historical events to shape identity, the role of gender and sexuality in identity formation, and the impact of geopolitical factors on identity.

Interpretation: The third step is to interpret the linguistic features of the text in relation to the wider social, cultural, and historical context in which the novel was written. This will involve identifying the ideological assumptions that underpin the text and the power relationships that are present in the language use. For example, the research paper may analyze how the representation of Muslim characters in the novel reflects wider discourses of Islamophobia and how the use of historical events to shape identity reflects broader cultural and political trends.

Contextualization: The fourth step is to contextualize the interpretation of the text within the wider social, cultural, and historical context. This may involve drawing on other sources, such as academic literature and historical texts, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the social, cultural, and historical factors that contribute to the construction of identity in the novel.

Critical reflection: The final step is to critically reflect on the findings of the analysis and to draw conclusions about the role of identity in Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows*. This may involve assessing the implications of the findings for wider debates about identity and representation in literature and culture, as well as identifying areas for further research.

Overall, the methodology for analyzing Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows* using Fairclough's model of CDA involves a systematic and rigorous approach to uncovering the hidden power relationships and ideological assumptions that underpin the text. By conducting a detailed analysis of the linguistic features of the text, interpreting them in relation to the wider social, cultural, and historical context, and critically reflecting on the findings, this

methodology provides a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the role of identity in the novel.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Raza's Identity Metamorphosis: Polyglot Translator to a Murder Suspect to a Guantanamo Bay Detainee

Burnt Shadows transports the reader from Japan, minutes prior to the deadly and devastating atomic bomb annihilating the denizens of Nagasaki, to sub-continent at the eve of Pakistan and India partition, to Pakistan in the clutches of military despotism and CIA activity; and finally to America during the war on terror and Afghanistan in the instant wake of 9/11. This geographic voyage through history and continents symbolizes the identity crisis that places one of the novel's protagonists as a medium of understanding and insight through experience at a succession of global upheavals. The Japanese woman Hiroko Tanaka after losing her German fiancé Konrad Weiss in the devastating atomic bomb explosion in Nagasaki, progresses to colonial India to meet Konrad's half-sister Ilse Weiss and her English husband, ties the knot with their Muslim clerk Sajjad Ashraf, is transported with him to Pakistan following the Partition and finally shifts to New York after Sajjad's death to reside with Ilse Weiss. Hiroko and Sajjad's son, the Japanese-Pakistani Raza Konrad Ashraf, who is brought in Pakistan, gets employed in Dubai, later in the United States, and subsequently Afghanistan. His life was revolutionized radically because of his acquaintance with an Afghani boy named Abdullah and the arrival of Ilse Weiss' son, Harry. The German-English woman Ilse Weiss, who budes from India to the United States, her son, the Englishman Harry who stays in India during his childhood, in the U.S.A during adolescence, and breathes his last breath in Afghanistan and his daughter, the American Kim Burton, an engineer by profession, tackling with her disjointed family and country after 9/11.

Shamsie has not simply endeavored to sketch a narrative graph of history linking Nagasaki and 9/11. Her novel is about the journey of reinterpreting and reclaiming of identities amidst these devastations. The protagonist of the novel, Raza Konrad Ashraf, the son of Sajjad and Hiroko, who ends up as a prisoner of Guantanamo Bay is shown naked facing an orange jumpsuit and a steel bench at the onset of the novel. Hiroko and Sajjad wish to have "Konrad" as the middle name of their son, Raza Ashraf— which connects him resolutely to the atomic bomb dropped in Nagasaki, Japan twenty years prior to his birth. It torments Raza with an identity crisis and he becomes a pariah in Pakistani community. It is his embarrassment with his inexplicable and yet impregnable past that makes Raza's present doubtful and

vague and he meanders into a perplexed fundamentalism and finally becomes a prey to American nationalist suspicion. Raza Konrad Ashraf, the Japanese-Pakistani polyglot, a multilingual fluent in Japanese, English, Urdu, and Pashto, suffers a schism in the war against terror as he is divided between both the opposing sides of the war. Hired by Harry to work as a translator for an American military outworker, Raza assists America in her conflict in Afghanistan in the role of a translator but on the other side being a Pakistani Muslim; he shares the religious and cultural values with the Afghans. This results in further strengthening of confused identity construct as Raza has since his childhood been a victim of identity crisis.

Raza finds his undecided and vague status indefensible and on shaky grounds, as he ought to ceaselessly demonstrate his allegiance. When he is doubted for Harry's murder in Afghanistan, Raza escapes the democratic frontage of American judiciary and tries to seek refuge in the merciless world of human trafficking. These selections result in a particular course of occurrences consequently lead to the novel's perturbed and edgy conclusion. Raza searches for his childhood pal, Abdullah, an Afghani refugee in Pakistan, with whom he had, in an imprudent and foolish conception of adventure, once journeyed to a militant training camp. When Raza comes to know that Abdullah is at present an illegal immigrant in New York, also evading from the FBI, Raza plans a chain of events to save him from the clutches of FBI. Raza persuades Kim Burton Harry's daughter, to take Abdullah to Canada from where Abdullah's family will arrange to have him trafficked back to Afghanistan. Kim betrays his trust and reports this to the authorities but she cannot foresee the upshot of her action. Raza on knowing that the same man, who had transported him to Canada, will also transport Abdullah back to Afghanistan makes up his mind to meet his friend, Abdullah. A sight of the police coming into the restaurant where he and Abdullah are getting-together instigates Raza to switch his coat with Abdullah and take his place, and because Kim and Raza have never convened, Kim does not apprehend that she has unintentionally directed the arrest of a man, whom her father had loved greatly. Hence Raza ends up in Guantanamo Bay, as a Muslim Afghani prisoner, in place of Abdullah.

Kamila Shamsie gives the novel an uneasy and disturbed ending as apparently it looks as if Raza's quest for his true identity, his identity crisis remains unresolved till the end. Before answering this pertinent question, I wish to trace the identity crisis of Raza from his childhood days in Pakistan to his imprisonment at Guantanamo Bay. Raza's confusion and perplexity regarding his identity do not begin with his arrival to America or with the fall of the Twin Towers. For Raza, born to a Japanese mother and Pakistani father, identity crisis

starts from the day he is looked at with suspicious by the Pakistani community due to his Japanese features or because of his inexplicable relation to the Nagasaki bombing of 1945. All these childhood and youth incidents of confused identity are just pricks that disturb but do not unnerve him. Yet they lead him to a feeling of lost national/ethnic identity, a short coming he had inherited from his mother. But in the aftermath of 9/11, while he was in Afghanistan serving as a translator, he gets an identity prick on witnessing the plight of Afghans at the hands of America, with whom he shares religious and ethnic values. Later on when he is accused of Harry Burton's death, whom he had revered as a father, he gets a severe identity blow as not only his loyalty for the American organization for whom he worked as a translator was doubted but also his reverence and adoration for Harry Burton was suspected because of him being a Pakistani Muslim and sharing religious and ethical values with the Afghans.

5.2 The Reinterpreting Phase

5.2.1 Raza's Disturbed Childhood and Adolescence

The reinterpreting of identity echoes the perplexity and conflict in Raza's identity in the pre-9/11 and later post 9/11 turmoil and chaos. Raza's confusion regarding his true identity is visible from the onset of the novel. When as a teenager, Kamila Shamsie off and on narrates episodes which hint upon his confusion and perplexity regarding his true identity. Being the son of Japanese turned Muslim Hiroko; Raza had always been uncomfortable regarding his Japanese features which raise doubt and suspicions on him being a Pakistani. This unease and discomfort on his Japanese features and his mother's true ethnic identity pushes him into an identity quest and crisis from his teenage years which gains momentum and thrust in the post 9/11 scenario. A few incidents from his adolescence are being narrated which prick Raza's conscious and reflect his perplexity and confusion on his identity.

As a child, he felt embarrassed rather ashamed of speaking Japanese with his Hiroko in public. As discussed above, he was even uneasy with his mother's Japanese identity and his Japanese features. In his early teens, when involved in a telephonic love affair with Salma his friend Bilal's sister, Raza's conscious is once again pricked. Salma breaks away by giving the reason that no one would give their daughter's hand in marriage to Raza because he might be deformed as his mother had been a witness and was present in Japan, Nagasaki during the devastating atomic bombing of 1945 (Shamsie, 2009). This rejection plunges him into depths of perplexity and inferiority complex regarding his identity.

Later in the novel, Shamsie declares that Raza was leading two lives, one Raza Ashraf and the other Raza Hazara (2009). Raza on acquaintance with Abdullah (an Afghan by nationality and a young gun runner for the Afghani Mujahedeens and a resident of Sohrab Goth) used to pay regular visits to the slums where these Afghan refugees had taken asylum to teach the slum inhabitants English and to learn how to assemble an AK-47. There he was known by the name of Raza Hazara. Replacing his sir name which was actually Raza Konrad Ashraf with *Hazara*, reflects his dissatisfaction with his ethnic identity, he finds himself misfit in Pakistani society, one reason being the people surrounding him, his friends, class fellows and neighbors who had been thwarting his assimilation in Pakistani society. This dissatisfaction leads him to run off from his house to an Afghani training camp as Raza Ashraf takes the persona of Raza Hazara, an Afghan freedom fighter. Soon Raza is commanded to quit the camp as he is supposed to be an informer of CIA but by the time he reaches his house, his father; Sajjad Ashraf is murdered.

5.2.2 Raza's Empathy with Afghani Mujahideens

While serving in Afghanistan as a translator, in the wake of terrorist attacks of 9/11, and assisting America in the war against terrorism, Raza is disturbed on witnessing the wretchedness and plight of Afghans and the havoc that America was causing in Afghanistan. With Afghans, he shared religious and cultural values, they were his Muslim brethren and hence a religious propensity and a soft corner for them were natural. He had left the Asian continent at the age of seventeen, had spent the last twenty years in the company of Harry Burton, but still he couldn't ignore the pull and haul of his ethnic/religious identity. To answer the pull of his religious identity, Raza openly challenges and questions the American hegemony. Raza, who symbolizes the deviant and probing Muslim mind, is ready to challenge the American discrimination and domination and create for Muslims a space of resistance within the margins, hence making the margins a site of resistance, emancipation, enlightenment and creativity. His comment while having a discussion with Harry is thought provoking:

When you don't know the realities of war, that's when you can put things like this out of your head. But coming here, being in this place, seeing all the young men who have been old men almost their entire lives, it does something to you. It must do something to you, Harry. Don't you feel any responsibility for Abdullah? And as for your father, he would have wept to know the kind of men you and I have become. -- How long ago was it that you decide to justify your life by transforming responsibility into a disease (Shamsie, 2009).

This comment is a sign of challenging status quo; an indication of Raza's transforming identity and need for reinterpreting identity. Raza's blaming and accusing Harry, in a broader perspective symbolizes the Third World country Pakistan holding responsible America, the super power. America has for centuries, governed the Third World countries and even the period of colonization has ended, the post-colonial situation is not much varied.

5.2.3 Raza Suspected for Harry's Murder

The most hard hit identity blow that Raza receives in the aftermath of 9/11 is when he is accused of Harry Burton's murder whom he had revered as a father. Raza Konrad Ashraf is trapped by Steve as a conspirator and master mind behind the death of Harry Burton in Afghanistan. Although, Raza had ardent love and reverence for Harry, Harry was his Godfather, he was shocked when Steve accuses him of signaling the Afghan gunman to fire at Harry. It was a white lie. Steve's accusation rested on the lame excuse that some days earlier he had overheard Raza's telephonic conversation with Abdullah's brother, who had been his adolescence friend and an Afghan resident of Sohrab Goth, Karachi. Raza had once in his teens ventured to visit one of the Mujahideen camps in Afghanistan, where he was turned out the very day he joined the camp. Since then Raza had no contact with Abdullah. Abdullah's brother contacted Raza to seek help for Abdullah, who is an illegal citizen in America and needs to exit the country. Unfortunately, Steve was standing close to Raza while he was attending the call, he hears Ismail addressing Raza as *Raza Hazara*. Steve is so much blinded in his ridiculous assumptions to prove Raza guilty of Steve's murder that he relies on just Ismail's addressing Raza as *Raza Hazara*. How can a name, the way you address someone be a strong justification of proving someone guilty. Moreover, when Harry was fired by the Afghan gunman, Harry and Raza, were playing cricket along with the others. Harry had bowled an off-break, short of length, followed by an exaggerated cry of pain when the batsman hit him for a four. At that moment Steve stepped out of his room to see what the noise was about. The ball landed near Raza, who held up a hand to the fielders to signal he had retrieved it. He was bending down to pick up the ball, when he saw movement in the guard tower. Harry was facing Raza, when the guard fired at him (Shamsie, 2009). Steve misinterprets Raza's signaling the fielder and bending down to pick the ball, as Raza signaling the guard to fire at Harry and his bending down to pick the ball as a gesture to duck just before the guard opens the fire. The misunderstood phone call and the misinterpreted gesture of signaling and bending down of Raza during cricket aren't enough proofs for charging him with terrorist allegations of murdering an American official. Steve is so obsessed in his

assumptions in regarding the Muslims as terrorist, his discriminating nature have blinded him to an extent that he is ready to accept any ridiculous piece of information, any illogical excuse to prove that the Muslims are terrorist. The distrust and hatred that followed 9/11 urges Raza to reinterpret his identity and results in the creation of a resistance identity that instigates him to retaliate and challenge the American discrimination and hegemony.

5.3. The Reclaiming Phase

5.3.1 Raza. K. Ashraf becomes Raza Hazara: a Resistance Identity Construct

After being accused of Harry's murder, Raza gets disoriented and disappointed with the America to an extent that instead of seeking refuge in American judiciary he enters the merciless world of human trafficking, and decides to go to America by sea illegally. This further intensifies the resistance identity (Castells, 2010) creation and symbolizes his deviant behavior. Raza decides to meet Abdullah, whom he had asked Kim to drive to the Canadian border. But Kim betrays his trust and informs the authorities regarding Abdullah's presence in America. At the sight of the policemen entering the restaurant where Abdullah and Raza were to meet, Raza in a spur of a moment takes the most crucial decision of his life. He exchanges his coat with Abdullah and takes his place and is arrested by the FBI as

The officials assume him to be Abdullah, the Afghani Muslim *Mujahid*. The novel ends with Raza being taken to Guantanamo Bay, for worst atrocities to be inflicted upon him.

One gets perplexed at Raza's decision; apparently it looks as if the identity crisis that has brought him from Afghanistan, after a narrow escape from the authorities, to America has remained unresolved. But a close analysis of Raza's forfeiting his life for Abdullah reveals that Raza has actually reclaimed his identity by taking the place of Abdullah in Guantanamo Bay. Guantanamo Bay is notorious for confinement of Muslim jihadis. There it's just the Muslim identity that becomes the sole reason for the worst atrocities and inhuman treatment imposed on the prisoners. Raza who had always been a victim of confused identity and had once ran away from home during teenage to a militant camp to become *Raza Hazara* as according to him this was his true identity, has finally reclaimed that identity. He no longer hangs in confusion regarding his Japanese features nor does his identity pendulum vacillates between his loyalty for America and his pro-Islamic tendencies catalyzed by the plight of Afghans. He is now, a Muslim prisoner detained at Guantanamo Bay, nothing more than that; an identity that Raza Konrad Ashraf has willingly and conscientiously opted for himself. For Raza Konrad Ashraf, the touch of

belongingness was with Abdullah's life and mission. He not only found refuge but reclaimed his true identity in taking Abdullah's place in Guantanamo Bay. As a teenager he was happy and content in pretending to be *RazaHazara* which consequently leads to his taking Abdullah's place at Guantanamo Bay and that was the place and stance in life, the role which made him feel that he belongs the most to the clan of Muslim Mujahideens.

6. CONCLUSION

The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of Kamila Shamsie's 'Burnt Shadows' reveals the author's intention to shift the marginalization of particular groups in society to the center of the narrative. Through her writing, Shamsie challenges the dominant discourse and creates a space for individuals who have been silenced or ignored in the mainstream. One of the key findings of the CDA is the representation of marginalized groups such as women, minorities, and immigrants. The author portrays them as complex characters with agency and individuality, challenging the stereotypes and generalizations that have historically been associated with these groups. The text highlights the struggles faced by these individuals in their daily lives and their efforts to navigate and overcome social, cultural, and political barriers.

Another important finding of the CDA is the role of language in shaping power relations and identity. The author uses language as a tool to challenge dominant discourse and to create a new narrative that reflects the experiences and perspectives of marginalized individuals. Through the use of various narrative techniques, including shifting perspectives and multiple timelines, the author creates a rich and multifaceted story that captures the complexity of identity and the intersections of various forms of oppression. Overall, the CDA of *Burnt Shadows* reveals the power of literature to challenge dominant discourse and to create new spaces for marginalized individuals. The author's commitment to representing diverse experiences and perspectives provides a valuable contribution to contemporary discussions of identity, representation, and social justice. As such, this research paper is an important contribution to the ongoing dialogue on the role of literature in shaping social and political discourse.

Clinching to their Otherness, the Muslim Americans now participate in intellectual and scholarly discussions about what it means to be a Muslim, particularly a Muslim American. As a critical research, the enterprise to trace the identity metamorphosis of Raza has brought forth the thought that notion of Islam and the seeds of Islamization lie dormant in the heart of every Muslim and the proliferation of these seeds often takes place during identity crisis and results in conception of a unified identity. On the part of Americans, there is a

dire need for tolerance and compassion in accepting and acknowledging Islam as a religion of peace and benevolence. Pakistani writers like Kamila Shamsie have felt the urgent need of giving voice to the earlier unheard and silenced Pakistani community and taken a stand against their misrepresentation. They are not merely concerned with recovering past cultures and histories, but discovering how the world can move beyond colonialism towards a region of mutual esteem and respect. These writers emphasize that the formerly colonized nations would continue to be hybrid with a wretchedly schizophrenic identity if they don't challenge and question the Western hegemony. The center is shifting anew; formerly colonized and silenced voices are entering the discourse.

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