

Tribhuvan University

Negotiating the National with the Transnational: Interrogating Diaspora  
Consciousness in South Asian Novels in English

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of  
Tribhuvan University in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

English

By

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Ph.D. Reg. No. 242/074

April 2023

## Letter of Recommendation

We certify that this dissertation entitled “Negotiating the National with the Transnational: Interrogating Diaspora Consciousness in South Asian Novels in English” was prepared by Ravi Kumar Shrestha under our guidance. We hereby recommend this dissertation for final examinations by the Research Committee of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, in fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English.

Dissertation Committee:



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Approval Letter

This dissertation entitled “Negotiating the National with the Transnational: Interrogating Diaspora Consciousness in South Asian Novels in English” submitted by Mr. Ravi Kumar Shrestha for final examination to the Research Committee of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University in fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English. I hereby, certify that the Research Committee of the Faculty has found this dissertation satisfactory in scope and quality and has therefore accepted for the degree.

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Prof. Kushum Shakya, PhD

Dean and Chairman

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Date: April 18, 2023

### Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and it contains no materials previously published. I have not used its materials for the award of any kind of other degree. Whenever and wherever other authors' sources of information have been used, they are acknowledged and cited.

Signature:

Ravi Kumar Shrestha

January 17, 2023

## Acknowledgements

I wish to express my gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Dhruva Karki (Former Dean of Nepali Military Academy) and Co-Supervisor Associate Prof. Dr. Hari Ram Adhikari for taking painstaking efforts in encouraging, guiding and inspiring me in course of writing the dissertation. Their guidance and feedback in writing the dissertation incredibly and indelibly moulded my way of writing.

I am indebted to the members of the committee of the central Department of English, Kirtipur, Prof. Dr. Jib Lal Sapkota (Head of the Central Department of English, T.U.), Prof. Dr. Krishna Chandra Sharma, Prof. Dr. Ram Chandra Paudel (Former Dean of Nepal Open University of Social Sciences and Humanities), and Prof. Dr. Anirudra Thapa for advising, encouraging and giving me proper direction in the reiterating process of preparing the Dissertation.

I must thank the Committee members of the Office of Dean (Balkhu), Dean Prof. Dr. Kushum Shakya, Assistant Dean Prof. Dr. Dubi Nanda Dhakal and Assistant Dean Prof. Tara Prasad Bhusal for their continual and timely support in my research work. I would like to appreciate Mr Bijay Ghimire and Mr. Samprit Tandukar for their administrative and technical support. Likewise, I would like to heartily thank UGC for the grant I have been provided for my PhD.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my venerable Prof. Dr. Shreedhar P. Lohani, Prof. Dr. Abhi Subedi, Prof. Khagendra P. Bhattarai (Former VC of Pokhara University), Prof. Dr. Shreedhar Gautam (President of LAN) who was always ready to help me being my academic mentor, Prof. Dr. Mohan Lohani, Prof. Dr. Padma P. Devkota, Prof. Dr. Anand Sharma, Prof. Dr. Arun Gupto, Prof. Dr. Amma Raj Joshi (VC of Far-western University), Prof. Risikesh Upadhyaya, Prof. Dr. Sanjeeb Upreti, Prof. Dr. Bijay Kumar Rauniyar, Prof. Dr. Bhupa Prasad Dhamala, Prof. Dr. Rudra Paudel, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Toya Upadhyay and so on.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to Prof. Dr. Sanjay Kumar Mishra, the Head of the Department of English (Patan Multiple Campus) for his constant support sending me relevant materials, suggestions, guidelines and encouragement, research members, the Campus Chief, Assistant Campus Chiefs, and colleagues of Patan Multiple Campus.

I must thank Prof. Dr. Karki, Associate Prof. Dr. Adhikari, Prof. Dr. Thapa, and Prof. Dr. Mishra for their insightful suggestions and materials they provided me in course of writing my dissertation. Besides, my elder daughter Rumi Shrestha (an Engineering Graduate) from the Clemson University (USA) helped me with necessary research material collection for this dissertation. I wish to thank the Central Library of T.U. and Social Science Baha for the research materials I was provided. I feel grateful to all those who have helped and encouraged me directly or indirectly to complete my dissertation.

Finally, words cannot express how grateful I am to my beloved wife Rajya Laxmi Shrestha whose patience and cultural upbringing played a great role to get peaceful, congenial, and supporting environment at home. I feel blessed to have two witty, cultured and supporting daughters Rumi Shrestha (Engineer in Texas) and Sneha Shrestha (a MBBS Student at KUSMS, Dhulikhel) whose encouragement has left me an indelible impression.

Ravi Kumar Shrestha

## Dedication

I dedicate this research to my beloved mother Late Bindu Sundari Shrestha and my father Late Purna Bahadur Shrestha who have shown me this world giving birth. Despite being simply literate, my mother implanted the seeds of education in my delicate mind of childhood when gaining education for a rustic boy like me was like finding oasis. Things that could not be imagined and dreamt then have been true due to mainly my mother's inspiration, motivation, blessings and nurturing. Therefore, her impression on me is indelible. I pray to the Almighty for the eternal peace of my parents' departed souls in the heavenly abode.

Ravi Kumar Shrestha

## Abstract

Transnational identity has become an intriguing debate in the diaspora consciousness over decades. This study concentrates on the interaction between the national and the transnational in the fictional representations of the South Asian diaspora. To unfold intricacies in the identity quest in the South Asian diaspora, the researcher has selected Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*, Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*, Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, and Manjushree Thapa's *Seasons of Flight*. The major characters in these South Asian novels, in their quest for the white identity, undergo a process of transformation of consciousness in white communities of the US and the UK. In their quest journey, the South Asian immigrants in the rich industrialized western world in their pursuit of multiple opportunities, such as higher education and career prospects live in diaspora having multiple identities. Their colour, religion, language and geographical location make them the other and they begin to question and search their identity. For an instance, in *The Namesake*, the characters move from the USA to India and vice versa. Since they live in diaspora in the USA, they face conflicts and need the negotiation for their survival. Regarding negotiation, they have maintained it because they celebrate Christian festivals as they did Hindu festivals in India. Besides, they enjoy eating American food as well as Indian dishes. Similarly, as an instance of negotiation from *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Changez also tries his best to negotiate the language and culture of both Pakistan and America. Like Changez, Prema in *Seasons of Flight* does negotiation between American culture and Nepali culture in the cultural third space. Similarly, *Brick Lane* explores the negotiation of Bangaldeshi immigrants in England. Chanu uses English in London, but teaches his children Bangladeshi language and literature. His wife Nazneen learns English but is connected to the roots talking to her



sister Hasana in Dhaka and wears sari. Thus, these characters in these selected novels make a balance following the language and culture of both the home country and host country. So, they happen to show their loyalty and attachment to both the home country and host country while doing negotiation. They carry hybrid, divided identity, national and transnational identities. These interactions between people from different nations have formed an everlasting foundation for the modern social and cultural transformation. A new era of South Asian migration to the West began in the post-war period. The study focuses on the South Asian characters' migration to Britain and America with their desiring whiteness, which appears as white privileges such as education, lucrative jobs, business, social security and freedom, which get reflected in the life of the South Asian characters such as Ashoke, Ashima, Gogol, Chanu, Nazneen, Changez, Prema and so on in the primary texts: *The Namesake*, *Brick Lane*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Seasons of Flight*. The study explores how their desiring whiteness becomes a major reason for the South Asian immigrants to be transnational. This study unfolds the South Asian characters in their conflicts within the diaspora, have identity crisis, and try to do negotiations between national and transnational in different motifs such as language, politics, education, culture and so on.

The study investigates the negotiation between the national and the transitional in the theoretical framework of postcolonialism. The postcolonial experiences such as migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, race, gender, difference and so on are related to mainly identity issues of postcolonial people or immigrants from the postcolonial states. Since the European theories cannot address postcolonial people, postcolonial theories are used to raise voices of the postcolonial people. Hence, in the theoretical stance of postcolonialism, different concepts such as desiring whiteness,

double consciousness, hybridity, national and transnational are used to analyze the selected novels. The third space is the hybrid location where the South Asian diaspora is located. So, Homi K Bhabha's theory of hybridity and third space are applied to explore the hybrid identity of the South Asian immigrants. Likewise, third space is used to discover how South Asian transnational characters negotiate in different identities such as hybrid, divided, national and transnational. Besides, double consciousness of W. E. B. Du Bois and Frantz Fanon, nationalism theory of Benedict Anderson and transnationalism theory of Steven Vertovec and Linda Basch et al. are applied as theoretical concepts to interrogate the conflicts and negotiation between the national and transnational in the third space. Thus, the study exposes the South Asian immigrants' position in the western world. At times, the South Asian immigrants such as Ashoke, Gogol, Sonia, Nazneen, Chanu, Changez, Prema and so on enjoy the privileges of the whiteness and they take advantages over transnational identity since they become successful in negotiation between the national and transnational identities. They even maintain their status in the host country and glorify the western liberalism, too. However, at other times, characters such as Chanu, Karim and Changez fail to negotiate as they find their transnational identity endangered due to their national identity and they decide to return to the home countries. The study explores about when the South Asian characters succeed in negotiation and settle in the host country and when they fail to negotiate, and return to the home country. It explores how and why they do negotiation successfully between the national and the transnational in the diasporic consciousness or fail to do so.

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## Chapter I

### Issues of National and Transnational and Diaspora Consciousness

Diasporic experience embodies negotiation between the national and the transnational. This research work extrapolates exposures of identity quests of fictional characters, embodiments of South Asian diasporas in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*, Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*, Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and Manjushree Thapa's *Seasons of Flight*. Moreover, this dissertation unfolds the diaspora consciousness of the South Asian characters such as Ashoke, Ashima, Sonia, Gogol, Maxine, Nazneen, Chanu, Shahina, Bebi, Hasina, Karim, Changez and Prema in these South Asian novels. These fictional characters in South Asian novels epitomize immigration and transformation with multiple factors, including an increasing trend of globalization and transnationalism in recent decades. In the select novels, South Asian immigrants appear to have moved to the West, which is predominantly resided by the White people. This study investigates the dynamics of negotiation between the national and the transnational identities of South Asian characters, in their efforts to locate themselves in the third space in Homi K Bhabha's term, in western societies.

National and transnational indicate two different identities that immigrants maintain in the diaspora. The national identity embodies the identity of individuals being the citizen of the nation, where they are born or brought up or legally become the citizens. Wherever they migrate or settle, they carry it or it follows them like their shadow. Their national identity gets reflected in their culture, language, religion, and so on. Likewise, when the people migrate to hostlands crossing borders and maintain relationships with the homelands, they inculcate their transnational identity in their minds. This dissertation reveals how the South Asian characters feel carrying both

national and transnational identities, which indicate their diasporic experiences, too. Living in the hostland, they perpetually connect themselves to their original homelands. At the same time, they interact with the tangible and intangible values in the hostland.

People who leave their original homeland and settle in the hostland are called diasporas. After migrating to Europe and Americas, people of South Asian nations such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bhutan and Afghanistan create South Asian diasporas. Robin Cohen defines diaspora as people who disperse “from an original homeland often traumatically to two or more foreign regions” (17). Dispersal of the people from the homeland to the foreign land reposes the question of identity of the diasporas. Retracing the history of the diaspora, Cohen underscores the problematics of the diaspora ever since time immemorial. In this connection, Cohen reminds of God’s warning to me to leave Israel in the Old Testament:

If you do not observe and fulfil all the law . . . the Lord will scatter you among all peoples from one end of the earth to the other. . . . Among these nations you will find no peace, no rest for the sole of your foot. Then the Lord will give you an unquiet mind, dim eyes and a failing appetite. Your life will hang continually in suspense, fear will beset you night and day, and you will find no security all your life long. (21)

Cohen’s idea about diaspora is important to understand the classical or Jews diaspora which was forced migration caused by political cause, whereas today’s South Asian diaspora is quite voluntary.

In social context of South Asia, economy becomes a major factor for an ever-increasing trend of migration to the west. To retrace the history of South Asian

diaspora shows that the beginning of the South Asians people's migration began first when they were taken by the colonizers to different colonies as indentured laborers. But today, unlike forced indentured laborers, they migrate for better opportunities and life style. Judith M. Brown lists three types of economic trajectories for South Asian diaspora, which are: "The first trajectory was that of indentured labourers and their experience when their indenturers ended. The second was that of South Asians who moved to post-war industrial Britain. The third was the experience of those who moved later to northern America and Australia into complex, post-industrial economies" (62). In the select novels, South Asian characters appear to have been affected only by the second and third economic trajectories. People migrate from one part to the other part of the world mainly for better opportunities as well as personal security. In other words, people tend to migrate from one part of the world to the other when they are forced to move out of their home because they do not have space enough in their original homeland. Or, they just intend to move from their home country in search of better opportunities, such as jobs, business, and education. In connection with people's inclination to move from their homeland to the voyage from enterprise, nevertheless, Rajesh Rai and Peter Reeves underscore : "Certainly the experience of South Asian migrant communities born out of slavery, indenture or convict labour was vastly different from that of a contemporary South Asian migrant IT professional who finds his or her niche in 'Silicon Valley'" (2). In that sense, the South Asian diaspora has undergone a drastic change over a course of time. To take a case in point Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* goes to Princeton University and Ashoke in *The Namesake* graduates from MIT, both prestigious Ivy League Schools.



During the Second World War (1939 –1945), most of the war–victims, particularly the Jewish people migrate from Europe to North America. At the same time, the mass exodus of the Jews from different parts of Europe to safer haven, especially Europe and Asia created different communities, including ghettos and refugee camps. Likewise, many of the Chinese people had migrated to different parts of the world, including Taiwan, Hong Kong, Australia, America, and Europe after the communist take over in China. In cases of such forced exodus, exploitation of the minority group is the major cause as in case of classical Jewish diaspora.

Nevertheless, the majority of South Asian immigrants have voluntarily migrated to the West, especially Europe and. The nature of South Asian diaspora is different from the nature of many of the diasporas in general. Major characters in the selected South Asian novels in English uncover how they migrate to the western nations in search of better education, business, social security, job opportunities and liberal political system. So, the main thing is the migration in the past was caused by politics, whereas it is caused primarily by economic factors now. In *Post-colonial Studies: Key Concepts*, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin note, “Diaspora is the voluntary or forcible movement of peoples from their home lands to new regions” (68), which really indicates two causes of diaspora.

The present South Asian diaspora shows how the South Asians are interested in migrating to western countries, such as the UK, the US, Canada, and Australia. As they leave home nations voluntarily, they fairly feel connected to their original home countries. In the case of forced migration, they feel more emotionally connected to their home nations. This is how South Asian diaspora is different from other diasporas.

Diasporic consciousness reflects the life experiences of the immigrants which are built on the basis of their displacement, exile and migration. The term diaspora originated from the life experiences and state of the Jews living in exile getting displaced from their home country and living in the host country. Cohen states, “The notion of 'diaspora', used first in the classical world, has acquired a new meaning in the late twentieth century. Once the term applied principally commonly to Greeks, Armenians and Africans. Now at least thirty declare that they are a diaspora, or are so deemed by others” (507). Cohen’s view of diaspora indicates that diaspora has changed today. Diaspora is related to transnationalism, too. However, Thomas Faist states that “transnational communities encompass diasporas, but not all transnational communities are diasporas” (21), identifying differences between diaspora and transnationalism. In Faist’s perception, the transnational incorporates diaspora, but all the diasporas are not transnational migrants.

The South Asian transnational characters’ loyalty to their home nation is more dominant, whereas diasporic people’s loyalty to the host nation is more dominant. Michael Bruneau claims that “Transmigrants are far too dependent on their community of origin and on their host country to become as independent as people of the diaspora are” (49). But, the important idea about the transmigrants is that their loyalty is divided between the home country and the host country, which also gets reflected in the selected texts of this dissertation.

Since the characters of the selected novels make cross-border mobilities, social movements, networks of business and different activities between the hostland and the homeland or between one hostland and the other hostland, they obviously become transnational characters. *The Namesake*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Seasons of Flight* embody how South Asian transnational characters live in the

diaspora in America, whereas *Brick Lane* reposes South Asian characters living in the diaspora in Britain. However, both the nations, which reflect the transnational setting for the South Asian characters are white dominated, multicultural and liberal nations.

The study discovers how the traditional concept of fixed home or fixed territory or ancestral home has been entirely replaced by transnational activities, movements and networks. To say differently, the concept of multiple homes or the concept of homes in the homeland and hostland has emerged due to transnationalism. The study reflects how South Asian transnational characters connect their hostland to the homeland. This indicates that despite having transnational identity, they desire to keep their national identity. However, most of the South Asian characters portrayed in these novels desire their national identity when their transnational identity is endangered. For an instance, the central character of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Changez can be taken. After the infamous 9/11 terrorist attacks, the US had launched war against the Islamist extremist group. On September 11 of the year, al Qaeda had crashed the two planes through the twin towers of the New York City, a third plane hit the Pentagon, and the fourth plane over a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Almost 3,000 people were killed during this 9/11 terrorist attacks. As soon as the 9/11 event takes place in America, the American war against al-Qaeda terrorist outfit begins in the fictional world. In *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Changez with his transnational identity gets terribly shocked when he faces discrimination, segregation and torture from the American government as white Americans start suspecting mainly South Asian Muslims. So, Changez desires for his national identity. Similarly, the study also uncovers the South Asian immigrant characters' pursuit of their transnational identity which has become both the prospect and threat to the South Asian communities in the US. In other words, they have opportunities to grow while

facing threats of endangering their original identity. Moreover, these South Asian immigrants in the selected novels have to face the security threat and the identity question.

Major characters in Lahiri's *The Namesake*, Ali's *Brick Lane*, Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, and Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* embody a progressive trajectory of conflict and resolution, and suffering and transformation by reconciling their perception of the national and the transnational. They tend to negotiate between the national and the transnational in the third space, somewhere between the homeland and the hostland, resulted from their deep-rooted connections to both of the cultures. These characters in the hostland continuously cherish benefits of the rich industrialized nations, including the US and the UK while retaining their original home-grown cultural heritage of the source country. In this way, these immigrants unravel ambivalence between the two cultures, representative of the two formerly colonial and colonized worlds through food and dress, feast and festival, and language and education.

While examining these characters' negotiation between nationalism and transnationalism, the research addresses the following questions:

1. What are the specific sites of encounter between the national and transnational in the diaspora in the selected novels?
2. Why do major characters in their role play of South Asian immigrants in the West in the South Asian novels come across the third space in the United States and and Great Britain?
3. How do these diaspora novels reflect negotiation in multiple identities?

When South Asians migrate to the United States or Great Britain, they live in the diaspora with multiple identities. Their color, religion, language, and geographical

location make them the ‘other’ and they begin to question and search their identity. Indeed, these South Asian men and women migrate to the West for better opportunities, such as pursuing higher education in reputed schools, high-paid jobs, business prospect, independent lifestyles and better social security. More specifically, this dissertation investigates into instances of negotiation between the national and the transnational in the hostland specifically in sights of language, education, politics and culture in the selected South Asian diaspora novels in English. Basically, these immigrants in the rich industrialized world negotiate in the cultural space of food, dress, festivals, art and language. Further, some of these lead characters represent the South Asian immigrants’ life in the multicultural diaspora in the West where they have multiple identities based on nationality/region, profession, religion and language. Regarding nationalities/region, they become Nepalese, Indians, Pakistanis, Bangalese, Americans, British and South Asians. Likewise, these immigrants in the West have been pursuing high level professions, including engineers, doctors, and professors. In their faiths, they would still remain Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and Shikhs. Likewise, they would maintain their identities of hybrid, double consciousness, triple consciousness and multiple consciousness in their individual identities. They have to know at least two languages: the language of the home country and the language of the host country. Besides, they make a balance following the language and culture of both the home country and the host country. They show their loyalty and attachment to both the home country and the host country, which they do through negotiation. Hence, they carry hybrid, divided, national and transnational identities.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study primarily provides a new perspective to discover language, culture, education and politics as specific sites of encounter between national and

transnational of the concerns of South Asian Diaspora. It enables the readers to understand and explore that the South Asian immigrants migrate to Britain and the USA for embracing white privileges such as lucrative jobs, higher education, business, social security and western freedom. Another major objective of the study is to scrutinize how the South Asian immigrants negotiate between the national and the transnational in food, dress, music, festivals, language, education and politics. Finally, the study provides another conceptual framework to the readers to understand the power dynamics between national and transnational awareness.

### **Significance of the Study**

In recent decades, South Asia has increasingly been a potential site of research and knowledge production. In the humanities, numerous research works concentrate on issues of migration, diaspora and transnationalism of immigrant characters fictional works of South Asian writers such as Lahiri, Ali, Hamid, Thapa, Bharati Mukherjee, Kiran Desai, Michael Ondaatjee and Salman Rushdie. In this dissertation, the South Asian writers are themselves transnational writers, and thus, reflect their transnational experiences of the host nations and national experiences of their home nation in their novels. They seem to be representatives of their South Asian immigrant characters in the West. On the one hand, their texts reveal how the South Asian characters get othered, discriminated, alienated, culturally displaced and victimized in course of their identity crisis, conflicts and negotiation; on the other hand, the texts reflect how the South Asian immigrants get benefitted by the privileges of whiteness getting higher education, liberation, better jobs, business and social security. Mainly, the study addresses the centre from the centre as the writers are writing in the West. Besides, the theories of hybridity, double consciousness, transnationalism, and nationalism, which are applied in this research study, are very important for the study

of migration, transmigration and border studies. Likewise, the cultural theories of Bhabha and Hall that are applied are widely applicable in South Asian Studies and postcolonial studies.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

This study is related to the South Asian transmigrants' identities such as hybrid, double consciousness, national and transnational. The study is confined to the critical analysis of the selected South Asian English novels which are Lahiri's *The Namesake*, Ali's *Brick Lane*, Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and Thapa's *Seasons of Flight*. So, the research study has delimited the location to South Asian nations such as India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal and western nations: America and Britain. The study remains neutral regarding the debatable political, national, international and religious issues that the novels may include so that the bilateral relationship between or among nations may not be weakened and affected by such a research work. The theoretical concepts such as hybridity, double consciousness and desiring whiteness are delimited and incorporated in the broader theoretical framework of national and transnational. So, this study is mainly delimited to the theoretical concepts of Homi K. Bhabha, Frantz Fanon, W. E. B. Du Bois, Steven Vertovec, Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller, Cristina Szanton Blanc, Roger Waldinger and Stuart Hall as a theoretical framework for the systematic analysis of the selected texts.

### **Research Gap**

Numerous critical receptions on transnational situations in the South Asian diaspora in the West revolve around conflict and identity crisis. Some of the novels, including *The Namesake*, *Brick Lane*, *Seasons of Flight*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, and Bharati Mukherjee's *Jasmine* rather explore negotiation between

the new host culture and the original home culture. In their fictional works, *The Namesake*, *Brick lane*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, *Seasons of Flight* and *Jasmine* emphasize on resolution and negotiation of the two cultures, whereas others such as Michael Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost*, Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*, and so on do not. These texts have not been analysed for finding out what kind of models they present regarding their conflicts on issues of food, dress, music, festivals, language, education and politics. Little research has been done to explore the models they present for resolving such issues. This research interrogates the novels by using specific theoretical lenses such as Double Consciousness by W. E. B. Du Bois, Hybridity and Third Space by Homi K. Bhabha, Desiring Whiteness by Kalpana-Seshadri-Crooks and Frantz Fanon, Nationalism by Benedict Anderson and transnationalism by Steven Vertovec. The novels that reveal resolve means that the negotiation of immigrant characters has been shown, but the novels that do not reveal resolve means that the negotiation has not been shown. There is not enough research in this field regarding the factors that affect the negotiation or lack of negotiation. This is the research gap.

### **Rationale for the Selection of the Primary Texts**

The study has selected four novels *The Namesake* (2003) by Lahiri, *Brick Lane* (2003) by Ali, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007) by Hamid and *Seasons of Flight* (2010) by Thapa. All the writers are diaspora writers of South Asian background: Lahiri is from India, Ali from Bangladesh, Hamid from Pakistan and Thapa from Nepal. They portray characters that represent South Asian men and women migrating to the West, including the USA and the UK from South Asia. Among the four novels, *Seasons of Flight* cannot be regarded as the postcolonial text as the South Asian location of this text is Nepal which is not a postcolonial nation,



whereas other three texts are from previously British–colonized nations. These texts show the existing trend of South Asian characters’ transnational activities in the beginning of twenty first century as they migrate to the West mainly to America and Britain in search of better job opportunities, education, business, social security, freedom and so on. These texts reveal how the South Asian characters as transmigrants face conflicts between national and transnational in the host nation, have identity crisis and try to do negotiation between the national and the transnational in different issues such as language, politics, education and culture. The selection of theoretical ideas such as hybridity, double consciousness, desiring whiteness, transnational and national is very suitable to analyse the selected transnational literary novels. Moreover, these texts mainly focus on identity issues and negotiating strategy of the transnational characters depicted in the transnational setting in the novels. Thus, the novels/texts seem to have been properly selected for the present research work.

### **Organization of the Research**

This research study consists of seven chapters. The dissertation has been divided into seven chapters in such a way that every chapter is related to other chapters. Every chapter is designed and written so that it may reflect key ideas such as transmigration, South Asian immigrants, identity crisis, negotiation in the third space and so on. The first chapter is ‘Introduction’. The second chapter deals with Literature Review and Theoretical Review. The third chapter deals with Desiring Whiteness of South Asian immigrants, whereas the fourth chapter focuses on Double Consciousness of the immigrants. Likewise, the fifth chapter deals with Hybrid identity of the South Asian immigrants. The sixth chapter is the major chapter which deals with the national and transnational identity issues of the South Asian

immigrants. The final chapter focuses on Findings, Conclusion, and Suggestions for the further study.

Chapter 1 is “Diaspora Consciousness and the Issues of the National and the Transnational” which is comparatively short, but deals with fundamental aspects of the research such as Statement of the Problem, Research Questions, Hypothesis, Rationale for the Selected Texts, Delimitations for the Study, Methodology, General Overview of the Study and Significance of the Study. Thus, this first chapter gives a brief vision about the research study which is the initial step to enter into other chapters of the study.

Chapter 2 is “Literature Review: Hybridity, Desiring Whiteness, Double Consciousness and Negotiation between National and Transnational”, which explicates methodology, including theoretical and conceptual framework. Firstly, this chapter deals with the main theoretical framework which includes major theoretical concepts such as national, transnational, hybridity, double consciousness and desiring whiteness. The major theoretical views of the theorists such as Bhabha, Fanon, Dubois, Anderson, Vertovec, Basch, Schiller and Blanc are synthesized to develop the theoretical model in the Theoretical Review in this chapter, which becomes very useful for the textual analysis in other chapters. Secondly, the Literature Review on primary texts such as *The Namesake*, *Brick Lane*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Seasons of Flight*, which is the part and parcel of the Dissertation, is incorporated and dealt with very critically in this chapter. This chapter deals with the critics who on these primary texts have critiqued giving their views on the selected South Asian novels giving the picture of South Asian immigrants living in the diaspora and transnational setting in the West.

Similarly, chapters 3 to 6 are analytical chapters in this research work. Chapter 3 is “Desiring Whiteness: A Major Cause for Transnational Migration”, which deals with the desiring whiteness of the South Asian immigrants in *The Namesake*, *Brick Lane*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Seasons of Flight*. It unfolds South Asian characters’ innate desire for the whiteness in their migration to the US and the UK, considering this passion for the white color forms of privileges in these industrialized countries, which can help them for getting job opportunities, better education, social security, business and freedom in these novels. As the SA immigrants migrate to the US and the UK, which are the lands dominated by whites, the idea appears to be very justifiable. The textual analysis in this chapter focuses on whiteness which is taken as desire, identity, threat and negotiation for the immigrants. The textual analysis reveals how the South Asian immigrants have ambivalent perspectives towards whiteness. They desire and fear it, which indicates that whiteness appears to be desire as well as threat, to them. Basically, this chapter deals with the South Asian immigrants’ desire to have the white identity as they find whiteness as a form of privilege. Finally, the textual analysis in this chapter reveals how the immigrants who have conflicts between national and transnational in matters of language, culture, politics and education in the third space want to have negotiation for their survival and existence as they regard whiteness as negotiation.

Chapter 4 is “Double Consciousness: Divided Loyalty in Diaspora Consciousness”, which deals with divided identity of the South Asian immigrants in the diaspora. This chapter shows how Double Consciousness appears to be desire for the South Asian immigrants implicitly, while it appears to be identity, threat and negotiation for them explicitly. Dubosian concept of Double Consciousness, which Du Bois has used in the context of Afro-American, has been used in this chapter in

context of South Asian immigrants. Both Du Bois and Fanon as theorists of Double Consciousness have been used to show how South Asian immigrants in the host nation find their divided self. They neither become completely Americans nor British or South Asians. Their identity is divided because their loyalty, mind and responsibility get divided between the host nation and the home nation. Hence, this chapter explores how the immigrants along with the identity of Divided Consciousness live in the diaspora, face identity crisis and try to do negotiation between national and transnational.

Chapter 5 is “Hybridity: A Transnational Reality of South Asian Diaspora”, which deals with the hybrid identity of the South Asian immigrants in the diaspora. This chapter deals with the evolution of hybrid identities of South Asian immigrants delineated in *The Namesake*, *Brick Lane*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Seasons of Flight*. It deals with the conflicts among the immigrant characters on the issues of language, culture, politics, and education which are rooted in the varying levels of hybrid identities the immigrants have acquired in course of living in the transnational setting in the West. It shows how they have hybrid identities due to transnationalism. In this chapter, Bhabha’s theories of hybridity and third space are used to uncover how the South Asian immigrants’ identities become hybrid in the third space, where according to Bhabha, immigrants try to negotiate between their national identity and transnational identity. One very important aspect of this chapter is that the issues such as language, culture, politics, and education on which immigrants face conflicts and do negotiation are applied in Chapters 3, 4 and 6, too as all the four chapters 3,4,5 and 6 deal with the identity issues of the South Asian immigrants. Besides, chapter 5 has been designed slightly on a different model from chapters 3, 4 and 6 thinking that all these issues on which immigrants face conflicts and hence do negotiation can be applied in other chapters.

Chapter 6 is “Negotiating the National and the Transnational Consciousness” which incorporates chapters 3, 4 and 5. This chapter explores how different identities of South Asian immigrants such as hybrid and double consciousness are formed in the hostland between transnational and national identities. This chapter deals with the national and transnational lenses that are used to show the conflicts of the immigrants in the diaspora and how they try to do negotiation in the third space. Major transnational theories of Vertovec, Basch, Schiller, Blanc and Waldinger are applied. Likewise, nationalism theories of Anderson, Anthony D. Smith, Ernest Gellner, Ernest Renon and Fredrick Buell are applied. Besides, in this chapter the focus is on negotiation between national and transnational. Hence, Bhabha’s theory of third space (211) is mainly used to discover how the South Asian immigrants do negotiation in the third space.

Chapter 7 entitled “Findings, Conclusions, and Suggestions for Further Study” deals with the main findings and conclusions of the whole dissertation. Likewise, this chapter also includes suggestions for the fresh scholars and researchers for further study.

## **Chapter II**

### **Literature Review: Theoretical and Textual**

This dissertation concentrates on the issue of transnationalism and nationalism experienced by South Asian characters in the diaspora in the selected novels. For this purpose, the study explores the diaspora consciousness in the characters with South Asian origin situated in diverse transnational contexts represented in *The Namesake*, *Brick Lane*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Seasons of Flight*. Considering the exigency of the South Asian diaspora in the west, the following section critically retraces the existing literature on transnationalism and nationalism. First, theoretical review has been synthesized on relevant critical concepts such as hybridity, desiring whiteness and double consciousness in the diaspora. Then critical reviews on the selected primary texts have been brought into discussion which eventually leads to two underlying phenomena in primary texts. First, the diaspora consciousness of the characters has not been adequately problematized despite substantial scholarships on South Asian novels available. Secondly, the models of confrontation and/or negotiation on the issues of transnational nature presented by these novels are still far from due analysis.

#### **Review on Theories**

This review retraces the theories that are used in the textual analysis in this dissertation. The study reviews concepts of transnationalism, nationalism, hybridity, double consciousness, and desiring whiteness in the theoretical frame of postcoloniality and postcolonialism. As the existing literature on transnationalism is thematically categorized into hybridity, desiring whiteness and double consciousness, the review synthesizes theories into the broader framework of transnationalism and nationalism. The review on desiring whiteness unfolds how the concept of desiring

whiteness is suitable for the theoretical analysis of the South Asian immigrants' cause for migrating to the West. Likewise, the review on double consciousness becomes fruitful to reveal the divided identity or divided consciousness of the immigrant characters in the novels. Similarly, the review on hybrid identity shows how Bhabha's theoretical concept of the mixed identity of the immigrants who negotiate in the third space is suitable for the theoretical framework. Finally, the review on the national and the transnational becomes greatly helpful for the textual analysis of the selected texts with the help of the powerful theoretical tools the national and the transnational to reveal how the South Asian immigrant characters face conflicts and do negotiation between the national and the transnational in the third space.

In course of the theoretical review, the criticism of theorists and various critics on the selected and necessary theoretical concepts such as transnationalism, nationalism, hybridity, desiring whiteness and double consciousness has been critically made as a part of theoretical review so that the textual analysis of the dissertation can be done effectively.

### **Hybridity**

Essentially, hybridity, which is mixedness of two plants, races, languages and cultures, is used as a powerful postcolonial literary and cultural theory. Hybridity is a cross between two separate and dissimilar entities, races, cultures which mix giving birth to a new object, race and culture. In other words, it is signifying a counter-term to the stable national identity. In post-colonial theory, hybridity indicates the mingling of signs and practices from cultures of the colonizing and the colonized nations. Different theorists have defined hybridity. Mikhail Bakhtin focuses on the linguistic model of hybridity. What Bakhtin explores about hybridity is hybridity shows how the language within a single sentence can be double-voiced. In *The Dialogic*

*Imagination: Four Essays*, Bakhtin explains, “Hybridization is the mixing of two languages within the boundaries of a single utterance . . . that is deliberate” (358).

When people migrate to other places, their language mixes with the language of the place where they settle. As a result, the languages mix and get hybridized. In the postcolonial context, Bakhtin examines that hybridization destabilizes univocal forms of authority, whereas Bhabha sees it as a problematic of colonial representation.

Bhabha associates hybridity primarily with colonialism. He argues that the production of hybridity both expresses the condition of colonial voice and marks the possibility of counter colonial resistance. Bhabha, a leading voice in postcolonial studies who is highly influenced by Western poststructuralists mainly Derrida, Lacan and Foucault is also a major influence upon so many postcolonial and poststructuralist theorists. Bhabha’s views on hybridity express the relation between the culture and hybridity. He writes his theory of hybridity associating it with mimicry and sly civility in *Location of Culture*. In *Location of Culture*, Bhabha argues, “Colonial hybridity is not a problem of genealogy or identity . . . its rules of recognition” (114). Bhabha’s notion of hybridity indicates the political and cultural negotiation between colonizers and colonized. He explores that a major characteristic of colonial culture is its hybridity. He states that two different cultures are not the cause of conflict, but are instead the consequence of the discriminatory practices. He further states that cultures are effects of stabilization produced by authority. He suggests that cultures exist after hybridizing process rather than existing before and they are a part of an ongoing process. He argues that since the location of culture is spatial and temporal, hybridity and liminality do not only refer to space but also to time. He claims that majority liberal cultures in the West must view themselves through the postcolonial perspective.



Bakhtin focuses on the linguistic hybridity, whereas Bhabha highlights the cultural hybridity. But, Robert J. C. Young relates hybridity to racial theory and cultural criticism. Young has pointed out biological origins of hybridity that projects a conjoining strings of individual identity: “hybridity is a making one of two distinct things, so that it becomes impossible for the eye to detect the hybridity of a geranium or a rose” (24). In Young’s postulation, hybrid infers to a cross between two different species with a botanical image. Young identifies connections between hybridity and discourses in cultural studies. Further, Young unfolds the dynamics of the antithetical structure in society in the diaspora. Young considers hybridity a blend of people of multiple races in discourses of human sciences.

Unlike Young, in *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, Paul Gilroy defines hybridity differently: “the idea of hybridity, of intermixture . . . I think there isn’t any purity, there isn’t any anterior purity . . . that’s why I try not to use the word hybrid. . . . Cultural production is not like mixing cocktails” (54-55). Gilroy also shows the problem of ethnic purity in hybridity; he tends to reveal the creative aspect of hybridity. Gilroy points out the transatlantic flows of people, ideas and culture that began with the slave trade, arguing that “the invigorating flux of . . . mongrel cultural forms” (3). It indicates that Gilroy’s views are important for cultural renewal in Europe. But, Cristina Voicu argues, “On the one hand, hybridity may imply a space between two pure identities; on the other hand, it can be understood as a sine-qua-non condition of the human cultures, which do not contain pure identities” (190). However, Bhabha uses hybridity as such a form of liminal space, where “cutting edge of translation and negotiation” (89) occurs and which he names as the “Third Space” (211). This is a space where cultural hybrid or original culture is formed. John Rutherford directly regards hybridity as third space in place of relating

hybridity to third space as Bhabha has done. Rutherford writes what Bhabha argues in the interview, “For me the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the Third Space, which enables other positions to emerge” (211). In this context, both Bhabha and Rutherford deal with hybridity differently, however both of them relate hybridity to third space. According to Bhabha, the hybrid third space is an ambivalent site where cultural meaning and representation have no “primordial unity or fixity” (176). Bhabha means to say that cultural identity in the third space is hybridized, which can also be argued that identity is not fixed.

Hall draws an analogy between diaspora and cultural identity. He explains, “The New World presence America, Terra Incognita is therefore itself the beginning of diaspora, of diversity, of hybridity and difference” (235), which indicates that America is a site where people migrate to and hence cultural hybridity is formed. Fanon’s treatment of hybridity is entirely different. In *The Wretched of the Earth*, he uses national cultural identity instead of hybridity, which according to him is formed in three stages: the first stage is mimicking the colonial, the second stage is resistance or negritude that is reacting against the colonial authority and the third stage is combat literature/ revolutionary literature. Fanon argues, “Finally, a third stage, a combat stage where the colonized writer, after having tried to lose himself among the people, with the people, will rouse the people. Instead of letting the people’s lethargy prevail, he turns into a galvanized of the people. Combat literature, revolutionary literature, national literature emerges” (159). He tends to mean that native people can fight with hybrid language, literature, art and culture, which actually build national culture. However, formation of hybridity is a major feature of multicultural western society, where colonized or the Others feel secure.

At one point, Nikos Papastergiadis connects hybrids to xenophobia: “Hybrids were conceived as lubricants in the clashes of culture; they were the negotiators who would secure a future free of xenophobia” (261). It indicates the significance of hybrids. Because of the extensive use of hybridity, it has lured different postcolonial theorists and critics. P. Werbner’s views on hybridity seem to be similar to Papastergiadis’ views. Werbner is very critical about hybridity. In that sense, Werbner postulates his critical view on hybridity: “theoretical metaconstruction of social order” (1) and “all cultures are always hybrid . . . culture as an analytic concept is always hybrid” (15). Werbner’s concept of hybridity indicates that it is interruptive, culturally important, commonplace and pervasive. Bhabha and Hall reconsider hybridity in the postcolonial theoretical frame: “Hybridity is everywhere. It represents in many instances the triumph of the postcolonial or subaltern over the hegemonic” (234). But, Benita Parry, a critic on Bhabha argues, “Hybridity is not everywhere. It is only the elite who can afford to talk about hybridity” (159). Hybridity can be regarded as a bridge between cultures although R.Knox takes hybridity negatively “a degradation of humanity and . . . was rejected by nature” (497). Thus, it can be claimed that hybridity as a concept occupies a central place in postcolonial discourse.

### **Immigrants Desiring for/Threatened from Whiteness**

Immigrants have ambivalent perspectives towards the whiteness. In the West, South Asian characters replicate an ambivalence of desire for and fear of the whiteness. The whiteness symbolizes the West which is also the troupe of colonialism as colonialism started from the West. In this context, people of the world can be divided into two groups: the whites or westerners and non-whites or easterners. The westerners are taken as White people regarding the colour, colonizers and rulers, whereas the Easterners are regarded as non-whites, colonized and subjugated, or the

Other in Edward Said's concept. The image of whiteness incorporates different attributes such as power, knowledge, intelligence, liberal democracy, wealth and fear as well. Whiteness along with the colonizers as a form of authority, knowledge, privilege and power travelled to the East from the West. Most of the eastern nations were colonized by the West. However, almost all the nations are colonized culturally and linguistically in the postcolonial era by the West. Hence, there is still the western hegemony in the East. On the one hand, along with the decolonization, the migration of the non-whites has been increasing to the West; on the other hand, neo-colonization of the West has begun since the decolonization, which indicates the Western influence and dominance upon the postcolonial world. As a result, whichever nation is under the influence of the western civilization, white supremacy is observed there. How crazy are the non-whites to desire whiteness becomes clear from V.S. Naipaul's idea of mimicry, which is mentioned in *The Mimic Men* "I thought Mr Shylock looked distinguished, like a lawyer or businessman or politician. He had the habit of stroking the lobe of his ear and inclining his head to listen. I thought the gesture was attractive; I copied it" (5). Despite being dominated and oppressed by the whites, they become mimic men and want to travel to the West embracing whiteness. So, the whiteness has been a great lure and fear for the non-whites. Whiteness indicates white identity which is formed on the implicit acceptance of white racial domination making white category that systematically benefits the whites segregating and Othering the non-whites. On the one hand, the immigrants desire and want to embrace whiteness travelling to their lands in the hope of having better resources, personal identity, more self-esteem and high social status; on the other hand, immigrants fear the whites thinking that they are likely to be dehumanized by the whites.

The western nations are at the centre, whereas the non-western nations are at the periphery. The migration is definitely from the periphery to the centre. The whiteness is the centre which is the symbol of power, knowledge, resources, and opportunities. So, it is natural that immigrants from various parts of the world transcend the borders to travel to the West to embrace the whiteness. It is the great desire of the immigrants to have the PR of the western nations such as the US, the UK, Canada, Australia and various European nations. Unless the immigrants desire the whiteness, will they feel proud of getting the Permanent Resident of these nations? Seshadri-Crooks makes a Lacanian psychoanalysis of the immigrants for desiring whiteness in *Desiring Whiteness*. Seshadri-Crooks argues, “By whiteness, I refer to a master signifier that establishes a structure of relations, a signifying chain that through a process of inclusions and exclusions constitutes a pattern for organizing human difference” (3). She analyses signifying chain from Lacan’s perspective. According to her analysis of signifying chain, Whiteness is the master signifier that signifies various things such as West, America, Europe, Australia, liberal democracy, quality education, material prosperity, job opportunities and so on. Firstly, the immigrants desire to travel to the West. Then they desire to have good education, their citizenship, good jobs and social security. Thus, they desire to enjoy the privileges of the White category. In this struggle for obtaining those privileges, they cannot be Whites although they enjoy different facilities. However, each time their one desire is fulfilled, they desire to have another thing, which is like the chain of signifiers. In this context, Seshadri-Crooks’ statements, “whiteness represents complete mastery, self-sufficiency, and the jouissance of Oneness” (7) and “[r]ace has an all-too-present master signifier-Whiteness-which offers the illegal enjoyment of absolute wholeness” (7) indicate how Whiteness as a master signifier provides the structure of immigrants’

desires to embrace whiteness in a pattern of a signifying chain. Whiteness, a master signifier (Lacan) is a historical and cultural invention which is not only limited to color, sex and race. Instead, whiteness is like the dream or the unconscious desire of the immigrants. It is like the ultimate destination for many people of the world. Seshadri-Crooks' *Desiring Whiteness* provides a compelling new interpretation of race as a social construction. The white race or Whiteness has been constructed socially and culturally as the truth whose location was previously only Europe but today even America and Australia. According to Samir Amin, Whiteness is entirely related to Europe or the "eternal West" (89) as the standard for the world to emulate. Amin argues that the centre of present whiteness which is merely the artificial continuity between classical Greece and contemporary Europe is only racist hypothesis. He claims, "In fact, up to half of the Greek language was borrowed from the Egyptian and Phoenician tongues . . . a myth dear to Eurocentrism, that of the Aryan purity of Greece" (93). In that sense, Amin points out how the origin of the languages of the West is not the West but the East. Though both Seshadri-Crooks and Amin focus on Whiteness as a cause of migration to the West, Amin even highlights the classical Greek language. However, Whiteness reveals Eurocentric ideology which has engulfed almost the entire globe.

The immigrants travel from the colonized countries to West in search of Whiteness, whereas Whiteness travels from the West to the East. France Widdance Twine and Charles Andrew Gallagher argue, "Whiteness as a form of privilege and power travels from western countries to colonies throughout the world" (10). The westerners use whiteness as a powerful tool to re-colonize the decolonized countries in the postcolonial era differently. Raka Shome connects whiteness to white supremacy and argues, "white supremacy is continuing in the globe 'whether it was

the physical travel of white bodies colonizing ‘other worlds’ or today’s neocolonial travel of white cultural products- medieval music, television, music, television products, academic texts and Anglo-fashions” ( 108). It shows how whiteness has emerged as a transformed power for the Whites in the postcolonial era and a great lure for the non-Whites. It is like the civilizing machine or magic wand for the Whites or westerners to benefit themselves attracting the non-Whites through whiteness. Non-Whites want to embrace Whiteness by hook or crook. Their craze for Whiteness is powerfully quoted by Fanon, who claims, “I marry White culture, White beauty, Whiteness. When my restless hands caress those White breasts, they grasp White civilization and dignity and make them mine” (81). Fanon’s quote indicates how Whiteness is like their unconscious desire. Jacobson’s reading of the debates on US citizenship shows a particular set of norms of Whiteness as “capacity for industriousness, Christianity, degree of freedom, exercise of independent thought necessary for democratic government, and color” (73-74). Different writers such as Du Bois and Cheryl Harris point out that Whiteness supported by courts operates as a wage and property for the whites. In ‘The Future of Whiteness: A Map of Third Wave’, France Widdance Twince and Charles Andru Gallagher include Cheryl’s arguments that “whiteness like land or buildings, operates as a form of property” (11). Thus, Whiteness, according to the above mentioned critics/theorists, which is a great lure for non-white is a master signifier signifying multiple meanings.

Richard Dyer expresses his notion of whiteness a bit differently focusing on the images of whiteness. His claim is how racial imagery is used in the world institutionalizing whiteness. His powerful argument “As long as race is something only applied to non-white peoples, as long as white people are not racially seen and named, they/we function as a human norm” (1) indicates that whites are universalized

to be human. He further asserts “Research into books, museums, the press, advertising, films, television, software repeatedly shows that in Western representation whites are overwhelmingly and disproportionately predominant, have the central and elaborated roles, and above all are placed as the norm, the ordinary and the standard” (3). His notion of whites reflects that whites are in representation everywhere. But, whites’ representation weakens the identity of non-whites. *In Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon seems to agree with Dyer and argues “All round me whiteman. . .” (114). Both Fanon and Dyer view whiteness as threat to non-whites.

Non-whites desire whiteness due to privileges of whiteness although whiteness appear to be threat for them too. Different theorists define whiteness differently. In *Revisiting the Grand White North? Reframing Whiteness, Privilege and Identity in Education*, D. E. Lund and P. R. Carr claim colour white as a global racial supremacy “White is associated with being “the good guy”, the saviour and the empires of Europe and the UK as well as France, Spain and other Euro-Colonizing forces, while Black is inexorably fused to the colonial notions of the “bad guy”, the villain and the forbidding ‘dark content’ of Africa” (2). What is strikingly different quality of Dyer’s notion of whiteness is he analyses images of White people. In course of the analysis of the representation of whiteness, he explores and discusses Christianity, race and imperialism as major three elements of whiteness, which make the embodiment of whiteness. Dyer proposes “I approach this through three elements of its constitution: Christianity, race and enterprise/imperialism” (14). So, it means that whiteness travels from the West to the East and other parts of the globe colonizing the non-whites controlling through Christianity and showing the superiority of White men through the images of Christ, Tarzan, Rambo, and so on. But, in postcolonial era, the non-whites travel to the West desiring whiteness from the



East as they regard whiteness as a symbol of privileges, which the selected South Asian novels reflects

Though immigrants persistently desire for the Whiteness, it even becomes a terror and fear for them. They fear Whiteness because of mainly two reasons: firstly, they think Whiteness will dehumanize non-whites and secondly, they think it will negate their self. Wherever the Whites make their presence, the non-Whites are made the Other. Their absence as human beings is caused by Whites. The binary between Whites and non-Whites/ blacks is created as superior vs inferior, civilized vs barbaric, industrious vs lazy, intelligent vs dull, humans vs beasts, colonizer vs colonized etc. In this binary structure, the former indicates Whites, whereas the latter indicates non-Whites/ blacks. The former group is the privileged group that is benefited by Whiteness, while the latter group is underprivileged group that desires and fears Whiteness. Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* is very contextual in this issue, for Fanon has shown how non-Whites desire and fear Whiteness. Fanon's reference of O. Mannoni's Prospero Complex in the very book reveals how the colonialism exists in the land of non-White natives dehumanizing them. Fanon writes, "Toward Caliban, Prospero assumes an attitude that is well known to Americans in the southern United States. Are they not forever saying that the niggers are just waiting for the chance to jump on white women?" (147). The natives/niggers deserve love, respect and humane behavior from the colonizers, but Prospero's (colonialist's) treatment to Caliban (native) crosses every boundary of inhumanity, so the non-Whites fear the Whites. Mannoni argues, "Some of the semi-human creatures' the unconscious creates, such as Caliban or the Lilliputians, reveal their creator's desire to denigrate the whole of mankind" (101). Mannoni's quote indicates how Caliban in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and Lilliputians in Jonathan Swift's *Gullivers' Travels* get humiliated,

dwarfed and dehumanized by colonizers. Thus, the colonizers'/whites' treatment towards the non-whites/natives appears to be very cruel and inhuman.

Besides being dehumanized by Whites/colonizers, non-whites fear the Whites for fear of having their self negated. Everybody loves their self being loved, which is the inherent nature of human beings. Every movie or novel or play that is not created to show any influence of racism or any biasness reflects how the protagonist who values other's self is valued by others regarding him/her as the hero endowed with human virtues. Hence, the people love such a hero. However, as far as the binary between whites/colonizers and non-whites/colonized is concerned, the former seems to exist even in the lands of the latter one Othering them and negating their identity and existence. Fanon includes non-whites' fear for the Whites realistically in *Black Skin, White Masks*. He claims, "All round me the Whiteman, above the sky. . . under my feet . . . a white song. . . All this whiteness that burns me" (114). Don't these lines reveal how the existence of non-Whites is entirely engulfed by the existence of Whites to reduce them to nothingness? Likewise, the Whites entirely have attitudinal barriers towards non-whites. In place of highlighting the masculinity or sexual vigor of blacks, they construct them with the power of their language in such a way that they are merely confined to their penises. Fanon strongly argues, "Negro but only of a penis; the negro is eclipsed. He is turned into a penis. He is a penis" (170). Fanon's quote has two meanings: one is blacks fear Whites as Whites negate their self regarding them just penis rather than human beings; the second one is Whites fear blacks because of their unusual genitals, which they find a great threat for the White community. Thus, blacks are afraid of the whiteness.

In this way, the immigrants either in their home lands or host lands desire and fear whiteness, which Seshardi-Crooks has regarded as a master signifier. Even Fanon

writes in his book how on the one hand blacks madly desire to embrace whiteness; on the other hand they fear it. As non-Whites find the whiteness as the symbol of identity, dignity, greater resources, high status, and more power, they desire to embrace it. However, wherever the Whites are present, non-Whites feel their absence because of White hegemony and influence. Non-Whites fear the Whites, for the whiteness of Whites dehumanizes and negates their self. Thus, the immigrants have ambivalent attitudes towards whiteness.

### **Double Consciousness**

South Asian immigrants in the rich industrialized West are stereotyped as blacks, slaves, unskilled workers, uncivilized people, sub-humans, yellow people, Orientals, Asians, Muslims, and single minded consciousness with double consciousness and triple consciousness. Contrarily, those immigrants and their progenies have been able to secure high-paid reputed jobs of doctors, engineers, artists, and professors. Nevertheless, they are considered job-seeking immigrants with hybrid identities and double consciousness in their perennial fascination to the west as well as strong attachment to their original homeland in South Asia. For both of the groups of immigrants in the west, double consciousness is their core identity in the diaspora. It was Du Bois who theorized double consciousness in *The Souls of Black Folk*. Du Bois describes:

[A] sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with the second-sight in this American world—a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-

ness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body. (8)

It indicates the identity of the blacks who live in African diaspora. He explains three elements in double consciousness. Firstly, according to Du Bois, the blacks are born with a veil i.e. they are judged by Whites from their own mindset rather than the blacks'. Secondly, the blacks are gifted with the second sight i.e. they see themselves from the eyes or gaze of the Whites or others. Thirdly, the blacks feel two-ness i.e. they regard themselves as both Americans and blacks. Different theorists such as Fanon and Paul Gilroy and critics such as Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs have expressed their views on double consciousness. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon mainly focuses on the identity of colonized people whose consciousness is similar to Du Bois' double consciousness. T. Owens Moore writes, "Du Bois' double consciousness sounds as though it is echoed in Fanon's first book, *Black Skin, White Masks*" (754). Likewise, in *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, Gilroy expresses blacks' experiences in Caribbean nations which are under hegemony of whites. Today double consciousness is used as a powerful theoretical tool to analyze postcolonial literary texts reflecting the different identities of the immigrants in developed nations. Different theorists, critics and writers take double consciousness differently. Some regard double consciousness as a survival strategy for the people living in diaspora, whereas some others regard it as a great danger for the identity of the immigrants. Although Du Bois theorized it for the blacks, it is applicable to show the state of marginalized or colonized people in any part of the world.

Double consciousness is the dual identity of the blacks or immigrants that weakens and confuses them in such a way that they always doubt their identity and judge themselves from others' eyes in place of judging themselves from their own

perspectives. Moore argues, “A double consciousness can delude a person to believe they can mentally fixate themselves into someone’s reality. A single minded consciousness, on the other hand, will help to lessen the delusion and allow the individual to look at themselves in a healthy manner” (759), which lucidly reveals the great danger of having double consciousness which confounds them in such a way that they become unable to be aware of their real identity. It also indicates that double consciousness means divided consciousness or dual identity which endangers the immigrants and keep themselves in a mental conflict, whereas single minded consciousness will enable them to judge themselves from their own eyes giving them mental liberation. Moore further claims, “It is the view of this author that double consciousness in a white-dominated society has caused us to lose the map and compass to know where the African American community is going” (759), which shows how due to double consciousness the immigrants become directionless and aimless. As a result, they can’t build up their actual identity and are forced to embrace American identity too. Du Bois’ claim in *The Souls of the Black Folk* “The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line” (15) suggests the racism or color discrimination as a major problem for mainly marginalized or immigrants in the world. It indicates how the concept of life of blacks is behind the veil which is due to blacks’ feelings of double consciousness. Marc Black argues, “There is a connection between Frantz Fanon’s work and W. E. B. Du Bois’ concept of double consciousness” (393). Fanon shows his closeness to Du Bois’ double consciousness as: “Overnight the Negro has been given two frames of reference within which he has had to place himself. His metaphysics, or, less pretentiously, his customs and the sources on which they were based, were wiped out because they were in conflict with a civilization that he did not know and that imposed itself on him” (110). Fanon points

out double consciousness of blacks due to the conflict between their culture and new civilization of Whites/ colonizers.

On the one hand, double consciousness as a source of anxiety and lack of fixed identity splits their psyche and they regard themselves as both blacks and Americans; on the other hand, due to double consciousness, they regard White Americans much superior to them. In this context, Rutledge Dennis argues, “This perspective explains why he viewed the white position as representative of a system of exploitation, privilege, and domination . . . contrasted to a consciousness of the oppressed” (16). Here, Dennis explains how because of concept of double consciousness, Du Bois views whites or Americans as oppressors, but blacks or immigrants as oppressed. Thus, white supremacy is the major cause for the immigrants/ blacks to have double consciousness, which splits their personality and they carry dual identities in such a way that they neither have the identity of their root nation nor they have the identity of the host nation. Instead they carry the hybrid identity.

However, adopting double consciousness appears to be a great advantage for the immigrants/ blacks. It is said that while we are in Rome, we should do as Romans do. Hence, the blacks/ immigrants have to embrace the cultural identity of the host country along with the identity of their root country for their survival in diaspora. So, it becomes a part and parcel for the immigrants to maintain identity negotiation in different fields such as colleges, universities, social environments, work places and so on, as they often have to confront with different cultural and social norms of the Whites, which may be entirely different from immigrants’/ blacks’ expectations. This double consciousness or the dilemma of duality is considered as the strength or positive force by Gilroy. Dennis writes about Gilroy’s *The Black Atlantic* as:

“Modernity and the double consciousness have joined to produce something revolutionary in Western ideological, political, and philosophical thought: the formation of racial mutation and hybridity” (22). It suggests that Gilroy does not base double consciousness as power inequalities and contradictions as Du Bois does. Instead he regards it as a creative force which can help the immigrants/ blacks for revolutionizing in Western politics, philosophy, education and so on for their identity. Gilroy argues, “the black Atlantic politics of location frames the doorway of double consciousness” (19). Thus, firstly, Gilroy’s black Atlantic appears to be the antecedent to double consciousness and secondly, the black Atlantic emerges due to the European travel experiences of blacks/ immigrants. Dennis gives his two contrasting double consciousness themes, “One, emphasizing the irreconcilable nature of the two opposing forces ( one African, the other European) locked in an eternal battle the outcome of which cannot yet be known; the other theme offers the possibility of a synthesis of the two opposing forces suggesting that unity may emerge from great disunity” (15). Most of the theorists and critics seem to deal with the first double consciousness theme, however Dennis seems to deal with both the themes mainly highlighting the second double consciousness theme, which has the power of synthesizing two conflicting selves for making creative force. In ‘Diaspora and Double Consciousness’, Samir Dayal claims, “The transnational migrant’s double consciousness can continually reinvigorate the regulative ideal of an endlessly open and unpredictable negotiation of civil society and its quickening principle, social justice” (56). It definitely unfolds that the immigrants change their dual identity to maintain negotiation in diaspora for their survival. Thus, wherever the immigrants live in diaspora, they are likely to have double consciousness as that location is the third space (Bhabha 211), where multiple identities overlap. Hence, the best remedy for the

immigrants is to change double consciousness into creative force that can help the individuals to live comfortably maintaining negotiation.

Besides, multiple identities the immigrants maintain with their double consciousness, single minded consciousness, and triple consciousness are some of them. Doubtlessly, the immigrants become very much conscious of the identity they carry as it is nature of human beings to be in search of identity. However, the identities of most of today's immigrants seem to be better than those of the immigrants in the past. If we have a glimpse of history of human diaspora and identities, we can easily discover how identities of immigrants are changing. As far as the history of diaspora is concerned, Robin Cohen claims, "The destruction of Jerusalem and razing of the walls of its Temple in 586 BC created the central folk memory of the pessimistic, victim diaspora tradition" (22). It suggests that the first diaspora mentioned in the history was Jewish victim diaspora as Jews were exiled from their ancestral home land. The modern diaspora has started since European whites started colonizing America, Africa, Asia, and Australia dividing the globe into west and the rest. Likewise, African diaspora started when the first transatlantic slave voyage of Portuguese traveled to Brazil and other Europeans soon began. Thus, Africans got the identities of blacks, slaves and Americans. Similarly, South Asians/ Indian Diaspora began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Judith M. Brown claims, "The system lasted from 1830 to 1916 and in this period hundreds of Indians moved overseas under its aegis over half a million to the Caribbean, similar numbers to Mauritius and over 152,000 to Natal" (19). Brown's claim reveals the history of the Indian immigrants to different parts of the world creating Indian diaspora. But, regarding South Asian diaspora in the west, Rajesh Rai and Peter Reeves claim that South Asian diaspora has started in the west since the end of the Second World War. Rai and



Reeves examine: “Prior to the Second World War, the largest South Asian diasporic communities were based in Southeast Asia, South and East Africa, the Caribbean, Mauritius and Fiji. While they remain significant communities in these parts, the period after the Second World War has seen a rapid escalation in the number of South Asians settled in the West” (2). Thus, Rai and Reeves reveal a glimpse of history of South Asian diaspora in the west, whereas Brown’s statements reveal South Asian diaspora in other parts of the world. Thus, along with the dispersal of the South Asian diaspora, they happen to maintain multiple identities

Although Du Bois has used double consciousness for the blacks, it can be applied as a theoretical tool to know the divided consciousness of the immigrants whether they are blacks or non-blacks. Different critics and writers have critiqued it. Unlike Du Bois, Frederick Douglass claims that Africans are slaves, blacks and Americans. In his autobiography *The Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass*, Douglass argues:

By far the larger part of the slaves know as little of their ages as horses know of theirs, and it is the wish of most masters within my knowledge to keep their slaves thus ignorant. I do not remember to have ever met a slave who could tell of his birthday. They seldom come nearer to it than planting-time, harvest-time, cherry-time, spring-time, or fall-time. (21)

It reveals how Africans were not only blacks and Americans but also mainly slaves. Even Harriet Jacobs doesn’t agree with Du Bois’ double consciousness. In her autobiography *Incidents in the life of a Slave Girl*, Jacobs reveals the identity of black women as follows, “The secrets of slavery are concealed like those of the Inquisition. My master was, to my knowledge, the father of eleven slaves. But did the mothers dare to tell who was the father of their children? . . . They knew too well the terrible

consequences” (36). It suggests that African females had identities of being blacks, Americans, slaves, women and being the sexual victims of white masters. Along with the passage of time, the life of immigrants- blacks or South Asians with better multiple identities is better now. In her PhD thesis, Lento Mzukisi Jerrey discovers multiple identities of blacks like this, “The latter observations endorse my overall argument which is that in place of two-ness of identities, African Americans manifest and can command multiple identities” (274). It lucidly indicates that today the immigrants’ identity should not be limited to double consciousness. As opposed to the theoretical postulation of Du Bois and like Jerry, Dayal amplifies double consciousness in a broader term (48). Thus, though time has modified identities of the immigrants, Du Bois’ concept of double consciousness is a powerful theoretical tool.

Thus, Du Bois’ double consciousness appears to be a powerful literary theoretical tool that becomes very fruitful for critics to analyze postcolonial literary texts reflecting diaspora and transnationalism. Some critics/ writers such as Du Bois and Fanon take it as a great danger to degrade the identities of the immigrants; whereas other critics/ writers such as Gilroy, and Dayal regard it as a great advantage for the survival of immigrants. But, critics/ writers such as Jerry, Douglass and Jacobs strongly argue that the identities of the immigrants should not be confined to double consciousness. Instead, the immigrants carry multiple identities to maintain negotiation in the third space, which is a must for their successful life.

### **Transnationalism and Nationalism**

Transnationalism and nationalism are used as major theoretical tools in the textual analysis of my dissertation. Other theoretical concepts such as hybridity, double consciousness and desiring whiteness are supporting the major theoretical concepts transnationalism and nationalism to explore different identities of the South

Asian characters such as transnational, national, hybridity, and double consciousness in the diaspora. As national consciousness of immigrants affects transnational activities and transnational activities of the immigrants affect national consciousness, transnationalism and nationalism are very powerful and suitable theoretical concepts to do textual analysis of the selected novels.

Transnationalism refers to cross-border mobility, social movements, networks of business people and different activities. Transnationalism ties across the international borders appears to be a powerful theoretical tool which on the one hand is related to diaspora, nationalism, globalization and cosmopolitanism and on the other hand, is related to theories such as hybridity, mimicry, double consciousness and desiring whiteness. Transnationalism as a theoretical concept enables the researchers or critics to analyze how the immigrants have conflicts and develop negotiations in the diaspora, which gets reflected in the literature written by the immigrants acquiring the experiences of both the home country and the host country. From the point of sociology and anthropology, transnationalism is actually a noble phenomenon closely connected to social, cultural, political and communicative transformations of the globe, for families of the immigrants are split between the countries of origin and destination and their emotional cultural, social, political and communicative ties are maintained due to transnational cross-flows and movements. According to Vertovec, a powerful theorist of transnationalism, transnationalism refers to multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation-states. So, transnationalism indicates cross-border ties and connections between people or institutions living in different nations. Regarding the impact of transnationalism on the present world of migration, in his book *Transnationalism*, Vertovec argues, "Today transnationalism seems to be everywhere, at least in social

science. That is, across numerous disciplines there is a widespread interest in economic, social and political linkages between people, places and institutions crossing nation-state borders and spanning the world” (1). Thus, transnationalism is crossing the international borders and maintaining linkages, ties and networks of social, economic, educational and different activities between people or organizations.

Nationalism which is a political doctrine in human history indicates people’s attachment, bond of love, interest and view of separateness of their nation from others. Wherever people travel, migrate and settle, they have feelings of nationalism. Whether they are in their own nation or become transnational people or live in diaspora, they love their nation and love to hear people talk positively about their nation. They hardly tolerate people criticize their nation. Such people are regarded as nationalists. Anthony H. Birch defines the term nationalism which “refers to a political doctrine about the organization of political authority” (4). Birch further says that “nationalism can and should be expressed in terms of a general theory about good government” (4). Many writers have pointed out that people who have been colonized, oppressed, and live in diaspora have identified with clear national identities. So, such people become great nationalists loving their nations. It can also be said that the degree of nationalism is increased by transnational activities. Bhabha like so many thinkers is also impressed by Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* and writes about nationalism as: “European nationalism was motivated by what Europe was doing in its far-flung dominions. The ‘national idea’, in other words, flourished in the soil of foreign conquest” (59). So, the idea of transnational people having nationalism becomes clear and one need not be only within the boundary of one’s nation to have feelings of nationalism.

Whether the nationalism has come to an end due to transnationalism and globalization or not, it has interested Fredrick Buell who argues that nationalism has not ended, but focuses on “the invention of a new breed of cultural nationalism- a form of cultural nationalism for post-nationalism circumstances” (550). Likewise, Robert A. Cross argues that in American Studies “the nationalist project is obsolete” (384) as it has taken the form of post-national development due to transnational turn. In one way, Cross’s views on nationalism and post-nationalism are similar to Arjun Appadurai’s views, but a bit differently, which Buell writes, “Appadurai has argued that imagined national communities have been replaced, in our new electronically mediated global system, by imagined worlds” (551). What Cross, Buell and Appadurai mean to say is the traditional concept of nationalism has been changed by transnationalism in such a way that in place of imagined nations, imagined world have been thought, today. Buell’s statement, “National culture has reworked itself, in short, to adapt to postnational circumstances” (578) is very contextual here. Thus, transnationalism seems to have changed the traditional concept of nationalism to postnational state.

Because of the global trend of migration, today’s individuals cannot be only limited to the boundaries of the nation; instead they should be located in both homelands and hostlands, which indicates the growing trend of transnational practices. P. Levitt and Glick Schiller argue about the importance of transnational phenomena for transnational migration studies, “individuals can no longer be understood only looking at what goes on within national boundaries. Our analytical lens must necessarily broaden and deepen because migrants are often embedded in multi-layered, multi-sited transnational social fields, encompassing those who move and those who stay behind” (1003). To know the relation between national and

transnational identities, the life of individual inside the national boundaries and across the boundaries should be observed and studied. In *Transnationalism: Diaspora and the Advent of a New (dis)order*, Eliezer Ben-Rafael and Yitzhak Sternberg emphasize the importance of relation between national and transnational, “The incorporation of individuals into nation-states and maintaining transnational connections are not contradictory” (5). Franco Zappetini seems to agree with the above mentioned critics as he argues, “Transnationalism has thus conceptually emerged as a range of complex social phenomena which interface discursively with powerful narratives of cultural ‘inbetweenness’, territorial ‘unboundedness’ and post-national politics” (85). Likewise, the need of transnational perspective becomes clear from Paul Giles who argues that national histories “cannot be written simply from inside” (6). Thus, the study of national and transnational is a must for even the national history of a nation.

Transnationalism which emerged in the 1990s as a new theoretical concept to describe the real situation of immigrants is like a popular umbrella term which connects nationalism, Victor Roudometof argues that “the terms national and transnational are used in several different disciplines, each with its own agenda and its own conventions” (313). Nationalism which is used mainly for political ideologies shows one’s love for one’s nation, while transnationalism mainly focuses on cross-border mobilities and different ties between people or organizations across the nation-states. Regarding the relationship between transnationalism and nationalism, Victoria Bernal quotes Katherine Verdery’s views, “nationalism is political utilization of the symbol nation through discourse and political activity, as well as the sentiment that draws people into responding to this symbol’s use” (227). It definitely suggests that nationalism is like a symbol that binds not only people living in a nation state but even transnational people living across the borders of nation-states. As Bernal seems

to agree with Verdery, she claims that “transnationalism refers to the fact of living a life that is not in any real sense circumscribed by a nation” (5). So, it suggests that transnationalism cannot be confined by any geographical territory of any nation-state. Bernal further writes, “The relationship between nations and transnationalism has been recently addressed by a number of scholars who are moving beyond the simple question of whether transnationalism means a decline of the nation theorizing the complex phenomena and nationhood” (19). Transnational immigrants who live in the diaspora also have feelings of nationalism expressed by South Asian transnational characters in the selected novels. So, nationalism and transnationalism are related, too.

It is a burning question in the research whether transnationalism affects nationalism positively or negatively. In this context, the critics’/ theorists’ views are divided. According to Glick-Schiller, transnational migration or transnationalism does not weaken the nation-state, “On the contrary, transmigrants helped to construct nation-states in many regions of the world in the past and are active participants in the constitution of transnational nation-states” (99). It clearly indicates Glick-schiller’s optimistic outlook towards transnationalism. During the nationalistic movement in Eritrea due to the war with Ethiopia in 1998, Eritreans living as transmigrants throughout the world helped their nation supporting with money to fight against Ethiopia showing their strong feelings of nationalism. To show how nationalism and transnationalism are connected positively, Bernal points out: “For Eritreans, nationalism and transnationalism do not oppose each other but intertwine in complex ways in the globalized spaces of diaspora, in cyber space and in new definitions of citizenship and state-citizen relations advanced by the Eritrean state” (3). Victor Roudometof and Anna Karpathais write, “Our children here, we here, the Greek

Americans are more Greek, truly Greek, not the Greeks in Greece” (49). The Eritean nationalism and Greek nationalism show how transnational people value nationalism. In “Nationalism and Transnationalism in Contemporary Europe”, Roudometof, treats both the terms as a pair, however he writes that “Immigrant transnationalism, however poses a fundamental challenge to traditional conceptions of European nationalism” (324). In one way, both the terms not only affect each other but also seem to exist meaningful. Magdalena Nowicka argues, “Thus, social contexts, shaped by nationalism, local socio-economic conditions, universal values, as well as family histories, are essential for transnationalism as well” (11). It discovers how transnational activities of immigrants reflect their feelings, ideas and views of nationalism. Today people do not need to have feelings of nationality and nationalism living within the boundary of the nation-state. Because of transnationalism and globalization a nation becomes like an imagined political community. Benedict Anderson defines the nation, “It is an imagined political community- and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (6). Anderson’s concept of nation means as all members of the nation who are scattered around the world neither know most of their fellow-citizens nor meet or get their whereabouts, however they have the picture of their nation or fellow-beings, which is caused by their feelings of nationalism.

However, aggressive nationalism is taken as a threat and a great danger for the nation-state. Along with European modernism, aggressive nationalism started and then two world wars, holocaust, racism, and genocide proved to be a disgrace for humanity taking lives of millions of people. As for an example due to the impact of Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor during the Second World War, Japanese Americans were kept in different concentration camps in America. The Editors of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* claim, “After the attack on Pearl Harbor by Japanese aircraft on December



7, 1941, the U.S. War Department suspected that Japanese Americans might act as saboteurs or espionage agents despite a lack of hard evidence to support that view. Some political leaders recommended rounding up Japanese Americans, particularly those living along the West Coast, and placing them in detention centres inland". Roudometof argues showing the negative aspect of nationalism, "In the US, the 9/11 tragedy was quickly nationalized and the war on terrorism soon assumed the characteristics of a national crusade to vindicate American patriotism" (317). Due to such nationalism, the movement and life of so many transnational people but particularly Muslims was terribly affected and even their identity was entirely endangered. Even the transnational movement of refugees, though legal is likely to be a great threat to nationalism. Ivo Ritzer claims, "refugees in their transnational force as a threat to nationalism is indeed just" (16). It means that refugees raise different questions of national identity in diaspora inside the boundary of a nation-state and become a danger to the nation. The two primary texts- *Brick Lane* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* reflect how the negative aspects of nationalism works and the immigrants are affected due to political movements such as the 9/11 events. Thus, national consciousness, national conflicts and rise in nationalism cause transnational activities and integration.

The traditional notion of fixed territory or home or ancestral home has been entirely challenged by transnational activities and movements. In *Home Away from Home?* Lloyd L. Wong argues, "the traditional notion of home being associated with a single country of origin or birth does not necessarily always apply. Rather, home becomes trans- or multilocal" (169). Hence, deconstructing the traditional concept of fixed home, transnational people have started keeping multiple homes in multiple transnational locations. Werbner who totally agrees with Wong in this context

strongly claims that “transnational people are those people who create collective homes around themselves” (12). It indicates that only elite global capital class had multiple homes away from home in the past, whereas today different transnational people have made it possible to have multiple homes in different countries such as the UK, the USA, Australia, Canada and so many other European countries just because of transnationalism. Besides having multiple homes, people living in such countries have dual or multiple loyalties and citizenships, too.

Both transnationalism and diaspora are used as postcolonial literary theoretical concepts to analyze the literature about the life and activities of immigrants who make back-and-forth movement between home country and host country or settle in the host country leaving the home country and transcending the international border. As they have operated as globalization and multiculturalism and work as awkward dance partners, Thomas Faist argues, “Over the past decades, the concepts of diaspora and transnationalism have served as prominent research lenses through which to view the aftermath of international migration and the shifting of state borders across populations” (9). Thus, both these concepts are used to deal with cross-border social formations. Although people often use them as synonymous terms, there are lots of differences between them. Faist writes that although both terms refer to cross-border processes, diaspora has been often used to denote religious or national groups living outside (an imagined) homeland, whereas transnationalism is often used more narrowly – to refer to migrants’ durable ties across countries – and, more widely, to capture not only communities, but all sorts of social formations, such as transnationally active networks, groups and organizations (9). These lines show the difference between transnationalism and diaspora. According to Faist, “transnational communities encompass diaspora, but not all transnational communities are

diasporas” (21). Likewise, Faist shows one more difference between them regarding the time frame arguing, “Scholars using the term diaspora often refer to a multi-generational pattern, while transnational analysts deal with recent migration flows” (22). In course of differentiating diaspora from transnationalism, Michel Bruneau writes:

Diaspora implies a very strong anchoring in the host country and sometimes, when the home country is lost or is not accessible (as with the Greeks of Asia Minor, Armenians or Tibetans), a clear-cut break with it. . . . In transnational spaces and territories of mobility, this break does not take place, nor is there the need to be re-rooted elsewhere on the host territory. (49)

It focuses on the loyalty of diaspora to mainly the host country and the loyalty of transnationalism to the root country.

But, in place of showing the differences between transnationalism and diaspora as theorists and critics like Michel Bruneau do, Janine Dahindra makes a departure from this trend and mixes both and uses diasporic transnationalism although she focuses on different forms of transnational formations based on mobility and locality. About diasporic transnationalism that she names as localized diasporic transnational formations, Dahindra argues, “Groups of people who develop this kind of transnationality have experienced one-way migration in their family from a place of origin to a new country, and perhaps also a secondary migration to a third or fourth country” (53-54). Thus, Dahindra’s views challenge other critics’ views on diaspora and transnationalism as most of critics regard transnationalism as one way migration from the place of origin to the host country, but Dahindra regards transnationalism as migration from one host country to another one in place of migration from home country to host country, too. To show the difference between transnationalism and

diaspora, Lan P. Duong writes mentioning Jana Braziel and Anita Mannur's words: "They explain that the diasporic experience describes people and communities that have been displaced, with migrants that tend to be more forced than voluntary. Transnationalism, in contrast, alludes to a more abstract discourse that underscores the circulation of people as well as information, goods, and capital across national territories" (233). Braziel and Mannur mean that diaspora focuses on fixity of locality, whereas transnationalism does on circulation or cross-border mobility. Previously, the notion of diaspora implied the dispersal of the Jews from their historic homeland, while now, it is mainly used to describe various well-established communities that have an experience of displacement such as the Armenians in exile, the overseas Chinese, the Palestinian refugees and the blacks. Osten Wahlbeck seems to show a balanced relationship between transnationalism and diaspora regarding the issue of refugees. Wahlbeck claims, "The concept of diaspora can take into account the refugees' specific transnational experiences and social relationships. Likewise, it is also possible that studies of transnationalism and diasporas can benefit from the more empirical tradition in the area of refugee studies" (3). Although Wahlbeck's treatment with these terms seems to be balanced, he seems to regard diaspora more suitable in case of refugees, which appears to be clear from his statement, "The notion of transnationalism is not precise enough if one wants to describe the specific experiences of Kurdish refugees in exile. Instead, the diaspora concept gives a more precise description of this specific transnational community" (12). Besides, another difference between them is about the loyalty, transnational people show it to the home country, while diasporic people show loyalty to the host country. Thus, even though transnationalism and diaspora overlap, there are differences between them, too.

Likewise, transnationalism becomes very meaningful, situational and contextual once it is related to globalization because we are in the global era. Both transnationalism and globalization are used as theoretical tools to analyze literature written by immigrant writers about the international migration and the transformation of state boundaries. Today the concept of deterritorialization has become effective because of transnationalism and globalization as Lloyd L. Wong claims that “globalization and transnationalism facilitate deep attachments to more than one home” (170). Globalization is the trend of accelerating and maintaining the interaction and relationship between people or organizations/companies throughout the world because of the development in transportation and communication technology. Regarding globalization, J.A.Scholte examines: “globalization has too often perpetuated poverty, widened material inequalities, increased ecological degradation, sustained militarism, fragmented communities, marginalized subordinated groups, fed intolerance and deepened crises of democracy” (53). But, other critics take it positively. Globalization has given human beings the ability to conduct their affairs across the world without reference to nationality and government authority, too. Bernal in ‘Eritrea Goes Global: Reflections on Nationalism in a Transnational Era’, expresses views on globalization, “Globalization, on the other hand, suggests borderlessness, a unifying process in which distance and location no longer matter because everything and everyone on our planet are so tightly linked” (5). It means that due to globalization, people can enjoy autonomy and independence conducting their business, social, cultural and other legal activities themselves. Doubtlessly, the world is emerging as a global village due to globalization which is promoting change and development in the life of people showing how nations and people are increasingly interconnected and mutually dependent. But, transnationalism mainly refers to

different cross-border mobilities or ties. Lan P. Duong writes, “As Françoise Lionet and Shu-mei Shih (2005) argue, the transnational and the global are spatially different; globalization assumes a universal core from which everything spreads outward, while transnationalism locates particular sites of exchange and hybridity” (233). Likewise, Bernal argues, “In a literal sense, the term transnationalism as a description of our contemporary era, draws attention to border crossings through evoking national borders. Globalization, on the other hand, suggests borderlessness, a unifying process in which distance and location no longer matter because everything and everyone on our planet are so tightly linked” (5). Though there are differences between them, they appear to be interrelated. The new transnational connections enshrined by globalization bring about further important changes in the nature, orientation and character to enhance each other’s significance in changing the world with the help of modern science and technology. Many critics regard transnationalism as a vehicle of globalization. Thus, as the literature of international migration incorporates transnational and global activities of the immigrants, transnationalism and globalization are effective tools to deal with different issues of immigrants such as Hall’s cultural identity, Bhabha’s hybridity, and Du Bois’ double consciousness in Bhabha’s the third space.

Transnationalism which is used as a powerful and broad theoretical tool becomes effective to discover different identities of transnational characters such as hybridity, mimicry, double consciousness and desiring whiteness while analyzing transnational literature written by mainly writers such as Mohsin Hamid, Manjushree Thapa, Kiran Desai, Salman Rushdie, Monica Ali, Jhumpa Lahiri, Hanif Kureishi and so on who have the experiences of being transnational or living in diaspora. When the immigrants become transnational and settle in the host country, they gain diasporic

consciousness acquiring multiple identities for their survival. That space where the immigrants live with the local becomes the third space which produces hybrid culture as it becomes the contact zone for multiple cultures carried by immigrants from multiple home countries. The life of such young transnational people reflects the production of hybridity manifesting new ethnicities. Thus, the young immigrants within the cross-currents of different cultural fields produce hybrid culture and identity in course of socialization process. Because of globalization and transnationalism, fixed identity, fixed culture and fixed territory/fixed boundary of the nation have been deconstructed. Lloyd I. Wong argues, “Transmigrants have multiple identities which are grounded in more than one society and thus, in effect, they have a hybridized transnational identity. This identity simultaneously connects them to several nations” (171). It clearly suggests that as transnational people have connections with multiple societies and multiple nations, they carry multiple identities. As far as transnationalism is concerned, Begum Tuglu seems to agree with Wong, for Tuglu writes, “Transnationalism offers a definition for individuals who have stretched out the limits of race, culture and language. In this context, individuals who try to exist under the influence of multiple cultures produce their own concepts of identity, each unique to their own perception of their hybrid culture” (456). Such immigrants are naturally under the influence of the dominant culture and hence their identity gets hybridized. Regarding hybridity, Gloria Anzaldua is one of the writers who express their mainly painful experiences in the books. In *The Borderlands*, Anzaldua shows her vision of hybridity writing, “In fact, the Borderlands are physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy”

(Anzaldua, Prefix). This is how the borderlands are like the third space where transnational characters have hybrid identity.

Likewise, transnationalism causes mimicry which means the copying of language, manners, culture and ideas of other people and nation. On the one hand, Bhabha's term mimicry appears to be a powerful concept of visualizing the postcolonial situation which appears to be a kind of binary opposition between colonizer vs colonized and authority vs oppression; on the other hand, mimicry seems to be the imitation of the whites or people of developed nations where transnational people immigrate. In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha writes, "colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (86). Thus, mimicry seems to be created in accordance with the design of the colonial master's authority and hegemony. In "Homi k. Bhabha," a book about Bhabha, David Huddart criticizes, "In fact, mimicry as Bhabha understands it is an exaggerated copying of language, culture, manners and ideas. This exaggeration means that mimicry is repetition with difference, and so it is not evidence of the colonized's servitude" (39). It indicates mimicry is not only imitation but also a form of mockery of colonizers. Evidently, Naipaul is disappointed and unhappy to see the post-colonial societies mimicking the colonialists. In *Construction of Identity in V.S. Naipaul's The Mimic Men*, Tahsin Culhaoglu argues, "Evidently, Naipaul is disappointed and unhappy to see the post-colonial societies mimicking the colonialists. The corruption, nepotism, violence, fanaticism, racism, dictatorship, violation of human rights, and many other negative aspects in the Third World are depressing not only for him but also for the peoples living there" (91). It indicates how the third world is affected by mimicry in the postcolonial era and Naipaul's (the novelist's) hatred towards colonized or the immigrants in the Caribbean nations such



as Trinidad where people were mimic men. Thus, mimicry is done in the world in two ways. Firstly, the immigrants mimic the culture of whites or people of developed nations migrating to their nations. Secondly, the native people or colonized people even in postcolonial era mimic the colonial people's culture which they regard superior to their own culture. However, the selected novels for the thesis reflect the former way of doing mimicry rather than the second one.

Besides, social and literary theorists regard transnationalism as an umbrella term which can be connected to the immigrants' double consciousness and desiring whiteness. Linda, Basch and Christina define "transnationalism" as the processes by which "immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement" (8). Thus, for them, a fundamental element of transnationalism is transmigrants' multiple involvements that connect both home and host societies. Their involvements indicate transnationalism as processes and a means of construction of multiple identities. When immigrants from the periphery (Asia and Africa) migrate to the center (Europe and America) in the hope of embracing different opportunities and facilities because of desiring whiteness which is the symbol of privileges, facilities and opportunities, they face different identity crises. Double consciousness is one of multiple consciousnesses that endanger their identity. Du Bois writes, "It is a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity" (8). So, the blacks see themselves not only as Americans in America but also as Africans from the point of view of whites, which weakens their identity of being Americans. If the origin of today's whites is searched, doubtlessly it is Europe. But, once they settle in America, they are easily accepted as Americans, whereas the non-whites are still identified as citizens of the home country despite being American citizens. Because of double consciousness,

status and psyche of non-whites, have been terribly affected. Moore argues, “Since the establishment of this White-dominated and White –controlled society, mental conflict has been in existence from the inception” (752). It reveals how non-whites or transnational people who come to live with whites or even the natives who are colonized by whites have been victimized by whites since beginning.

On the one hand, transnationalism acts as a major factor for transnational people to connect their host country and home country benefitting both countries as they send remittances to the home country working in different sectors such as business, labor force, educational, engineering, medical, IT and so on in the host country. However, on the other hand, transnational practices and activities happen to be a great threat to the security system. Vertovec writes, “For the United States Department of Defense, transnationalism means terrorists, insurgents, opposing factions in civil wars conducting operations outside their country of origin and members of criminal groups” (Secretary of Defense, 5), which means illegal and criminal cross-border activities such as pornography, trafficking in drugs, smuggling of weapons and nuclear materials endanger and weaken the law and order of both the host country and home country.

However, one different and important aspect of transnationalism is even without crossing the border of nation-states transnational activities become effective because of different means of communication such as internet. Cohen argues, “transnational bonds no longer have to be cemented by migrant or by exclusive territorial claims. In the age of cyberspace, a diaspora can, to some degree, be held together or re-created through the mind, through cultural artefacts and through a shared imagination” (516). Cohen’s argument suggests that the concept of transnationalism is not confined to physically transcending the borders/ territories only.

Thus, transnationalism, which means cross-border mobilities, social movements, networks of business people and different activities and ties, is related to diaspora, nationalism, globalization, cosmopolitanism, hybridity, mimicry, double consciousness and desiring whiteness of the immigrants. Transnationalism and nationalism are used as theoretical tools that enable researchers and critics to analyze how the immigrants have cultural, religious and various identity conflicts and develop negotiation in the diaspora. Although transnationalism is highly related to diaspora as though they were awkward dance partners, there appears to be a pertinent difference between them regarding their loyalty, for transnationalism shows loyalty to the home country, while diaspora does it to the host country. Likewise, if the immigrants have any break from their home country due to the legal problems, diaspora becomes the exact theory which can be applied to study the immigrants' life style, identity and other activities. Besides, transnationalism is also related to globalization as transnationalism is regarded as a vehicle of globalization, which means transnational activities and networks enhances globalization and vice versa. Due to transnationalism and globalization, on the one hand, the concepts of borderlessness and deterritorialization become effective in literature; on the other hand, the immigrants' identity, culture and territory are deconstructed. However, the immigrants carry national consciousness wherever they migrate or settle. Thus, transnationalism and nationalism help the readers, writers, researchers and critics to make a good study of the immigrants' hybridity, double consciousness and desiring whiteness in the third space.

### **Review on Primary Texts**

The South Asian immigrants in the diasporain dynamics of the cultural assimilation in the western societies in Europe and America invoke the cultural identity of their original home country and the new host country. Representatives of

Asian Americans, major characters in the selected texts equally share social practices and cultural values of the worlds. In their lifestyles, value systems of the West and South Asia persist because of their perpetual connection to their original home country and incessant desire for adjustment in the new world. Going beyond their nations, South Asian immigrants experience transnational value systems, and thus, blending the national and transnational identities. The following section retraces conditions of the national and transnational in the South Asian diaspora in the West as posited in primary texts and critical receptions on them.

### *Brick Lane*

Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* beautifully shows how Bangladeshi immigrants migrating from rural Bangladesh to metropolis England live in diaspora at Brick Lane in London. The novel reveals how the Bangladeshi immigrants or South Asian immigrants face cultural conflicts, have identity crisis and try their best for negotiation. Ali locates her characters in England and Bangladesh, but mainly at Brick Lane in London giving a picture of South Asian diaspora in the west.

Many critics and reviewers such as Nutan Garg, Mohamed Noufal N, Mrinali Chakravorty, Emanuele Monegato and Irene Perez Fernandez have commented on *Brick Lane* showing their views towards the novel. Firstly, some critics regard *Brick Lane* to be a powerful novel like a bildungsroman to depict the picture of Bangladeshi immigrants living in diaspora facing conflicts and doing negotiation. Secondly, some critics comment on the novel regarding the west to be the fertile ground for the emancipation of the females. Thirdly, some critics critique on Ali's depicting two generations of immigrants. Fourthly, some comment on the novel quite negatively showing shortcomings of Ali.

Firstly, critics comment on the novel regarding it to be a bildungsroman showing the massive transformation of the central character Nazneen. Garrett Ziegler writes: “*Brick Lane*, like most of the nineteenth-century bildungsroman narratives that it mimics, is fundamentally a novel about the relationship between an individual and a city and the effects that this relationship has on the construction of self-identification” (145). It indicates how Ali’s *Brick Lane* based on the bildungsroman pattern plays an eminent role in transforming the construction of self-identification of Bangladeshi females. Perez Fernandez argues: “The novel focuses on the Bangladeshi population that began migrating to Britain in considerable numbers in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century . . . . The narrative revolves around Nazneen, a Bangladeshi woman who migrates to London after an arranged marriage . . . the Bangladeshi community that surrounds her” (150-151). Thus it reveals the trend of migration from East to West and the problem of identity crisis of immigrants such as Nazneen in diaspora in London. However, according to Nutan Garg, *Brick Lane* unfolds successfully the concept of dislocation, relocation and home both in transnational spaces and national spaces. Nutan Garg argues:

Monica Ali, in *Brick Lane* delineates how for Nazneen, the transition from the slow rhythm of village life in Bangladesh to the transnational space i.e. accelerated London of 1985 proves very difficult to manage in the beginning. On the other hand, Ali presents how the life of some individuals like Hasina, also remains always dislocated and disturbed despite living in their own national space. (362)

Garg reveals Nazneen’s transformation from an innocent and dependent Bangladeshi village girl to a determined and independent transnational female. Garg further argues, “Dislocation is an acute crisis in the contemporary context, which involves not

only long distance national borders but can also be within the borders” (361). Garg points out how people like Hashina gets dislocated in her own homeland Bangladesh, which means that one need not live in diaspora to feel dislocated like Nazneen.

Secondly, according to, the critics such as Mohamed Noufal N and Mrinalini Chakravorty, the western land becomes the fertile site for eastern females such as Nazneen to get emancipation and construct their identity. In the process of her self-awakening and empowerment, her close companion Raqia influences her to be interested in English and widen her horizons. Noufal N argues, “This long walk she taken by herself through the streets itself contributes something towards her eventual empowerment” (451). Even, Mrinalini Chakravorty argues similarly, “For Nazneen, learning English represents the possibility of venturing outside of the confines of her small apartment” (511). Nazneen’s learning English widens her journey of liberation in the west, which she found lacking in the East. Thus it clarifies how the West is the site of liberation for eastern females. Similarly, in *Brick Lane Patchwork*, Emanuele Monegato writes: “In her 13-year-London experience Nazneen develops an emancipation process culminating in the decision of staying in London with her daughters without following her husband’s return to Bangladesh” (29-30). Thus, the novel discovers how Nazneen a traditional Bangladeshi girl who lacked freedom in the East enjoys it in the West.

So, Nazneen’s such transition suggests the influence of western freedom upon Nazneen who was deprived of it throughout her life. Likewise, Ziegler shows the emancipation of Nazneen in the West and deprivation of it in the East. He argues:

The novel traces the transformation of Nazneen from a dependent, isolated wife to an independent, Westernized social actor. Significantly, the book locates the possibility of such sexual, economic, and political empowerment . .

. it is the “liberal city,” rather than simply urban life, that allows this transformation is apparent by the fact that Dhaka affords Hasina no such opportunities. (148)

Nazneen’s identity formation and Hasina’s loss of identity clearly unfold the freedom in the West for females and lack of freedom in the East.

Thirdly, critics like Irene Perez Fernandez views the novel as the diasporic experiences of South Asian immigrants having conflicts between the first generation immigrants and the second generation immigrants, which also becomes one of the major issues of most of the South Asian English novels. Fernandez critiques this issue:

Conflicts between first and second generation immigrants characterize the novel. This issue is addressed in the family conflicts that arise between Nazneen’s teenager daughters, Shahana and Bibi and their father, Chanu. Shahana and Bibi are quite well integrated in British society. Their identity is constructed according to British cultural norms; they have no sense of belonging to Bangladesh. Chanu forces them to maintain a link with his native culture. (152)

Fernandez further investigates, “Second generation characters such as Nazneen’s teenage daughters Shahana and Bibi or Razia’s children Tariq and Shefali present different levels of assimilation to British culture” (152). Fernandez means to say that second generation immigrants assimilate to British culture far easily than the first generation immigrants like their parents.

Fourthly, Mahmud Hasan, Chris Lehman, Bruce King, Germaine Greer and Salman Rushdie have commented on *Brick Lane*. Ali’s weakness that Mahmud Hasan finds in the novel is full of just cultural caricaturing. Hasan argues: “By uniting the

‘God-conscious’ Karim and the religious Nazneen in the house of the Muslim Chanu, Ali presents a microcosm of Muslim social space, and portrays it as full of insidious sexual indulgence” (670). Thus, Hasan blames Ali for disgracing Muslim faith in the novel following the orientalist trend of observing the traditional culture. However, Natasha Walter takes Ali’s *Brick Lane* positively. She reviews in *The Garden*:

Beyond this moving portrait of the domestic world, I cannot think of another novel in which the politics of our times are caught with such easy vividness. So many novelists either ignore politics altogether, or else they treat politics as journalists do, by making arguments rather than creating situations. But here, everything political that the characters say or do seems to spring from their own hopes and disappointments, so that—even when they are reacting to September 11 or the Oldham riots—it never feels as if Ali is simply using them to illustrate a point. Particularly impressive are the precisely observed descriptions of the meetings of Karim’s group of local Muslims, the “Bengal Tigers”, where girls in headscarves and boys in Nike fleeces argue about whether they should engage with global jihad or local injustices.

Walter makes an appreciation of Ali’s *Brick Lane*. What Walter desires to point out about Ali’s inclusion of political movements after 9/11 is very realistic besides other events she intertwines in the novel. Since America or the west blames the Muslim immigrants mainly the South Asian Muslims to be the cause of the 9/11 event, islamophobia is observed in the west and hence the life of South Asian immigrants is fully insecure in the South Asian diaspora. This state of insecurity of the South Asian immigrants gets revealed in the novel by different critics such as Walter.

Many protests and comments were made against the publication of the novel and even the film based on the same novel, for according to protesters and critics/



reviewers, *Brick Lane* insulted the Bangladeshi immigrants living at Brick Lane. In *Brick Lane Blockades: The Bioculturalism of Migrant Domesticity*, Chakravorty writes, “According to a number of reports in the British media, the residents of the real Brick Lane, the Bangladeshi enclave where the novel takes place, took offense at the representation of the community in Ali’s text” (506). It suggests that the representation of Bangladeshi Muslims of Brick Lane is found highly offensive by critics/ reviewers and readers who are mainly Bangladeshi Muslims. She says that even writers, critics and reviewers participated along with other protesters in the protests against Ali’s *Brick Lane*. Among the most prominent of participants were Salman Rushdie and Germaine Greer (Chakravorty 507). The essence of these protests was in defense of cultural identity of Bangladeshi immigrants at Brick Lane. Germaine Greer, who appeared to be a strong supporter of the protesters wrote a letter to *The Guardian*. A part of her letter is:

She writes in English and her point of view is, whether she allows herself to impersonate a village Bangladeshi woman or not, British. She has forgotten her Bengali, which she would not have done if she had wanted to remember it. When it comes to writing a novel, however, she becomes the pledge of our multi-ethnicity. . . . Ali did not concern herself with the possibility that her plot might seem outlandish to the people who created the particular culture of Brick Lane. As British people know little and care less about the Bangladeshi people in their mindset, their first appearance as characters in an English novel had the force of a defining caricature. The fact that Ali's father is Bangladeshi was enough to give her authority in the eyes of the non-Asian British, but not in the eyes of British Bangladeshis.

Greer blames Ali to have taken the privilege and authority of being the daughter of Bangladeshi father to depict the Bangladeshi culture in the novel, but it is hollow and merely caricaturing in the eyes of British Bangladeshi immigrants.

Thus, despite different positive and negative comments on the novel, *Brick Lane* becomes successful to represent the life of Bangladeshi immigrants in diaspora at Brick Lane. One impressive and indelible aspect of the novel is the ending that justifies the central character Nazneen's cultural negotiation in the third space. Language and dress are two of the most important cultural markers. Nazneen finds her own new identity in the West since keeping her Bangladeshi identity she assimilates and negotiates into British society by learning English language and wearing a skirt, a jacket and a pair of high heels in place of sari. Thus, she becomes the symbol of the connection between the British values and Bengali culture, too.

#### *The Namesake*

Lahiri's novel *The Namesake* depicts Indian Bengali characters' diasporic consciousness in America as they face cultural conflicts and hence do negotiation in diaspora in matters of food, language, festivals, dress, religion and so on. My paper studies how critics view such Indian immigrants of transnational migration who can neither fully forget their homeland nor adapt America. They are in-betweenness. However, they do negotiation in the third space.

Regarding criticism on *The Namesake*, firstly, most of the critics regard *Namesake* as a novel which reflects transnational migration, identity crisis, no fixity of home and negotiation. Secondly, the critics like Tamara Bhalla and Iffat Sharmin, comment on the novel showing the conflicts and negotiation of the first generation and second generation immigrants. Thirdly, the critics like Farhana and Binod

Paudyal focus on the protagonist Gogol's identity. Finally, most of the above critics focus on the negotiation between the national identity and transnational identity.

The different problems such as identity crisis, loss of home, and discrimination that South Asians face in America are due to the growing transnational migration in the post-war era, which has broken the concept of fixity of culture and territory. K. Balaji Sundharam writes: "*The Namesake* draws attention towards the present era of transnational migration, the flow of the people among the different countries, convergence of the heterogeneous cultures, creolization of languages and hybridization of identities have broken the concept of fixity, or absolute territoriality" (1). The novel studies the relation between transnational activities and South Asian diaspora. Binod Paudyal describes in his critical essay: "Lahiri's novel offers us a striking account of transnational identity in which South Asian immigrants and their American-born children import practices from their country of origin, which they adapt in the new environment" (195). Paudyal further writes, "Throughout the novel Lahiri's characters remain transnational agents who are routinely mobile, maintaining transnational ties with their country of origin" (200). Paudyal mainly points out the novel's focus on transnational connections.

Secondly, critics discover the novel's focus on the conflict of the first generation and second generation immigrants in the diaspora. *The Namesake* focuses on the first generation and second generation South Asian immigrants' attachment with the old and new lands. Ashoke and Ashima are delineated as first generation immigrants, whereas Gogol, Sonia and Moushumi are portrayed as the second generation immigrants, but the reality is immigrants of first generation can feel easier than those of the second generation to negotiate in cultural issues living in diaspora. Iffat Sharwin claims, "Whereas Gogol's mother, Ashima, as a first generation Indian-American, is able to negotiate a hyphenated subjectivity because she has an original

identity as a starting point, Gogol is ‘always-already’ in crisis due to his birth on ‘foreign’ soil” (39). The new multicultural society in America unlike the traditional Bengali society in India becomes a liberal and fertile set up for Gogol and Sonia to fall in love with White Americans. Gogol falls in love with Ruth at Yale and later develops his love affairs with Maxine. Shrawin shows Gogol’s resentment: “He cannot understand why his parents disapprove of his romantic relationships with American girls; he cannot understand why his parents do not accept his American girlfriends as their parents accept him” (40). It definitely uncovers the cultural clash between the home culture and foreign culture and secondly it reveals how the immigrants of the second generation let the foreign culture encroach upon their culture. To support this, Tamara Bhalla further adds, “The novel functions similarly in literary academia as a touchstone text describing the complexity of second generation South Asian American experience” (109). Bhalla seems to appreciate Lahiri’s *The Namesake* regarding its authenticity as she writes, “In the field of South Asian American literature, nowhere do these issues of recognition, authenticity and stereotyping coalesce more fully than in Lahiri’s *The Namesake* (2003)” (109). Bhalla’s comments on *The Namesake* uncovers the importance of the novel as a touchstone text to study the life of South Asian immigrant characters mainly second generation characters in America.

Thirdly, critics such as Farhana Haque and Sharmin explore how *The Namesake* revolves round Gogol’s identity. Haque argues: “*The Namesake* was a novel about searching Gogol’s identity. This way was to get the real identity which has started from Kolkata to the USA” (2). Sharmin argues, “Gogol’s act of renaming himself from Gogol to Nikhil explains his urge to assume an American persona in order to blend into mainstream American society” (37). In Bengali culture, people

carry two names: one is *daknam* /pet name that is used by one's family and close friends, and the another one is *bhalonam* /good name that is used by the rest of the society. As for Gogol, he is given Gogol as pet name at birth, which is later used as official name when he is admitted at the school because his official name sent to the USA from India in a letter is lost. His act of renaming himself from Gogol to Nikhil reveals his intention of keeping his identity to blend into the mainstream American society. K. Mangayarkarasi argues, "He manages to have dual identities- an existence having both Indian and American cultural values. Gogol represents the Indian part in him whereas Nikhil is the embodiment of all cultural values that America has given to Gogol" (59). Likewise, Paudyal claims, "He believes that by switching his name to Nikhil, he will escape his cultural past. But he learns later through his father that his name is so strongly connected to his father's unforgettable past" (205). Paudyal points out Gogol's realization of the importance of his name 'Gogol' his father had given for his identity.

Fourthly, critics besides conflicts point out the negotiation of the immigrants in the diaspora. Like the Ganguli family in the novel, South Asians negotiate in the Third Space in festivals and religions, which becomes clear identifiers. Ashish Sangwan claims so, "They celebrate Christmas and thanksgivings the way they would deserve Hindu festivals like Dipawali and Durga Pooja. By doing so, they integrate US culture that crosses national boundaries" (68). As years pass, both Gogol and Sonia seem to embrace American culture better than Bengali culture, for people feel easy and get lured in adapting the culture of the place where they are born and groomed by their parents. The novel beautifully unfolds how the immigrants of the second generation get fascinated by the foreign culture, whereas those of the first generation not only adhere to their root culture but also play a role for the cultural

negotiation. Hiral Macwan adds, “ So Gogol is always sailing in two boats simultaneously, one with his parents at home speaking Bengali and living in Bengali style and the other of American Indian” (48). Paudyal argues explicitly, “Lahiri’s characters do not assimilate into American culture, but they negotiate it” (210). Mangayarkarsi claims, “Gogol wants to be liberated from his Indian backgrounds but after his father’s death . . . the sudden death of his father makes him turn back towards his family and unknowingly he donned the responsibility of an elder son, as he would have done if he had lived in India” (59-60). Mangayarkarsi’s comment reveals Gogol’s negotiation in the culture of his root country.

Fifthly, critics seem to explore the divided loyalty of immigrants. Sundharam argues, “Henceforth, she would be sandwiched between the double societies and ways of life also” (5). Binod Paudyal also claims, “Ashima’s home is no longer considered to be a single geographical location, but belongs to different geographical locations, based on her travels and migration. Ashima’s decision to divide her time between India and the United States” (209). The above critics’ views on Ashima indicate how transnational immigrants show their attachment and loyalty to both the home country and the host country.

Burnali Dutta points out the cosmopolitan nature of immigrants, whereas Paudyal focuses on transnational nature of immigrants. Lahiri’s characters such as Gogol, Sonia and Moushumi are like global and cosmopolitan ones due to their movements from one country to another country and acts of embracing different cultures. Dutta claims, “Hence, her belongingness is moving among different countries instead of a fixed country. Moushumi’s preference for the French literature, food and feeling of oneness with the French friends usually signify her recondition with the French environment instead of the Bengali” (3). In this context, Gita Ranjan and Shailaja Sharma define new cosmopolitans, “as people who blur the edges of

home and abroad by continuously moving physically, culturally and socially, . . . to position themselves in motion between at least two homes” (3). However, unlike Dutta, Ranjan and Sharma, Paudyal mainly focuses on the transnational activities of these diasporic characters. He argues, “Throughout the novel, Lahiri’s characters remain transnational agents who are routinely mobile, maintaining transnational ties with their country of origin” (200). Paudyal claims that the characters in *The Namesake* are typical transnational.

Thus, the critics comment on *The Namesake* exploring the transnational identity, identity crisis, conflicts and negotiation between the national and transnational in the diaspora in America. They point out how Lahiri deals with themes of transmigration, loss of identity, homelessness, displacement, rootlessness, exile, negotiation and so on of South Asian immigrants in *The Namesake*. They mainly emphasize the immigrants’ negotiation in the diaspora despite multiple problems. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*

*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* written in dramatic monologue by Hamid, revolves round the protagonist, Changez Khan. Changez’s voice becomes the representative voice of all the Muslims of the world, in the post-9/11 primarily in the USA and Europe, and then throughout the world where Muslims are treated differently. A lot of criticism has been made on this novel, which is said to reveal different identities of Muslims such as transnational identity, cultural identity, Pakistani identity and religious identity, conflicts in identities and negotiation giving Changez the voice.

According to Daryoosh Hayati, one major feature of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is the deconstruction of the western gaze upon the Islamic world establishing the Muslim gaze upon the West in the construction of different Muslim

identities. Hayati's claim "*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* immediately de-stabilizes the 'gaze' of the West upon the Islamic world, especially the one related to Pakistan" (35) lucidly indicates the destruction of the grand narrative technique of Western point of view as genuine and authentic one. Tufail Muhammad Chandio agrees with Hayati in this context and argues: "In the beginning, it presented white man's point of view . . . it was incumbent to portray the other side of the coin and Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalists* (2007) broke the ice" (64). Chandio's criticism of the novel indicates that *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* establishes the trend of giving voices to the voiceless Muslims challenging the established trend of western canon writers becoming the mouth piece of western voices. Similarly, Shafayat Hussain Bhat seems to agree with Chandio and Hamid and claims: "Changez not only tries to reconstruct his identity but also produces a counter viewpoint to that of American viewpoint. Hamid not only challenges and creates new identities for his characters but also of their respective countries" (448). Bhat's argument uncovers how Hamid's novel reveals the deconstruction of the Western gaze upon the Muslim world.

However, the dramatic monologue as a narrative technique has been pointed out by Amani Salmeen and Bhat to write on behalf of Muslims. Salmeen writes, "The fact that the novel is written in dramatic monologue gives the Muslims, represented in Changez character, a voice. Changez believes that the Muslim voice on the 9/11 is ignored" (32). Similarly, Bhat comments, "The novel, in the form of a monologue which we are supposed to consider a dialogue, offers a fascinating narrative of infatuation and repulsion towards America. The novel, an identity narrative could be seen as a cultural write back which tries to invert certain stereotypical narratives and discourses of hegemony" (447). So, the logic that *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is



written giving a counter view point to the established American view point is clear from the above mentioned critics' arguments.

According to the critics Cristina E. Bradatan and Mustafa Demirel, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* mainly focuses on the transnational identity of the Pakistani Muslim immigrant Changez who represents South Asian Muslims/ immigrants, identity crisis and negotiation. The idea that makes Changez transnational is the way he travels like a bildungsroman character to different nations such as the USA, Greece, the Phillipines, and Peru carrying American identity including his Pakistani identity. Changez speaks Urdu as well as English and loves both America and Pakistan having very good contacts with people of both nations, which indicates he has a transnational identity since Bradatan writes, "A transnational identity can then develop only among those who not only master both languages (host and origin), but also come into contact and have the social skills to establish connections with people and communities from both the host and origin country" (174). Regarding Changez's transnational identity, Demirel argues: "He is a transnational character whose flexible identity leads him to constantly altering sense of belonging throughout his life. He has a double consciousness bringing along with ambivalence in the identity; that is why, Changez belongs to both places, Lahore and New York" (121). Demirel's study of Changez's identity indicates that like Changez transnational people don't have fixed stability regarding the identity and location.

The critics Daryoosh Hayati and Suhana PA view the novel as the conflict between East and West and between national and transnational identity. Hayati comments, "The novel is his monologue: a quietly told, cleverly constructed fable of infatuation and disenchantment with America, set on the treacherous faulties of

current East and West relations . . . American- prejudice and misrepresentation” (41). PA supports it by saying, “Mohsin Hamid’s *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* provides a different take on the issue narrating the story through the ‘Other’ and represents the tension between the dominant forces and the minorities in the neo avatar of colonization” (67). The 9/11 event appears to be the major cause of the conflict between America and Pakistani Muslims & the identity crisis of mainly South Asian Muslims. After the 9/11 event, George Bush’s announcement of war on terror and terrorism reflects the American threat to Muslims. The George Bush’s statements that T. Covarrubias, R. P. Lansford and J. Watson mention in *America’s War on Terror*, “Every nation in every region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists (13) appear to be a great threat to non- whites, mainly Pakistani Muslims endangering and weakening the identities of Muslims reflecting American hegemony, imperialism and power. Hence, literary writings produced in the post-9/11 started reflecting changes brought by this event mainly from the point of view of Americans, which reflects biasness of the West towards the Muslims as well as a great irony of American politics.

Many critics view Hamid’s conflict with America, identity crisis and conflict between his national and transnational identity because of the 9/11 event. Isam Shihada argues, “The 9/11 attacks in the United States of America arguably mark a turning point in shaping America into pre- and post—9/11 America . . . hence, Islam and the Islamic world had subsequently become the target of President Bush’s ‘War on Terror’” (452). Shihada’s comment “Islam and Muslims are negatively represented as potential threats to the stability and democratic values of the American society” (453) both weaken and endanger the Muslim identity in America. According to E. Alsultany, because of the 9/11 event, the American media has “stereotyped and misrepresented Arabs and Muslims for over a century” (2). Even in the pre-9/11 era,

Changez observes how the South Asian Muslims like him have identity crisis, which becomes clear from the way his boss Jim devalues Pakistani financial status, Erica's father's criticizing Pakistan, and so on. But, the post-9/11 totally shattered and weakened Muslim identity.

In course of exploring multiple identities of Hamid, Amani Sameen points out Hamid's hybrid identity in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. Sameen claims, "Changez's hybridity enables him to view one and the same situation through the eyes of an American and a Pakistani" (35). PA's statements "After his return to Pakistan, Changez claims that a part of Erica always lives in him even after her death. In the same way a part of America continues to live in him even after he returns home and becomes an anti-American activist" (69) reflect his carrying hybrid identity.

Hamid's life revolves between transnational/American identity and national/Pakistani identity. So, he has fluid identity, which is affected by 9/11 event according to Chandio. But, due to the sudden 9/11 event, nationalism of both Hamid and immigrant Muslims and Americans is explored by critics such as Chandio. Chandio opines, "As the feelings of patriotism and national integrity intensified among American natives . . . (63). Chandio's claim "America has a long history of racial hatred, discrimination and harassment in the days of war, emergency or disaster" (63) suggests American monopoly at critical situations such as the war and tragic events like 9/11. Hence, on the one hand, the 9/11 event started fueling Americans their feelings of nationalism and patriotism, and on the other hand, Muslims particularly South Asian Muslims or Pakistanis were affected by harassment, discrimination, terrorist acts of blame, marginalization and alienation, which caused Muslim nationalism later. As a result, American and Muslim nationalism appeared in the global scene. Mustafa Demirel critiques, "After the 9/11, Changez's idea of

“home” comes closer to Pakistan. It is visible through his frequent use of phrases such as “we Pakistanis,” “my people,” and “my home” (121). The novel clearly reveals how the 9/11 event transformed Changez who had regarded himself an American, but happened to be a nationalist. Demirel means to point out Changez’s Muslim nationalism, and hatred and anger towards America. Chandio states, “Immigrants have two options either to segregate or integrate into the identity of the host society. Integration is likely to assimilate and acquire the language, culture, values, traditions and norms of the host land, whereas segregation is to remain stuck to the original identity prototype” (72). As for Changez, he chose the latter one and tried to integrate into the American culture. Since he is a transnational person, he has double nationalism and divided loyalties (Cristina Bradatran). However, transnational people become more loyal to the home country rather than the host country. Therefore, in this context, Changez resigning from his lucrative job at Underwood Samson returns to Pakistan because of his identity crisis despite the fact that he has always tried his best for negotiation.

Some of these critical receptions on *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* revolves round the ideas such as identity crisis of Muslims, American nationalism, South Asian Muslim nationalism, transnationalism and deconstruction of the western gaze and transnational negotiation which were caused by the 9/11 event. The novel is structurally divided into two parts: the pre and post 9/11 event. In the pre-9/11 event, the protagonist Changez representing South Asian Muslims seems to kiss the pinnacle of success embracing American identity as well as transnational identity, whereas in the post-9/11 event, Changez seems to show the identity crisis of South Asian Muslims. Hence, the novel seems to show different ways of Muslim immigrants’ negotiations along with their suffering. The best of all is Hamid’s narrative technique

of using dramatic monologue as a counter to American point of view, which on the one way becomes the voice of voiceless Muslims and on the other hand, de-establishes American gaze.

### *Seasons of Flights*

Unlike *Brick Lane*, *The Namesake* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* has not received abundant critical responses. However, the available critical readings on the novel can be categorized into the following categories. Firstly, most of the critics are Nepali critics such as Khem Guragain, Umesh Regmi, Dilu Gurung, Sunila Gurung, Dr Jagdish Joshi and Mr Mahesh Bhatt whose writings are published mainly in general journals. Hence, no serious criticism seems to have been made. Secondly, even non-native critics are South Asians mainly Indians besides Nepali ones such as Deepthi V G, Pooja Swamy and Himadari Lahiri whose criticism appears to be very light and superficial in place of having seriousness and depth in treatment. Thirdly, criticism by native speakers of English doesn't seem to be available. However, it doesn't indicate that only native speakers' criticism is genuine. Thus, as *Seasons of Flight* does not seem to have received a wide and genuine response, a further research is a must.

As far as selected Nepali critics are concerned, most of them seem to appreciate the novel while critiquing. They do not seem to have separated husk from wheat while critiquing, which is a major function of criticism. Most of them deal with the issues such as struggle for adapting American identity in America, Nepali identity in South Asian diaspora in America, Hybrid identity, Nostalgia, Alienation, Life in exile, and Cultural negotiation. Firstly, Mahesh B. Bhatt's "Adaptation of Minority in Diaspora Novel: A Case Study of Manjushree Thapa's *Sesons of Fight*" and Dr Jagdish Joshi's and Mr Mahesh Bhatt's "Relocating Nepali Identity in Manjushree

Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* deal with Nepali identity in America, adapting American culture in America, cultural negotiation, nostalgia and alienation in *Seasons of Flight*. Although both of these articles deal with similar themes, the former one which was published in 2018 is more informative and critical than the latter one. Mahesh Bhatt is the co-critic of the second article too and the second article reflects almost all the ideas that the former article deals with, which makes the second article just like the photo copy of the former one. Mahesh B Bhatt critiques, "Human migration is the movement by people from one place to another with the intention to settle in the new location. Migration may be voluntary migration within one's region, country or beyond" (5). It indicates that the novel is entirely based on migration. In course of criticism, Bhatt gives a short biography of Manjushree Thapa, too. Bhatt wants to explore in the novel how Nepali immigrants such as Prema adapt American culture in America. Bhatt writes, "During her company with Luis, Prema makes efforts to adapt American culture and so she buys a red bikini of \$24.99 and flip-flops for \$4.47. She visits different places with Luis and both of them become close friends. Prema has had sex with Luis and she learns new techniques of making love and sex" (7). Bhatt's criticism clearly indicates how Prema, a Nepali immigrant in the USA tries to adapt American culture, which is a very essential issue a critic like Bhatt seems to point out in *Seasons of Flight*. Bhatt's statements "At Mata's home, Prema finds books on the *Bhagvad Gita*, the *Mahabharat*, the *Ramayana*, on Osho, Krishnamurti, Vivekananda, Ram Das, Sai Baba, Aurobindo, Maharshi Mahesh Yogi" (7) reflect how Thapa's novel shows Prema's sense of belongingness in America, which indicates Bhatt's appreciating *Seasons of Flight* for showing immigrants' cultural negotiation in America. But, Bhatt seems to have ignored the gravity of genuine criticism as a chapter 'Nostalgia and memory and their role in the present' in both the

above articles is same. Besides similar ideas in both the research writings, Bhatt's same conclusion: "It created a cultural limbo in neither here nor there. The novel gives voices to the predicament of an immigrant for assimilation in an alien land" (13) in both the writings clearly proves that criticism is superficial.

Likewise, Khem Guragain points out identity crisis of Nepalese in the US reflected in Thapa's novel. Guragain writes, "Thapa, through Prema's interstitiality, interrogates the issues of Nepali identity, belonging, sense of home connection, and Nepaliness conflated with Indianness in a metropolitan city" (60). It indicates how Prema encounters her/Nepali identity crisis in the US. What Guragain points out in the novel is Nepali identity is conflated with Indian identity in South Asian Diaspora communities mainly in the western societies where Nepalese are taken as Indians. Guragain is different from other critics by the way he points out the failure in maintaining cultural negotiation of Prema in America, which becomes clear from his sentence commenting in the final part of the novel "Prema and Luis do not see any possibility of negotiation and cultural assimilation but aspire to go in different directions" (17). Sunila Gurung, a Nepali critic and research scholar seems to agree with Guragain regarding Prema's failure in negotiation in American multicultural society. Gurung writes:

Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* becomes a physical, more importantly a metaphorical journey of a Nepali diasporic subject towards reinvention and self-actualization: towards finding and retaining an identity that is not a negotiated one, not assigned or imposed on her by her homeland or hostland. She rejects both the spaces and creates her own out of her unique experience of diaspora. (178)

So, Gurung also does not find successful cultural negotiation of the central character Prema in Thapa's novel. However, Gurung also seems to appreciate *Seasons of Flight*

as she writes, “Through a textual analysis of the novel, the paper engages in issues of estranged homeland, hostland, expressive patriarchy, non-belonging and marginalization with regard to the Nepali diaspora” (176). In ‘Reflection on Exile in Manjushree Thapa’s *Seasons of Flight*’, Umesh Regmi, a Nepali researcher argues that there is a lack of study and research on the issue of Nepali diaspora and exile in the west. Regmi writes, “There is, however, the lack of studies based on the reasons of exile and the circumstances that compel an individual Nepali immigrant to live a life as culturally and therefore psychologically alienated diaspora in Thapa’s *Seasons of Flight*, which is the issue of this research” (11). Thus, though Regmi points out that Thapa’s novel deals with Nepali immigrants’ experience of exile in the USA, he doesn’t hesitate to argue that there is a lack of extensive and analytical study and research on Thapa’s *Seasons of Flight*, too. Regarding Nepali critics on *Seasons of Flight*, Dilu Gurung is very critical and inclusive. Gurung writes:

The novel is written by an Asian expatriate about an immigrant like her. It is more than a single nation that is represented by the author and the characters. Migration, hybridity, assimilation, transformation, fluidity, and multiculturalism are represented by the novel and the characters. The author has difficulty in adjusting in a new country so she opts to create the third world in the novel with the help of imagination. Writing the novel is the way to connect her native land with her new home. She has her native culture mixed with foreign culture. They could neither completely follow their culture in the foreign land nor could follow the new culture. They mix both cultures and create the third culture. The following of the third culture makes them think that they are attached with both the nations. The authors writing migration literature write about more than a nation. This is the case with the characters, too. (11)



Gurung seems to be appreciative about Thapa's novel, which according to her reflects major issues of the migrant literature such as hybridity, cultural assimilation, and multiculturalism.

Gurung discovers the transnational character of *Seasons of Flight* and claims that this novel is a transnational novel, whereas other critics on this novel do not claim so. Gurung writes, "It is a transnational text as it occupies multiple nations' characters and their experiences. It shows the mixing of the east and the west. This novel too has an American running after an Asian" (11). The above statements even indicate how Dilu Gurung is different from other Nepali critics and besides her criticism is a bit more inclusive than others' too.

Secondly, regarding superficial criticism, Pooja Swamy is one of them whose criticism on *Seasons of Flight* seems to be short, superficial and incomplete though her focus on the novel is quite different from other critics' focus as Swamy focuses on diasporic South Asian women's identity regarding women's double marginalization in the USA. She writes, "So identity crisis in South Asian women, especially in diasporic women is the main motif dominant in the works of Thapa. This double marginalization in immigrant women has influenced her writings. She is rewriting women's agency through women's body" (495). Swamy regards Thapa as a feminist as the novel reflects elements of feminism portraying Prema as the protagonist whose double marginalization according to Swamy is revealed in the novel. According to Swamy, Prema, the protagonist in *Seasons of Flight* has been shown very contrary to the stereotype of an Asian woman. Swamy writes, "In the novel the stereotype of an Asian woman also has been negated by the free will and unarrested behavior of Prema. She is not the mouse Americans think she is 'You were so quiet and reserved, so Asian" (164/5), "She is searching" (496). It indicates the freedom for females in

the American multicultural society where Prema searches her identity and freedom without the social approval, which is contrary to the South Asian traditional society. Likewise, Deepthi VG also points out cultural conflicts, dislocation, and contesting identities in the novel. Deepthi claims, “As the novel progresses, Thapa unfolds the cultural conflicts, dislocation, separation, and contesting identities of immigrants entombed between the culture, values and beliefs of their homeland and the unfamiliar circumstances of their homeland and the unfamiliar circumstances of their present home” (485). So, it means that when the immigrants live in the diaspora, it is natural that they find the difference between the environment of their home country and the host country. However, what she points out different from other critics is she does thematic analysis of the title of the novel comparing the immigrant Prema to a butterfly. Deepthi writes, “*Seasons of Flight* is titled by Thapa after that period of the year when butterflies start flying and later die. The novel narrates a pragmatic instance of uprootedness through Prema who similar to a butterfly flies from a picturesque village in Nepal to a socially and culturally flamboyant metropolis in the United States” (485). In one sense, the death of butterfly can be similar to uprootedness of Prema. Besides, in “Diaspora from the Himalayan Region: Nation and Modernity in Select Literary works,” Himadri Lahiri, another Indian critic deals with Tibetan diaspora and Nepali diaspora in this article. Regarding Nepali diaspora, Lahiri shows how *Seasons of Flight* is a novel of the protagonist’s escape or migration from the violent war-torn region because of maoist insurgency, Nepal to the multicultural nation, America. Lahiri’s statements “The novel is therefore a narrative of escape from the violent, war-torn, less evolved Nepal, immersed in poverty, to a technologically advanced and economically progressive America” (82) reveal it.

However, the different issue in the novel that Lahiri points out is a sense of nationalism and patriotism that Bijaya, Prema's sister shows, whereas Prema fails to do so. Bijaya had joined the maoist insurgency, whereas Prema had migrated to the USA winning DV lottery. After the civil war is over and Prema comes to Nepal, the conflict between sisters reflects Bijaya's nationalism.

Thus, the above mentioned critics' criticism is found to be quite superficial, lacking and incomplete. As for native critics on the novel, it has not been found enough. Hence, a serious further criticism is a must on *Seasons of Flight*.

### **Methods and Methodology**

This research explores four South Asian diaspora novels. I have applied the qualitative research approach to scrutinize the national and transnational experience of the diaspora characters in these narratives. Further, I have used the inductive method to extrapolate characters' experiences and reflections in the fictional texts.

For a broad methodological framework, the theoretical frame and conceptual frame are designed. Since the select texts are South Asian novels and the issues that deal with the research study are about identity and conflicts caused by postcolonial state, the postcolonial theory is used as the theoretical frame. Likewise, as for the conceptual frame, theoretical concepts such as transnational, national, hybridity, double consciousness and desiring whiteness are applied as they deal with the identity issues, conflicts and negotiation of South Asian characters of the selected novels.

Basically, the qualitative research methodology has been selected because it is about the transnational phenomenon of the South Asian immigrants depicted in the novels in diaspora setting. As national consciousness of immigrants affects transnational activities and transnational activities of the immigrants affect national consciousness, transnationalism and nationalism are powerful and suitable theoretical

concepts to do textual analysis of the selected novels. So, the study uses transnational and national perspectives as major theoretical lens which incorporate hybridity, desiring whiteness and double consciousness to discover how the characters' conflicts are created, how they face identity crisis and how they negotiate between transnational identity and national identity in the third space.

Different theorists have defined transnationalism in context of migration. According to Vertovec, a notable theorist of transnationalism, who in "Conceiving and Researching Transnationalism" argues, "Transnationalism broadly refers to multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation-states" (1). Transnationalism indicates cross-border mobilities, different social ties, movements and different activities of people that connect people and institutions across the nation. In *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects Postcolonial Predicaments and Deterritorialized Nation States*, Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller and and Christina Szaton Blanc define "'transnationalism' as the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement" (8). Thus, for them, a fundamental element of transnationalism is transmigrants' multiple involvements, which on the one hand connect both home and host societies and on the other hand, their involvements indicate transnationalism as processes and a means of construction of multiple identities. Among their multiple identities, my research deals with national identity, hybrid identity, double consciousness and transnational identity. The idea of transnational does not only appear as identity but it does appear as desire, threat and negotiation, too, which this research explores in characters' life in the novels.

Like transnationalism, nationalism is also a theoretical concept. Nationalism, a political doctrine in human history, which indicates people's attachment, bond of love, loyalty and view of sovereignty of their nation, is related to cultural phenomena and national identity of the home nation, too. In "National Identity", Anthony D. Smith states, "nationalism, the ideology and movement, must be closely related to *national identity*, a multidimensional concept, and extended to include a specific language, sentiments and symbolism" (7). Thus, nationalism is applicable to explore national identity of South Asian characters who live in diaspora and feel of having identity crisis in the host land.

The research study is not on transnational humans/human beings, but it is on transnational characters depicted in the selected novels. For this research work, the textual data are obtained from behaviours, attitudes, interactions, events, symbols and social processes that reflect every day life of South Asian characters depicted in the selected novels. Hence, the qualitative research is made for creating an in-depth understanding of different activities, interaction, events and social processes of the characters in the selected novels. Since the South Asian characters depicted in the novels are transnational, the qualitative research becomes effective to study the mentality of characters and how they are affected by transnational phenomenon.

On the basis of the qualitative research methodology, the research work analyzes the selected South Asian novels: *The Namesake* by Lahiri, *Brick Lane* by Ali, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Hamid and *Seasons of Flight* by Thapa. Textual analysis has been used as an effective research method, which shows how the research has been designed and performed. Research methodology is the theoretical paradigm for the research and the research method indicates how the research is conducted. So, the textual analysis is used as a research method, which is highly valued by a

researcher and writer Gabriel Griffin in her book *Research Methods for English Studies*. Connecting textual analysis to the broad theoretical methodology, Griffin claims: “Textual analysis as a research method involves a close encounter with the work itself, an examination of the details without bringing to them more presuppositions than we can help” (160). So, the textual analysis of the primary texts reveals the examination of the details in course of the research. Within the theoretical framework of postcoloniality and postcolonialism, this study examines them critically on the basis of major theorists of transnationalism such as Steven Vertoveck, Linda Basch, N. Glick Schiller, Cristina Szanton Blanc, Paul Kennedy, Victor Roudometof, Roger Waldinger and Lloyd L. Wong. Postcolonialism means after colonialism, which reflects the effects of colonialism on both the colonized ones and the colonizer ones. The postcolonial texts reflect the power dynamics between the colonizers and the colonized. Hence, the postcolonial theory questions the power dynamics between imperial nations and their colonized ones or territories. In *The Empire Writes Back*, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin argue: “The idea of ‘post-colonial literary theory’ emerges from the inability of European theory to deal adequately with the complexities and varied cultural provenance of post-colonial writing” (11). It indicates that the issues of marginalized people after colonization, the effects of colonization and voices of colonized people from the center about the center are addressed by postcolonial theories.

So, in place of the canonized western theorists’ theoretical concepts, I have applied postcolonial theorists’ concepts such as Bhabha’s ‘Hybridity’ and ‘The third space’, Du Bois’ ‘Double Consciousness’, Seshradri-Crooks’ and Fanon’s ‘Desiring Whiteness’, Hall’s ‘Thinking the Diaspora’ and Edward Said’s ‘Orientalism’ for a broader perspective of theory implemented in the analysis of literary texts. Hybridity which means the mixedness of cultures or identities of immigrants is a theoretical

concept that is very contextual to apply to reveal the hybrid identity of the South Asian transnational characters depicted in the selected novels. Bhabha regards the third space as the hybrid space where South Asian immigrants negotiate for their survival identity. According to Bhabha, in *Location of Culture*, this hybrid third space is an ambivalent site where cultural meaning and representation have no 'primordial unity or fixity' (176). So, the third space is the contact zone where immigrants get hybrid identity which is not fixed but in flux. Bhabha's concept 'the third space' is really contextual to understand not only the hybrid state but to know that immigrants have conflicts and negotiation in this space.

Likewise, Du Bois' double consciousness is applied as a theoretical concept to explore how the identity of the South Asian immigrants becomes weak due to double consciousness in the diaspora. Du Bois defines double consciousness:

It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body. (8)

Du Bois' concept of double consciousness indicates that the identity of the African Americans is endangered as they have feelings of two-ness and they judge themselves from the eyes of whites. So, their identity is divided. I have applied double consciousness to reveal the divided identity of the South Asian immigrants whose state is also like that of the Blacks.

Similarly, the South Asian characters seem to have desiring whiteness as they immigrate to the UK and the US that are the white dominated lands to have white privileges. I have used two major theorists Seshadri-Crooks and Fanon besides other theorists and critics to do textual analysis on Desiring Whiteness. According to

Seshadri-Crooks who makes a Lacanian psychoanalysis of the desiring Whiteness of immigrants, the immigrants migrate to the West in search of Whiteness which symbolizes different kinds of privileges, job opportunities, and education. She writes, “By Whiteness, I refer to a master signifier that establishes a structure of relations, a signifying chain that through a process of inclusions and exclusions constitutes a pattern for organizing human difference” (3). She regards whiteness as a signifying chain which indicates various things immigrants desire such as West, America, liberalism, democracy, education, privilege and so on. But, Fanon regards desiring whiteness as threat for the immigrants. He thinks that whiteness dehumanizes and endangers the existence of non-whites. Fanon writes, “Towards Caliban, Prospero assumes an attitude that is well known to Americans in the Southern United States. Are they not forever saying that the niggers are just waiting for the chance to jump on white women” (147), which reveals the dehumanizing/ insulting act of whites for the blacks. Why Seshadri-Crooks’ desiring whiteness is applicable in analyzing these primary texts is the South Asian immigrant characters migrate to the west in the hope of embracing such privileges of whiteness.

Therefore, with these perspectives as theoretical tools, the research makes a qualitative analysis of the primary texts. Regarding critics, the research work uses critics such as Michel Brunea, Thomas Faist, Garrett Ziegler, Germaine Greer, Bernal Dutta, Tamara Bhalla, Binod Paudyal, Khem Guragain, and Daryoosh Hayati as a few names who have critiqued the selected novels. Besides, the supervisor’s suggestions and guidelines are strictly followed and relevant books and research articles are consulted to bring the current debate on transnationalism with regard to the above mentioned issues.



This research work examines the transnational experiences of characters in the South Asian diaspora. This present work applies the postcolonial theory that includes the notions of transnationalism and diaspora which are similar as well as different. Both indicate cross-border processes. According to Thomas Faist, diaspora always refers to religious communities, national groups, social groups, and so on, while transnationalism refers to issues of mobility, networks and cross-border mobility (10). Diaspora mainly focuses on the religious, social and national groups of immigrants living in imagined communities (Anderson 6). The forced dispersal of immigrants who settle in the hostland are regarded as the diaspora according to the old notion of diaspora. As for an example, Jews' diaspora can be taken. However, transnationalism focuses on the issues and activities of cross-border mobility and networks, which the activities of delineated characters in the selected novels reflect.

Likewise, secondary sources such as theories, notions, critics' views, reviews and so on are used for the textual analysis. Catherine Besley points out the value and use of textual analysis for the theoretical methodology so that the research study is done effectively. Focusing on the secondary sources for the textual analysis, Besley argues: "What secondary sources usually provide is well informed, coherent and rhetorically persuasive arguments, which can leave the researcher convinced that whatever can be said has been said already. The way to use secondary sources is very sparingly indeed" (160). Besley's statement: "we must consider other people's contribution carefully having in mind the pros and cons of each contribution" (160) reveals the importance of citing sources giving credit to the writers, theorists, critics and reviewers whose secondary sources have been used as materials in the research study. I have applied the theoretical ideas I have just mentioned in the previous sentence.

The entire theoretical framework has been checked to find out whether it has been suitable for the entire research work. Besides, the findings have been made through the qualitative research work. The theoretical framework has been designed in such a way that theoretical concepts of national and transnational become the umbrella terms under which other theoretical concepts such as hybridity, double consciousness and desiring whiteness lie. The theoretical tools such as hybridity, double consciousness, transnational and national are applied in such a way that on the one hand the emphasis is given on the various identities of South Asian characters delineated in the selected novels; on the other hand those all identities are related to transnational and national. So, transnational and national theoretical lenses become the dominant part of my research methodology as they are applied in textual analysis to explore the negotiation between the national identity and transnational identity of South Asian immigrants who face different cultural clashes which result into homelessness, rootlessness, alienation, loss of identity and marginalization. Hence, the designed and applied methodology in course of textual analysis shows how different strategies such as assimilation, adaptation, acculturation, rejection, and negotiation are adopted by immigrants for their adjustment and settlement in the diaspora and those who fail to do negotiation return to the roots.

### **Chapter III**

#### **Desiring Whiteness: A Major Cause for Transnational Migration**

The characters delineated in the selected novels transcend the borders, migrate to the West and show back and forth movements between the home country and the host country. So, they become transnational. Since the characters in three novels migrate to America and characters in one novel migrate to Britain and both America and Britain are the lands dominated by Whites, the characters portrayed appear to be desirous of whiteness. Desiring Whiteness means building up American identity or Western identity which appears to be the dream of South Asian characters in the novels. The selected novels reveal the transmigration of South Asian characters from South Asia to America and Britain, where whiteness prevails. On the one hand whiteness indicates White people or western colonizers; on the other hand whiteness indicates a form of authority, knowledge, power and privilege. Cheryl Harris regards whiteness as property. Harris' statement about Whiteness "[w]hiteness can move from being a passive characteristic as an aspect of identity to an active entity that—like other forms of property—is used to fulfil the will and to exercise power" (1734) supports his definition: whiteness is "'use[d] and enjoy[ed] in much the same way as property" (1731). Besides, the world can be divided into West and non-West. The West is the symbol of Whiteness or center, whereas the non-West is the symbol of non-whites or periphery. South Asian immigrants show ambivalent perspectives towards Whiteness. So, although they desire it, they fear it, too.

Desiring whiteness cannot be a suitable theoretical concept if the immigrants migrate to the nations such as Burma, Morocco, China, South Africa and so on where Whites do not live in majority. But, the immigrants in the selected novels migrate to America and Britain which are the center and symbol of whiteness. Since I want to

explore the desiring whiteness of characters in all these novels, I have applied desiring whiteness as a theoretical tool in these novels. The idea of Eurocentrism is also applicable here. However, in the post war era due to the rise and dominance of American civilization, both Europe and America have also become the center of whiteness. According to Samir Amin, whiteness is entirely related to Europe or the “eternal West” (89). The present trend of non-whites moving to the Western nations clearly suggests how they are lured by the privileges of whiteness. Apparently and mainly, whiteness indicates being whites or white supremacy. However, this paper argues that whiteness is a kind of magical privilege which has fascinated the non-whites across the world in such a way that to embrace it they happen to endanger their cultural identity, national identity and different identities. Living together in a joint family seems to be a dream today especially for such people who are running after whiteness in the name of career building leaving their homes, societies and nations back. They suffer from different hurdles including the family fragmentation. In search of whiteness, they become transnational people at the cost of sacrificing their national identity. So, whiteness is not confined to racism or being whites in my research. Linda Martin Alcoff argues, “Whiteness should not be reduced to racism or even racial privilege, even though these have been central aspects of what it means to be white” (9). What Alcoff means to say is whiteness should be taken in the form of privileges rather than racism.

There are multiple reasons for immigrants to be transnational. But, I have found their desire of whiteness as a major cause. Getting disappointed with the political system, lack of effective law and order, and lack of opportunities of one’s nation, the South Asians get lured by multiculturalism, liberalism and opportunities for immigrants of America and Britain and desire whiteness. Fanon’s statement in *Black Skin, White Masks*, “‘For Césaire’, Senghor says, ‘The Whiteman is the symbol

of capital as the Negro is that of labor” (133). So, they regard whiteness as powerful identity and want to have it. Though bell hooks’ arguments “I think that one fantasy of whiteness is that the threatening Other is always a terrorist. This projection enables many white people to imagine there is no representation of whiteness as terror, as terrorizing” (174) reflect the whiteness as threat for transnational migrants, they try their best to do negotiation with whiteness in the diaspora as they find whiteness as a civilizing machine. So, this research shows that those who become successful in negotiating in whiteness settle in the west, whereas those who fail to do negotiation return to their home country. So, this section of the dissertation projects instances of negotiation of the national and the transnational: whiteness as desire, whiteness as identity, whiteness as threat and whiteness as negotiation.

Whiteness has been related to racism by different theorists, critics and writers. It has been related to blacks, who are discriminated and weakened by whiteness. There are multiple theories and articles written on whiteness showing white supremacy. Dyer’s notion of whiteness about the embodiment of whiteness reflects how whiteness is institutionalized. Dyer proposes “I approach this through three elements of its constitution: Christianity, race and enterprise/imperialism” (14). On the one hand, such article on whiteness reflect how blacks desire whiteness; on the other hand they reflect how whiteness appears to be a source of pain, suffering and identity crisis for them. But, there are not enough theories and articles which relate whiteness to South Asian immigrants’ life. Like the blacks, I have found the South Asian characters delineated in the selected novels very much crazy about desiring whiteness. One important aspect of discriminating or othering the non-whites whether they are blacks or Asians is creating the binary between the Orient/East and the Occident/West. In *Orientalism*, Edward Said writes, “Orientalism is a style of thought

based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'" (2). Whiteness as power from politics to education in different domains which even Dyer's *White* reflects is represented in different spheres of human life. Lund and Carr who regard Christianity and rationality as grand narratives claim "These grand narratives continue to circulate among educational history, ideas and artifacts, further institutionalizing whiteness" (14). His notion of whiteness is whiteness is invisible, universal and dominant. Even though the selected novels reflect the South Asian characters' desiring whiteness, all the novels do not include the evidences of whiteness equally well. Hence, I am determined to discover different such evidences of whiteness applying theories of whiteness and critical articles in course of doing textual analysis.

### **Whiteness as Desire**

In the hope of embracing privileges of whiteness such as western education, social security, job opportunities, business and liberalism, the transnational characters depicted in the selected novels desire whiteness. As for an instance, Prema, the central character in Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* migrates to America from Nepal winning the DV lottery to embrace multicultural and liberal American society which offers privileges of whiteness. Thapa's statement "Yet, one day, she entered her name in the American green card lottery" (7) indicates Prema's intense desire of migrating to America. Later, she wins the DV lottery and migrates to America which appears to be the center of social security, freedom and job opportunities that her home country could not provide. Prema found the trend of young Nepalese leaving Nepal due to the civil war between Maoist rebels and Nepal Armies which has battered, shattered and terrorized Nepalese. Her younger sister Bijaya was forcefully made to join the Maoist group and her father was a widower. The trend of filling the form of DV lottery

throughout the world wherever it is done reflects mainly non-whites' desiring whiteness. Thapa's statements "Prema's friends had hatched elaborate schemes to migrate . . . to Australia, Europe, Canada, America" (6) reveal the existing trend of migrating to the land dominated by Whites. Why Prema migrates to America is mainly due to the civil war between the Maoist rebel groups and Nepali army.

Why the immigrants migrate to the West is they desire whiteness, which appears in the form of privilege, knowledge, opportunities and power that enable them to have the transnational identity for their bright career. People travel to the West, the land of colonizers in search of whiteness, but France Widdance Twinne and Charles Andrew Gallagher claim, "Whiteness as a form of privilege and power travels from western countries to colonies throughout the world. As whiteness travels the globe, it reinvents itself locally upon arrival" (10). The westerners seem to exploit whiteness as a civilizing machine in two ways: firstly, they have made the system of their nations in the name of whiteness in such a way that mainly non-whites from different parts of the world like the delineated characters in the selected novels love to migrate to the West at the cost of sacrificing so many things even creating brain drain in their home nations; secondly the westerners are recolonizing the decolonized nations in the postcolonial era very diplomatically and powerfully through their brand of 'whiteness'. There appears to be a great fascination for whiteness throughout the world. According to Raka Shome, whiteness or white supremacy is engulfing the entire globe. Shome points out, "Whether it was the physical travel of white bodies colonizing 'other worlds' or today's neocolonial travel of white cultural products-media, music, television products, academic texts and Anglo fashions, white hegemony continues to shape the color line" (108). Shome's views towards whiteness reveal that the Whites are recolonizing the world culturally, economically, educationally and digitally. In this context, people are embracing the whiteness in

their own lands even not visiting the Whites' land, too. According to Thomas Fuller, "A recent study found that 40 percent of women in Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Philippines, South Korea and Taiwan routinely use whitening creams to both enhance their social status and increase the odds they will be able to 'marry up' socio-economically" (49). Fuller's claim suggests the non-whites' craze for desiring whiteness due to privileges of whiteness, which they want to embrace migrating to the West.

The selected novels reflect the South Asian characters' desire for whiteness as they love to live in the West embracing whiteness. These different characters desire different aspects of whiteness. The American/British education system which offers scholarships to meritorious scholars of the world appears to be the major indicator of whiteness. The increasing demand of the intellectuals who are the products of Universities such as MIT, Harvard, Princeton, Oxford, Cambridge and so on in the job markets throughout the world proves the authenticity of the western education system, which strengthens people's conviction and reliability to deserve to have privileges of the whiteness. In this context, both *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *The Namesake* focus on the major characters' desire to pursue higher education in the West, whereas both *Brick Lane* and *Seasons of Flight* focus on the major characters' desire to enjoy western liberalism.

*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* revolves round the great transformation of Changez's identity because of his desiring and embracing whiteness. Changez's sayings "This is a dream come true. Princeton inspired in me the feeling that my life was a film in which I was the star and everything was possible" (1-2) and "Students like me were given visas and scholarships, complete financial aid, mind you, and invited into the ranks of meritocracy" (2) reveal how American system of education appears to be as magic wand for South Asian immigrants like Changez. Mohsin



Hamid's statement about Changez's girlfriend Erica and his rival Chris: "Chris the presence of a rival –albeit a dead one- with whom I feared I could never compete" (35) exposes Changez's desire to have Erica, an American white girl, as his beloved, but she just regards Changez as her friend and still passionately loves Chris, an American white boy though he is dead. Tufail Muhammad Chandio argues, "Changez's Princeton degree, Underwood Samson business card and Erica's love earn him a respectable nod of approval in the society and it also gives meaning to his life" (72). What becomes clear here is Changez's desire for American system of education, white girl friend and job at Underwood Samson reveal his desire for whiteness. Besides, his love for Erica shows how he wants to embrace whiteness, but her indifference towards him and showing her attachment with dead lover, Chris indicates white supremacy.

Though Fanon writes about Blacks' desire for whiteness in *Black Skin, White Masks*, the craze for whiteness of South Asian characters such as Changez, Gogol, Sonia, and Moushumi is similar. Fanon's claim "I marry White culture, White beauty, Whiteness. When my restless hands caress those White breasts, they grasp White civilization and dignity and make them mine" (81) indicates the unconscious temptation of whiteness for non-whites. Like Changez, Ashoke who is one major character in *The Namesake* pursues PhD in MIT on the basis of scholarship. Lahiri's statement "Ashoke, a doctoral candidate in electrical engineering at MIT" (2) shows his craze for American education. Gogol, Ashoke's son, develops love affair firstly with Ruth and later with Maxine, both of whom are white girls, which is also an evidence to prove his unconscious desire and fascination to embrace American identity. The relationship of Gogol with Maxine about which Lahiri writes "At night he sleeps with her in the room . . . just above the one in which Geraldine and Lydia

lie” (136-137) does not only reveal cultural difference between South Asia and America but it also reveals Gogol’s/ South Asian’s irresistible desire for embracing American privilege which appears here in the form of extreme western liberalism of the young unmarried couples living together and having sex even in the same house of parents, which is not possible in South Asia. Living together appears as a symbol of western freedom, whereas it appears to be a great cultural shock in South Asia besides exceptions. Seshadri- Crooks’ view “whiteness represents complete mastery, self-sufficiency, and the jouissance of oneness” (7) becomes very relevant as whiteness is the powerful symbol of white privileges the immigrants desire. Likewise, Sonia’s, Gogol’s sister, also developing affair and marrying Ben, a white man, and Moushumi’s getting divorce from Gogol marrying Dmitri clearly indicate the South Asian characters’ irresistible desire for the Whites. Tamara Bhalla’s statements “Gogol and Maxine’s relationship raises questions about the interplay of class privilege, assimilative desires for whiteness, and national belonging for South Asian Americans” (113) and “when Moushumi wants to escape her marriage from Gogol, she has an affair with another white man, Dmitri. Whiteness- specially, whiteness” (118) reveal South Asian characters’ desire to embrace whiteness. Thus, *The Namesake* reflects South Asian characters’ craze for whiteness which is similar to Fanon’s and Seshadri- Crooks’ views.

As for Monica Ali’s *Brick Lane*, it also discovers Bangladeshi’s temptation to migrate to London. The story of the novel revolves round Nazneen, her husband Chanu, their daughters Sahana and Bibi, her sister Hasina, her lover Karim and some other characters. The novel shows the bildungsroman narrative of the protagonist Nazneen who travels from a rural area of Bangladesh to Brick Lane, the East of London known as the center of capitalism and the global metropolis where

Bangladeshi immigrants live. The novel seems to focus mainly on the transnational activities and diasporic experiences of Bangladeshi immigrants at Brick Lane in London. It reflects the dominance of British/white identity over the South Asian identity because British identity of South Asian immigrants transforms them to be independent in many respects though they were not born with a silver spoon in their home country. One important aspects of whiteness in the form of liberalism for females is reflected through the novel as Ali shows how Hasina/ Nazneen's sister is deprived of such freedom in Dhaka, while Nazneen enjoys it at Brick Lane. Garrett Ziegler points out:

The novel traces the transformation of Nazneen from a dependent, isolated wife to an independent, Westernized social actor. Significantly, the book locates the possibility of such sexual, economic, and political empowerment not in the rights claims enabled by state-based citizenship in the West, but rather through political membership in the neo-liberal capitalist metropolis. That it is the "liberal city," rather than simply urban life that allows this transformation is apparent by the fact that Dhaka affords Hasina no such opportunities. (148)

What Ziegler points out about the difference between Bangladeshi society and British society is British society is such a liberal society where Bangladeshi immigrants such as Nazneen despite having illicit affair with Karim is not regarded as a whore, while Hasina is taken like that in Dhaka. So, western liberalism appears to be a kind of privilege of whiteness which has an irresistible attraction for the South Asians.

Whiteness appears to be a system of privileges in the land of the whites, which benefits the whites and becomes a source of discrimination for non-whites. The whiteness as property has been regarded by whites since whites started colonizing

America keeping Blacks as slaves and marginalizing Native Americans. In ‘Whiteness as Property’, Cheryl I. Harris writes, “Becoming white meant gaining access to a whole set of public and private privileges that materially and permanently guaranteed basic subsistence needs and, therefore, survival” (8). Harris further claims, “My grandmother's story illustrates the valorization of whiteness as treasured property in a society structured on racial caste” (8). The idea that whiteness is taken as property becomes obvious by the way Harris expresses his views on whiteness even narrating his grandmother’s example and relating it to racism. Ian Lopez argues, “The value of Whiteness to Whites almost certainly ensures the continuation of a White self-regard predicated on racial superiority” (24), which supports Harris’ views. According to Harris’ and Lopez’s above views, whiteness seems to be only for whites as property, but the selected four novels reflect how whiteness appears to be an advantageous temptation for South Asian non-whites who migrate to the land of whites to embrace it by hook or crook.

What Lopez hates about whiteness is the way it is founded on the base of racism discriminating non-whites. So, he argues, “Whiteness as it currently exists should be dismantled” (22). However, *Brick Lane* reflects mainly two aspects of whiteness. One is whiteness as a way of showing racism discriminating the non-whites, which becomes clear from the way Ali writes about discrimination shown to Bangladeshi immigrants at Brick Lane. Nazneen’s comment on racism “My husband says they are racist, particularly Mr. Dalloway. He thinks he will get the promotion, but it will take him longer than any white man. . . . He says that racism is built into the system” (72). Nazneen tells Razia about her husband Chanu’s hatred towards whites who cause racism according to him. A critic, Fakhare Alam, seems to agree with Chanu’s attitudes towards whites and says, “Constance experience of racial

discrimination and humiliation leaves Chanu on the verge of depression and disappointment” (135). But, Razia’s talk to Nazneen reveals the second aspects of whiteness, which appears in the form of social/economic security for the non-whites as Razia argues, “if you don’t have a job here, they give you money. Did you know that? You can have somewhere to live, without any rent” (73). Thus, although whiteness causes discrimination for the non-white immigrants, the social security of the British/American/western society appears as a form of second aspects of whiteness which tempts the non-whites to migrate to the west.

British and American societies seem to be such multicultural and liberal societies where not only Whites but non-white immigrants also feel secure, which the selected four novels reflect. The fact that America gave shelter to Jews, other minority groups, and war victims of Europe indicates freedom and human rights for people in America although Native Americans and Blacks suffered a lot for a long duration of time in America. America has been the land of immigrants since she was discovered by Christopher Columbus. The story of Prema and Luis is also similar. Himadri Lahiri asserts, “While in the US, Prema constantly draws parallels with “war”-torn countries like Guatemala in particular and other countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan. She reads a lot on Guatemalan history and compares herself with the immigrants from there. She has an affair with Luis Reyes, whose father left Guatemala to settle down in the United States” (79). Likewise, Sunila Gurung’s statements “Moreover, his mother was from the mainstream White American society. He never felt out of place, or un-American at any place in his life. . . . Like Prema, he had left his homeland at a time of civil war and violence” (178). One parallelism that both Lahiri and Gurung point out between Prema and Luis’ father is that both of them have found America as

the land of shelter and opportunities, which reflect their craze for embracing whiteness. But, Gurung's comment indicates how Luis' father embraces whiteness marrying a White girl. This kind of embracing whiteness marrying or falling in love with white girls/ boys gets reflected by the activities of Gogol, Sonia, Moushumi, Changez and Prema.

My study of the selected novels with the application of theoretical concepts and theories of whiteness indicates that South Asian characters who live in the South Asian diasporas enjoy job opportunities, individual freedom, social security and economic security, which indicates different privileges of whiteness even though sometimes they get affected by white supremacy/ racism. The fact that most of the South Asians who can negotiate in the western host nation hardly return to their homelands prove it. Besides, as for the South Asian females like Nazneen, Sahana, Bibi, Razia, Prema, Sonia and Moushumi, the western liberal society has the magical or magnetic power in such a way that they cannot think of leaving the West for the East.

### **Whiteness as Identity**

Although whiteness is taken positively as well as negatively by critics, it appears to be a great advantageous identity for whites and concerning people. Whiteness appears to be such identity which is like a bearer cheque for the people who get benefitted by it. The South Asian immigrant characters depicted in the novels seem to be highly tempted by white identity. Lopez argues that white identity is a kind of great privilege for Whites. So, he claims, "White identity provides material and spiritual assurances of superiority in a crowded society" (140). He highlights the significance of white identity for Whites by saying "Contemporary evidence suggests that among Whites, White identity continues to be highly valued. Despite its

superficial transparency, Whites widely continue to recognize the value of their own Whiteness” (140). Thus, whiteness, which appears to be identity for Whites, works as a great privilege for both Whites and other concerning people such as the non-white immigrants.

The idea that the social status and social relationships of people who possess whiteness are maintained becomes clear from Steve Garner’s argument “As much as anything, it is a lens through which particular aspects of social relationships can be apprehended” (1). Regarding whiteness, my argument is it is not only Whites who enjoy whiteness but it is also non-whites such as South Asian immigrants as depicted in my selected novels who feel proud of enjoying privileges of whiteness. Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* represents such South Asian immigrants who enjoy white identity. Changez’s pride of enjoying American identity “At Princeton, I conducted myself in public like a young prince, generous and carefree” (5) reveals how South Asian immigrants enjoy whiteness as their identity. Changez’s saying “Princeton made everything possible for me” (7) focuses on the value of American identity. About Changez’s embracing American identity, Mustafa Demirel writes, “Leaving his Pakistani part of identity aside, Changez enjoys his “Americanness,” represented by the American education, the American girl, and the American business” (118). Likewise, in *The Namesake*, Ashok’s studying on scholarship scheme in MIT also indicates enjoying American identity or privilege of whiteness. The examples of Changez and Ashok indicate that American identity or White identity is not reduced/ limited to racism only. In this context, Alcoff strongly argues, “Whiteness should not be reduced to racism or even racial privilege, even though these have been central aspects of what it means to be white” (9). Thus, whiteness should not be judged on the basis of racial privileges only. Instead, the positive aspect

of whiteness, which is the White privilege for which the non-whites and mainly South Asian immigrant characters in the selected novels desire, should be taken positively.

Why the second generation South Asian immigrants want to date Whites in the West is they want to have the identity of whiteness. Gogol, Sonia and Moushumi are the second generation South Asian immigrants who love to date white Americans, which means that they want to embrace the identity of whiteness. Min Zhou's argument "Most Asian Americans seem to accept that "white" is main stream, average and normal, and they look to whites as a frame of reference for attaining higher social position" (35) indicates the Asian Americans' infatuation with white identity. One important idea is due to the idea of Eurocentrism (Lois Tyson 366) and growing influence of America in the post-war era, colonized people/ South Asians or Africans who live in the margins/peripheri desire to migrate to the center i.e. Europe or America. But, in my research, the South Asian characters get fascinated to move to Britain and America desiring whiteness. Zhou argues, "Second-generation Asian Americans are also more conscious of the disadvantages associated with being nonwhite than their parents . . ." (35). It indicates that the nonwhites as the second generation immigrants are very conscious of maintaining the identity of whiteness though they know there is racial discrimination. Zhou mentions a Chinese-American woman's version, "The truth is, no matter how American you think you are or try to be, if you have almond-shaped eyes, straight black hair, and a yellow complexion, you are a foreigner by default. . . . You can certainly be as good as or even better than whites, but you will never become accepted as white" (35). This remark indicates the frustration and disappointment of the America born nonwhite immigrants who hate being treated as foreigners or just immigrants in place of Americans. Pamela, a white



woman at Maxine's, Gogol's white girlfriend's dinner table regards him as an Indian despite the fact that he was born in America. Pamela says, "but, you are an Indian. . . . I'd think the climate wouldn't affect you, given your heritage" (156). Here, Paudyal seems to relate whiteness to racism and argues, "What is striking about this passage is that Pamela insists on identifying Gogol according to his race rather than his country of citizenship or legal residence" (196). Paudyal's criticism on Pamela indicates how racism is caused by whiteness, which is weakening the identity of the immigrants.

*The Namesake* focuses on how whiteness is taken as identity by Gogol, Sonia, and Moushumi, which becomes clear by the way all of them develop relationships with Whites. Gogol firstly dates Ruth and then Maxine, both of whom are Whites. Likewise, Sonia and Moushumi also date and marry Whites. Regarding Asian immigrants' attraction for white bodies, Shan-mei Ma argues, "the disadvantaged group's fallacy of assimilation. White bodies . . . become not only an exotic physical entity whose fair skin and corporeal features captivate . . . Asian American men but also a political symbol within which lies the promise of power" (113). Lahiri's portrayal of second generation South Asian characters' desire for white bodies is similar to Ma's views, however, South Asian immigrants are regarded as outsiders instead of Americans. Natalie Friedman writes, "Lahiri's depictions of the elite class of Western-educated Indians and their children's relationship to both India and America dismantle the stereotype of brown-skinned immigrant families that are always outsiders to American culture and recasts them as cosmopolites" (112). Friedman points out that Lahiri's characters adapt American identity and negotiate the cultural identity between homeland and hostland.

Likewise, *Seasons of Flight* also revolves round the protagonist Prema's search for identity in America. In course of her search, she goes on dating white

Americans such as Andy, Bobby, Lois and so on. Thapa writes about their romantic love, “‘Make love to me everywhere,’ Prema cried. ‘I’ll make love to you here. And here. And here,’ Luis said, giving her the force of his coming” (119). In one way, their love in relationship shows excessive sexual liberalism South Asian females enjoy in America. In context of South Asian nations like Nepal, girls like Prema are sure to be regarded as whores. But, it mainly reveals the nonwhite’s desire for white bodies to have the identity of whiteness/ Americanness. Dilu Gurung argues, “It is not only with Luis that she has physical relationship but with Andy, Bobby, Jose, Marco and other Americans, too. She tries to get Americanized from every aspect” (5).

Besides, the protagonist of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* Changez’s love affair with Erica, a white girl symbolically indicates his love of America or American identity. Demeriel’s claim “His love of Erica symbolically refers to his love of America. Erica might stand for Changez’s desire to enter into the American way of life, to embrace American customs. Or from Bhalla’s (2012) perspective, Changez-Erica relation might show assimilative desires for whiteness” (118) reflects South Asian immigrants’ desire for whiteness as identity. However, unlike Prema and other characters such as Gogol, Sonia and others, Changez appears to be different since his attachment to America remains constant in spite of the fact that he stands against American imperialism after 9/11 event, which becomes clear from “Despite my not insubstantial financial constraints, I managed every year to pay my class dues in order to receive the Princeton Alumni weekly” (73). Bhat rightly regards him a reluctant fundamentalist and says, “Changez in the end faces the dilemma of his identity. . . . He is still a lover of America. But he is also known for his anti-American stance. . . . He can only be a reluctant fundamentalist” (451-452). Bhat reveals Changez’s

changed identity in the final part of the novel, which is his being a reluctant fundamentalist.

Unlike Changez, Prema, Gogol, Sonia and Moushumi, Ali's second generation characters in *Brick Lane* such as Nazneen, Shahana, Bibi, Karim and others are not delineated to show their affair or dating with Whites. It also does not mean that Ali's novel does not reflect Bangladeshi immigrants' attraction for whiteness. Ali has convincingly portrayed her characters such as Nazneen, Shahana, Bibi, Mrs Islam, Razia, Karim and others who enjoy British multiculturalism and western liberalism, which symbolize the identity of whiteness. What is very pertinent to understand in this novel is the way Nazneen and Hasina who are sisters are taken. Both of them develop extra marital affairs, however, Nazneen is taken as a strong transformed and independent Bangladeshi British woman who ventures to let her husband return to Bangladesh due to her identity of whiteness or Britishness, whereas Hasina who is deserted by her husband and she is taken as a whore. Michael Perfect's argument "*Brick Lane's* depiction of Hasina's life has been accused of propagating rather than challenging stereotypical notions of the oppression of women in postcolonial Islamic societies" (112) indicates how South Asian society is a threat for females unlike the western/British liberal society where females like Nazneen can enjoy the life of independence without taking even husband's support, which becomes clear from Razia's announcement in the final part of the novel "'This is England,' She said. 'You can do whatever you like'" (492). What I have explored about the second generation characters in all the selected novels is they seem to have the identity of whiteness.

On the one hand, whiteness is taken as identity by different critics and theorists, on the other hand, critics like Garner and Alcoff seem to be against whiteness as identity for the whites. According to Garner, whiteness is also a

problematic, or an analytical *perspective*: that is, a way of formulating questions about social relations (3). He means to say that whiteness appears to be even an obstacle for the status of whites who are capable of creating opportunities without the label of whiteness. Hence, he strongly objects to whiteness. His claim “Thinking about whiteness as a *system* of privilege is a huge source of anxiety for individuals who consider themselves white” (5) also seems to be similar to Alcoff’s statement “Whiteness should not be reduced to racism or even racial privilege, even though these have been central aspects of what it means to be white” (9). The negative aspect of whiteness is pointed out as whiteness endangers the potentiality of the Whites.

Thus, although some critics/theorists seem to regard whiteness as an obstacle for the identity of Whites, most of the critics and theorists regard whiteness as identity, which appears to be clear by the way South Asian second generation characters depicted in the selected novels show their attachment with the privilege and identity of whiteness. The South Asian characters’ migration to the white dominated lands and their embracing whiteness uncover how whiteness appears to be identity for South Asian immigrants.

### **Whiteness as Threat**

The major argument is that South Asian immigrants have ambivalent perspectives towards whiteness, which indicates that they do not regard whiteness only as desire but they regard whiteness as threat, too. Toni Morrison who regards whiteness as threat for the blacks focuses on fear and dominance created by whites showing their white supremacy from blacks’ perspectives. In *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*, Morrison’s statement “The images of impenetrable whiteness need contextualizing to explain their extraordinary power,

pattern and consistency” (33) reflects the power of whiteness, which also means the powerlessness of nonwhites. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon relates whiteness to dehumanization of blacks since Fanon argues, “Negro but only of a penis; the negro is eclipsed. He is turned into a penis. He is a penis” (170). What Fanon wants to say is in place of highlighting the sexual vigour or masculinity of blacks, the whites confine the blacks to their penis with the power of construction of their English language. Among the four selected novels, both *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Brick Lane* reveal whiteness as threat for the characters implicitly, whereas *The Namesake* and *Seasons of Flight* reflect whiteness as threat for the characters explicitly.

The terrible impact of 9/11 tragic event upon mainly South Asian Muslim immigrants gets reflected in both *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Brick Lane*, which indicates whiteness as threat for South Asian characters depicted as immigrants in America and Britain. Changez’s blame for American government to show discrimination to South Asian Muslims becomes clear from: “When we arrived, I was separated from my team at immigration. They joined the queue for American citizens; I joined the one for foreigners. . . . I sat on a metal bench next to a tattooed man in handcuffs” (32). Because of some Muslim terrorists’ involvement in the 9/11 event, all the Muslims mainly South Asian Muslims were suspected, tortured, discriminated and punished by America reflecting biasness and racism and ridiculing American democracy, liberalism, and privilege of whiteness for immigrants. Muslim immigrants like Changez had enjoyed American/Transnational identity just before the 9/11 event occurred, which becomes obvious from Changez’s statement “I was a young New Yorker with the city at my feet” (20). But, just one event 9/11 changed the American policy in such a way that whiteness which had appeared as desire and temptation turned to be threat and curse for the immigrants. Shihada’s statements “The 9/11

attacks in the United States of America arguably mark a turning point in shaping America. . . . Islam and the Islamic world had subsequently become the target of President George Bush's "War on Terror" launched under the pretext promoting democracy" (452) and "Islam and Muslims are negatively represented as potential threats to the stability and democratic values of the American society" (453) show how on the one hand Muslim immigrants as threat to America, on the other hand America as threat to Muslims. Chandio relates the state of Muslims due to 9/11 event to the state of Germans due to WWI and the state of Japanese due to WWII in the USA. Chandio's claims "America has a long history of racial hatred, discrimination and harassment. Germans had been treated as others of America after the First World War. . . . Japanese had been discriminated, profiled and othered after the Second World War" (63) reveal how American democracy or whiteness appears to be threat for the immigrants. Anyway, the dual identity of American government: promise of democracy and liberalism and othering/discriminating and terrorizing one group such as Muslims in the name of war against terrorism appears to be ridiculous.

The South Asian transnational characters delineated in the primary novels reflect that whiteness, which is in the form of racism, appears to be threat for them in the diaspora. Whiteness in the form of racism appears to be a threat and obstacle for Chanu's career in London which Nazneen's views on racism reflect "My husband says they are racist, particularly Mr Dalloway. He thinks he will get the promotion, but it will take him longer than any white man. He says that if he painted his skin pink and white then there would be no problem" (72). But, eventually he does not get the promotion due to being a non-white. Nazneen's further saying about her husband "He says that racism is built into the system" (72) indicates the systematic racism and discrimination in London, which weakens the identity of the immigrants. Alam's

statement “Constant experience of racial discrimination and humiliation leaves Chanu on the verge of depression and disappointment” (135) supports Nazneen’s saying. In this context, I would like to quote Du Bois’ powerful line “The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line” (15). Besides, like Hamid, Ali has also shown the impact of 9/11 tragic event upon the South Asian Muslims mainly Bangladeshi Muslims in London. Shamaila Haleem writes, “The backlash of 9/11 is quite alarming. . . . The Muslim immigrants of the USA and the UK are the special victims of hatred and fury of the non-Muslims after 9/11” (103). As a result, Muslims feel they are marginalized from the mainstream British society in London. Hence, British Muslims’ formation of Bengal Tigers and their protest against the Lion Hearts are to fight for their British identity and against racism, Britishness or Whiteness appeared as threat to them. Ali writes, “But the Bengal Tigers dwindled: they became an endangered species. . . . The Lion Hearts have gone underground. They are gathering their forces” (301-302). In *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Hamid does not show the Pakistani Muslims’ formation of groups such as Bengal Tigers against the Whites’ group The Lion Hearts as Ali shows in *Brick Lane*. However, both Ali and Hamid explicitly show whiteness as threat to South Asian immigrants in their novels using mainly the issue of racism.

This chapter revolves round the impact of whiteness or racism upon the non-whites mainly the South Asian immigrants in the West. But, unlike the theorists/critics who say that whiteness weakens non-whites’ identity and life, Ruth Frankenberg gives feminist views on whiteness. According to Frankenberg, race shapes white women’s life (1). She regards whiteness like male chauvinism. Her argument “White people are ‘raced’ just as men are ‘gendered’” (1) uncovers how whiteness is a threat not only for the non-whites but also for White women.

Munyaradi Mushonga points out the dominance, colonization and racism of White males upon black females and White females. Mushonga's arguments "European men were prone to have sex with black women, not only from a shortage of white women, but also from the need to exercise power and authority as well as to satisfy their sexual desires for black women" (1) and "The master taboo of the white society was the intimacy between a black man and a white female" (3) indicate that whiteness was a threat for both White females and black females. The main reason behind the master taboo is that whiteness is even a great threat to the Whites, too. White men have a great psychological fear of the blacks since if White women develop intimacy with the black men, the White men's masculinity will prove to be much weaker than that of the black men. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon, expresses White men's fear for blacks, "Our Women are at the mercy of the Negro . . . . God knows how they make love" (x). Fanon's claim reflects black men's sexual vigor, which Whites regard as animalism and confine black men to their penis dehumanizing them in Fanon's argument "Negro but only of a penis" (170). Thus, even though I have tried my best to elaborate White females' fear of White males and White males' fear of black males, the non-whites'/South Asians' fear of Whites/whiteness is the key issue in this chapter.

Both *The Namesake* and *Seasons of Flight* reflect whiteness as a threat for South Asian characters. Both the novels written in a transnational setting locating the characters in the American diaspora give diasporic consciousness of the South Asian immigrants and tend to give us the message that besides the White Americans, non-white American immigrants are only regarded as foreigners, which weakens and devastates the identity of the American immigrants. During dinner at Maxine's, his girlfriend's dinner table, Pamela, a middle-aged white woman doubts Gogol's



American identity “‘I’m from Boston,’ he says . . . ‘But you’re Indian,’ Pamela says, frowning. ‘I’d think the climate wouldn’t affect you, given your heritage’” (156).

Pamela’s doubt of Gogol’s being an American indicates how non-whites are regarded as foreigners or outsiders or others though they are also American citizens like the Whites. Paudyal’s argument “‘But for Pamela, a brown skinned man simply does not fit the category of ‘American’” (196) reveals the prevalent trend of racism in America as the non-whites are judged from their roots. If the non-white Americans are judged from their roots, even present White Americans’ root is not America but Europe.

As for *Seasons of Flight*, it mainly focuses on how whiteness appears to be a desire for South Asian immigrants. But, it shows explicitly how whiteness mainly weakens cultural identity and makes life of immigrants tough in America. Prema’s weak hybrid identity and loss of Nepali identity is caused by whiteness in America. Her loss of chastity and the state of being like a whore is also caused by excessive liberalism for females. Anyway, such western liberalism is taken positively by South Asian female characters such as Nazneen, her daughters Bibi and Shahan, Sonia, Moushumi and even Prema. But, Prema’s dating White males such as Andy, Bobby, Jose Marco, Luis and others have devastated her life and finally she expresses her disappointment and dissatisfaction to Luis, “‘I do not have a world!’ Prema cried. I left the world I had, and do not belong in the one I am in now- your world. I do not have any place to take you, Luis. I do not have place in the world” (186). Prema’s these sayings express her state of insecurity, fear, frustration and disappointment, which seem to have been caused by whiteness. However, White Americans are privileged, whereas nonwhites face different identity crisis as whiteness appears to be threat for them.

Thus, South Asian characters become desirous of embracing whiteness to climb social ladder and enjoy different White privileges migrating to the land of the

Whites although whiteness appears to be threat to them as they get dehumanized, insulted, exploited, racially segregated and othered. They find how their identity is weakened and devastated by whiteness and they face different identity crisis in the western diaspora, they find the great temptation of whiteness and try to assimilate.

### **Whiteness as Negotiation**

Why South Asian immigrants do negotiate with whiteness depends on the social benefits and different White privileges they get settling in the land of Whites. Here negotiation with whiteness means South Asian immigrants negotiating with Americanness and Britishness. Whiteness indicates privileges, multiculturalism, liberalism, democracy and so on which America and Britain have. As a result, the immigrants can celebrate their cultural heritage or cultural diversity. In *Negotiating Ethnicity*, Bandana Purkayastha writes, “The more open and multicultural a society becomes, the greater the freedom for groups to celebrate their cultural heritages” (6). In this context, one major cause for South Asian characters to negotiate with whiteness is they can enjoy hybrid identity in the American or British society, which appears to be the third space. Besides freedom, the immigrants in the selected novels migrate to Britain and America for the sake of White privileges such as education, jobs, business and so on. When they compare such benefits of whiteness to the facilities they had in their home country they find the host country far better. Hence, despite racism and some other difficulties such as endangering their culture, language, homeland ties and so on they encounter, they do negotiation for the survival strategy, too. P. Levitt and N.G. Schiller write, “In the United States . . . to move up the socioeconomic ladder, immigrants would have to abandon their unique customs, language, values and homeland ties and identities” (1002). The portrayal of South Asian characters such as, Changez, Gogol, Prema, Sonia, Moushumi, Nazneen, Bibi,

Shahana and so on indicates how they try to integrate and assimilate in whiteness at the cost of endangering different types of identity. Demirel's comment upon Changez "Leaving his Pakistani part of identity aside, Changez enjoys his "Americanness," represented by the American education, the American girl, and the American business" (118) indicates Changez's negotiation in the host land. Whenever people have conflicts and life becomes full of tensions, negotiation becomes like a tool for their survival strategy. Paul Willem Meerts writes, "Negotiation is one of the main tools—if not the most important—that enable states and other organizations to create order in today's world. Channelling negotiation processes through regimes will, as a rule, enhance their stability and effectiveness. In order to survive, negotiations need regimes and regimes need negotiations" (312). So, for South Asian immigrants, whiteness appears to be negotiation or they negotiate with whiteness for the sake of White identity, education and career opportunities, liberalism, and multiculturalism.

The charm of western identity enables the South Asian immigrant characters to negotiate. Carr's argument: "Education, social class affiliations, religious connections, and an infinite number of experiences shape (individual and collective) identity" is similar to the identity formation of Gogol, Sonia, Moushumi, Nazneen, Bibi, Shahana, Prema, Changez and so on in the selected novels (55). Gogol tries to mimic and assimilate American culture celebrating his 14<sup>th</sup> birthday firstly in an American way then secondly in an Indian way. Lahiri's statement "His own friends from school . . . a tame affair with pizzas that his father picked up on his way, a basketball game watched together on television, some Ping-Pong in the den" (71) shows Gogol's assimilating in American culture. Likewise, Gogol's act of mimicry and assimilation of American cultural identity gets reflected in "He learns to love the food she and her parents eat, the plethora and risotto, the bouillabaisse and osso buco,

the meat baked in parchment paper” (137). Gogol’s eating American food with his girlfriend Maxine and her friend indicates his assimilation in American culture.

Sharmin comments on Gogol saying “His mimicry of these habits gains him a place in the privileged sphere” (40). Here assimilating in American cultural identity means internalizing whiteness, which Changez does in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. In the first part of the novel Changez does negotiation for American identity having American food, American education, American girlfriend Erica, and a good job. His statements “We ate grilled octopus and drank sparkling water and red wine” (9) and “At Princeton, learning was imbued with an aura of creativity; at Underwood Samson, creativity was not excised” (16) indicate Changez’s desire of negotiation for white identity. However, the 9/11 event changes the political scenario of America in such a way that Changez tries his best to negotiate his identity as a member of a minority immigrant group in the majority white group in America in the second part of the novel, which becomes obvious from Chandio’s argument “how the protagonist of the novel, a Pakistani Muslim emigrant, negotiates his identity in the wake of post- 9/11 othering, labelling, harassment, discrimination, profiling, islamophobia and xenophobia” (70). But, one major difference between Changez and Gogol is Changez has double consciousness, while Gogol does not though both of them are transnational individuals. Demirel’s comment on Changez “In a way, Changez’s double sense of belonging works in accordance with time and space. Changez experiences a turning point in his life, which makes him feel closer to the homeland, Pakistan . . . . Till the 9/11 attack to the Twin Towers, Changez feels like an ‘American boy’” (117). Changez returns to Pakistan and becomes a reluctant fundamentalist. However, both Changez and Gogol do negotiation with whiteness for American identity.

One key and common issue which I have found in all the selected novels is liberalism in sex without marriage that South Asian characters enjoy in the West, whereas they find it a taboo in the East. The western liberalism in this context is the major cause for them to do negotiation in whiteness. Ali's portrayal of Nazneen and Hasina in *Brick Lane* shows the difference between the western liberal society and the traditional Bangladeshi society as Nazneen develops extramarital relationship with a young Karim in London and yet enjoys her independence, while Nazneen's sister Hasina is regarded like a whore when she lives like this in Bangladesh. Regarding Nazneen's illicit affair with Karim, Ali writes, "He kissed her on the mouth and he led her into the bedroom" (288). But, there is silence in London regarding such illegal sex. As for Prema, she is sure to be regarded as a whore if she is in Nepal as in *Seasons of Flight* Thapa shows her affair with different American males such as Andy, Bobby, Jose, Marco and finally Luis with whom she enjoys American love. Dilu Gurung says about her sexual affair, "She is sexually liberated in America" (10). Like Prema, Sonia and Moushumi as portrayed in *The Namesake* go on dating American males, which is like Anoop Nayak's claim "Dating an Asian male would forego any privileges of whiteness and 'would mean that you'd have all the bad bits of it in your head'" (70). Thus, why South Asian females negotiate with whiteness is whiteness does not appear to be threat for them in the West rather male chauvinism and patriarchy appear to be threat for them in their host nations. However, it does not mean that South Asian males are not sexually liberated in the West. Karim's enjoying sex with married Nazneen in *Brick Lane* and Gogol's sexual affair with Ruth and Maxine in *The Namesake* is similar to Shashid's sexual affair with his married white teacher and girlfriend Deedee in Hanif Kureishi's *Black Album*. Kureishi's writes about Shashid's sexual love with Deedee "Thinking of her was like listening to his

favorite music; she was a tune he liked to play” (33). Thus, liberation in sex is a major cause for South Asian characters to do negotiation in whiteness.

Among different White privileges for which South Asian characters negotiate with whiteness, American high class education on a scholarship scheme is a major privilege which *The Namesake* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* reflect. Ashok gets the American identity studying at MIT and settles in America about which Lahiri writes “Ashok, a doctoral candidate in electrical engineering at MIT” (2). Likewise, Changez’s infatuation with American identity becomes obvious as he studies at Princeton University and feels proud of embracing American identity which his statements “Princeton inspired in me the feeling that my life was a film in which I was the star and everything was possible. I have access to this beautiful campus, I thought, to professors who are titans in their fields and fellow students who are philosopher-kings in the making” (2) and “Princeton made everything possible for me” (7) support. The education is in relation to power, privilege and whiteness. In one way western education system is used as a civilizing machine for the non-whites, for which South Asians negotiate with whiteness.

Migration from the South Asia to the West means moving from poverty, insecurity and periphery to the wealth, security and center though it is not always the case since in some cases people in the West may be poorer than people in the east, too. As economic privileges of whiteness are found in the latter one, South Asian characters in the novels do negotiation with whiteness. In this context, Prema’s migration to America in *Seasons of Flight* and the migration of Chanu, Nazneen, Mrs. Azaad and so on to Britain in *Brick Lane* can be taken. According to Lopez, Whites who enjoy whiteness are of three types: passing as White, fully White and honorary White and Asian Americans or South Africans come to the category of honorary White (151). Vinay Harpalani regards South Asians as honorary whites and argues

that “Although South Asian Americans are not formally classified as White, there is the notion that the group has attained a status of “honorary Whiteness.” Segments of South Asian American communities have economic and educational privileges and are very successful” (623) though according to Harpalani, there have been ascriptions of Blackness to South Asian Americans since the early twentieth century (626). Thus, though South Asian immigrants cannot be Whites in the White dominated lands in the West, they can attain a status of honorary whiteness and mainly they can embrace White privileges.

Thus, though whiteness appears as a terror according to Fanon’s claim “All this whiteness that burns me” (114), Harris’s argument regarding whiteness as property “Whiteness at various times signifies and is deployed as identity, status, and property, sometimes singularly, sometimes in tandem” (1725) tempts South Asian characters depicted in the novels in such a way that most of them do negotiation with whiteness. But, those who fail to do negotiation like Chanu in *Brick Lane* and Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* return to their home lands.

### **Conclusions**

South Asian characters portrayed in the selected novels become transnational in search of whiteness and settle in the land dominated by Whites. Their strong desire for whiteness is reflected in all the selected novels. In course of embracing whiteness like thorns in the rose plant, they find whiteness as threat too. So, they face different problems such as racism, identity crisis, family fragmentation, isolation and so on. They even face the conflict between national and transnational, too. But, for the sake of white privileges which appear in different forms such as education, white identity, economic stability, sexual liberation and so on, most of them ultimately do negotiation with whiteness in the third space. In this way, desiring whiteness becomes the major cause for transnational phenomena in the selected novels.

## Chapter IV

### **Double Consciousness: Divided Loyalty in Diaspora Consciousness**

This dissertation explores double consciousness or divided consciousness in the South Asian characters of the selected novels. Changez's double consciousness gets reflected in his saying "Do not be frightened by my beard: I am a lover of America" (1). His dual identity of Pakistani Muslim and American reflects his double consciousness. Like Changez's double identity in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, double identity of Gogol, Ashok, Ashima, Moushumi and Sonia in *The Namesake*, double identity of Nazneen and Chanu in *Brick Lane*, and double identity of Prema in *Seasons of Flight* and so on get reflected. Whenever people migrate to developed nations in search of better opportunities leaving their native nations, they get torn between two worlds: the root/native nation is the world they have left behind and the host nation is the world where they have been settling. On the one hand, they carry national identity of the home nation, which follows them like their shadow. As for an example, Ashima in *The Namesake* and Chanu in *Brick Lane* can be taken. Both Ashima and Chanu teach their children the cultural identity of their home nations in the very novels. On the other hand, the immigrant characters adapt the cultural identity of the host nation as a kind of their survival strategy. As for an example, Ashima's teaching Gogol and Sonia the cultural identity of the US reveals her consciousness of the identity of the host nation. So, it is natural that their consciousness is thus divided. When they live in the diaspora, they develop different identities such as being blacks, slaves, skilled workers, hybrid, doctors, engineers, uncivilized people, sub humans, yellow people, orientals, Asians, South Asians, Muslims, Artists, Professors and so on and having single minded consciousness, double consciousness, triple consciousness and multiple consciousnesses.



It was W. E. B. Du Bois who theorized double consciousness meaning the dilemmas or the divided identity of immigrants across the globe. Du Bois's theory of double consciousness indicates the divided/split identity of the Blacks in America. Blacks are judged by Whites from the mindset of Whites rather than from the mindset of Blacks. Blacks have consciousness of two-ness i.e. they regard themselves both as Americans and Blacks instead of regarding themselves only as Americans. Like Du Bois, my study would like to explore how the South Asian immigrants carry double consciousness as their identity. But, unlike Du Bois, my study does not limit it to the Blacks. Instead, my research work mainly focuses it on the double consciousness of the South Asian immigrants in America and Britain. Besides, my research work also tries to explore double consciousness of the South Asian immigrants in a broader sense as Samir Dayal argues, "Double Consciousness need not be conceived in the restricted sense in which W. E. B. Du Bois casts it" (48). Dayal means to say that double consciousness can be applied to discover the divided identity of not only the blacks but also of any immigrants from any part of the world.

In course of doing the textual analysis focusing on the divided identity of the immigrants, my study has used the major theorists- W. E. B. Du Bois, Frantz Fanon, Homi Bhabha and Edward Said. Besides, my research work has used many critics' views. Besides *Seasons of Flight*, the three other novels reveal the double consciousness of the characters explicitly. As for an example, Gogol's divided consciousness about which Farah Masyitha Nurisyana writes, "The double consciousness that experienced by Gogol impacted his life style, in which he shift his self depending on where he was; he would act as American with his friends, and as Indian when he was with his family or relatives" (135). Likewise, according to Ernest Allen, "Double Ideals, 'double strivings,' 'twoness', 'second sight,' 'double life,' and

‘double duties’” (56) indicate double consciousness of Du Bois. Marc Black shows the difference between Du Bois and Fanon regarding double consciousness as: “Du Bois first defined double consciousness in 1903, and although the concept is familiar within African American Studies, it has not been elaborated upon thoroughly. Fanon’s work shows that double consciousness is also a condition of colonized people” (393). Dayal means to say that Du Bois focuses on double consciousness of the Blacks in America, whereas Fanon focuses on double consciousness of the colonized. But, I have focused on the double consciousness of South Asian characters because my point is immigrants in any part of the world develop double consciousness. What I want to explore about double consciousness of the South Asian characters is double consciousness is not only the identity of them but it is implicitly desire and explicitly threat and negotiation for them, too.

### **Double Consciousness as Desire**

Double consciousness appears to be a desire for immigrants implicitly because they hear and even make the mind of having consciousness of living in the diaspora before migrating due to the information and knowledge about the life style of immigrants which they get through different sources such as familiar immigrants, media and so on. Robin Cohen’s arguments “transnational bonds no longer have to be cemented by migration or by exclusive territorial claims. In the age of cyberspace, a diaspora can, to some degree, be held together or re-created through the mind, through cultural artefacts and through a shared imagination” (516) can support my argument that people can have double consciousness even before being immigrants, too. However, desiring double consciousness is unlike desiring whiteness as people tend to desire whiteness due to the privileges of whiteness before they migrate to the land of whites, while explicitly people do not seem to desire to have divided identity before

they migrate. Divided consciousness of immigrants is mainly related to migration, diaspora, transnationalism, and hybridity as double consciousness appears to be desire for people only implicitly in the home country, but it appears to be desire in the diaspora. The global trend of the immigrants enjoying dual citizenship is an indicator of double consciousness as desire, which Changez's keeping Pakistani and American identity in the very beginning of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* "Do not be frightened by my beard: I am a lover of America" (1) reveals. It also indicates that his double consciousness is his desire rather than threat.

Primarily people do not migrate to other nations desiring double consciousness, however when they live in the diaspora, their loyalty is divided and their loyalty to the home nation enables them to be conscious of having the identity of their home nation besides the identity of the host nation. Changez feels proud of having an American identity having Erica a white girlfriend, gaining education from Princeton and working at the multinational company and he points out, "I felt a peculiar feeling; I felt at home" (22), but due to the 9/11 event double consciousness appeared to emerge as a powerful desire. His claim "I lacked stable core. I was not certain where I belonged- in New York, in Lahore, in both, in neither" (62) refers to the divided consciousness or mental dilemma. On the one hand, Changez's remark indicates his fluid identity; on the other hand his remark implies his divided self, which symbolically indicates the divided self or double consciousness of the immigrants in the diaspora. Besides, Demirel's argument "Changez's feeling at home in America is partially due to his feeling inferior about where he comes from" indicates his looking at himself from the Americans' perspectives. Although Changez feels proud of having American identity, his hidden desire of seeing the fall of American pride shows his desire of double consciousness, which gets reflected: "of

the twin towers of New York's World Trade Center collapsed. And then I smiled” (31). Irshad Hussain Shah's claim “Double Consciousness is a state of internal conflict which is experienced by almost every people in diaspora” (1191) is applicable in case of all immigrant characters in the selected novels. Like Changez, whose single consciousness in Pakistan has been converted into double consciousness in the USA, immigrants' identity like cultural identity gets changed in diaspora. Hall's view on identity “Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation” (112) makes it clear how identity of immigrants goes on changing.

Though Du Boisian's concept of double consciousness is used as the touchstone to portray the mental dilemmas of the immigrants across the globe, which is taken negatively to show the divided consciousness of the marginalized Blacks, this theoretical framework is also used to reveal the immigrants' double consciousness as desire, too. Like Changez, Gogol manages to keep two identities American and Indian and the entire novel *The Namesake* revolves round his search for identity reflecting his divided identity. Gogol changes his name from Gogol to Nikhil as Gogol gives neither American identity nor Indian. Instead, it gives the identity of Russian. But, Nikhil gives the identity of American, which Gogol loved. Sharmin's statement “Gogol's act of renaming himself from Gogol to Nikhil explains his urge to assume an American persona in order to blend into mainstream American society” (37). In this context, Nurisyana writes: “This simple act, changing name, reflects Du Bois' idea that “looking at one's self through the eyes of others, measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity” (137). This act of keeping two names- his pet name Gogol which his father loved and kept and his officially changed name Nikhil led Gogol to have double consciousness. Besides, his keeping Nikhil as name shows his getting freedom from his parents' influences, orders,

Indianness and so on. Nurisyana's statement "In Gogol's case, he is 'self' when become Gogol, and 'other' when become Nikhil" (137) shows his divided self. However, finally he loves his name Gogol knowing the mystery of the name kept by his father, which indicates Hall's view on changing aspect of cultural identity "of identity as a production, which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation" (110). Gogol's identity relating to his name goes on changing and finally he accepts his father's keeping his name Gogol, which indicates how identity as Hall says is unstable and fluid like liquid.

Thus, double consciousness of the characters does not appear to be desire for them explicitly before they migrate to the hostland. But, during their stay in the hostland, dual identity appears to be their desire for them due to privileges of whiteness or western identity. Thus, my research explores how despite negative aspect of double consciousness, its positive aspect enables the immigrants to desire it in my selected South Asian novels.

### **Double Consciousness as Identity**

When people transcend the border and live in diaspora in the host country, they carry the identity of the home country and that of the host country. So, they live in a situation of double consciousness. To have single minded consciousness is almost impossible for the immigrants as they face identity crisis in the hostland and get their mind divided. So, for survival strategy Du Bois' concept of double consciousness appears in the immigrants. Why the identity of immigrants is endangered can be clear from the classical theorist of 'self' Charles Horton Cooley's argument "The immigrant has for the most part been treated purely as a source of labor, with little or no regard to the fact that he is a human being, with a self like the rest of us. . . . The negro question includes a similar situation" (262). The state of immigrant is like that of the negro in America as both of them are marginalized and become the victim of

othering. Cooley's arguments indicate the lack of recognition of the immigrant/black in America, which causes double consciousness in the immigrant/black. In *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois theorizes:

[A] sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world—a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body. (8)

This Du Bois' theory of double consciousness includes three key elements: the veil, the two-ness and the second sight. His theory focuses on the divided consciousness of the blacks in America. I want to apply his theory to show the divided consciousness of the South Asian immigrants as characters depicted in the select novels. I want to mainly focus on the double consciousness of Gogol, Sonia, Moushumi, Ashima, Ashok, Changez, Nazneen, Chanu, Karim and Prema.

*The Namesake* focuses mainly on the identity crisis and double consciousness of two generations of immigrants who live in American diaspora: Ashok and Ashima as first generation immigrants and Gogol, Sonia and Moushumi as second generation immigrants. Since all of them are immigrants, they are likely to have double consciousness, however, the degree of divided consciousness becomes higher in the second generation immigrants due to their birth and upbringing in the host nation.

Along with the passage of time, Gogol tries to blend himself in the American society, while others never view him as an American, which Pamela, a white woman's remark at Maxine's dining table shows "but you're an Indian . . . I'd think the climate

wouldn't affect you, given your heritage" (156) although his girlfriend Maxine's mother tries to defend him by saying that Gogol was born in America. Such an event causes immigrants like Gogol to see himself from the eyes of the Whites, which is like Du Bois' veil for having double consciousness. His act of changing name from Gogol to Nikhil indicates Du Bois' theoretical idea "looking at one's self through the eyes of others, measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity" (8). Nurisyana seems to be right to say "Double-consciousness, or seeing things with two perspectives, is seen to emerge with diasporic communities, biculturalism, and identity" (137). Gogol has duality i.e. the identity of being Gogol and Nikhil. His name Gogol reflects his self and his name Nikhil reflects his other i.e. American identity. In this context, Paudyal argues that Gogol's dual identity is unlike Du Bois' double consciousness as he says "While Du Bois' account of double consciousness helps to clarify the two-ness of an American identity. . . . In Gogol's case, transnational identity results from his dual cultural practices" (201), whereas Nurisyana says "The conflict of identity and double consciousness is implicitly shown in Gogol" (139). Anyway, Gogol's looking at himself from other's and whites such as Pamela judging him as the 'Other' make me conclude that the identity crisis and double consciousness are explicitly reflected in Gogol.

Lack of self identity is identity crisis which is entirely related to double consciousness. According to Du Bois, double consciousness is defined negatively as the lack of self consciousness. Thapa makes a clear portrayal of her protagonist Prema showing Prema's lack of self consciousness and the presence of double consciousness in *Seasons of Flight*. "Where are you from?" (2) is a question which Americans ask her in America to seek her identity, but the fact is the question problematizes her as her answer does not satisfy them and she faces identity crisis. She has to lie to them to

create her artificial identity by saying “‘I am from India,’ because Americans had at least heard of India” (2). Guragain’s statements “Moreover, her Nepaliness and her identity get constantly conflated with Indianness, as she encounters challenging situations. Prema is not able to say she is a Nepali, but instead, she claims to be an Indian throughout her journey to find completeness in her life” (10), which indicates her conflict of identity and divided identity. Marc E. Black argues “Du Bois’ double consciousness connects with the double consciousness model of his Harvard PhD professor, William James. They share an awareness of, and concern for, the negation of the self that occurs when one’s intrinsic sense of identity and being is not recognized by other people and other communities” (13). Black means to argue that negation of the self causes double consciousness since the Black Americans are judged by White Americans as Blacks rather than Americans.

Literature is a mirror of human society. Literary characters created reflect South Asian diaspora they create in the West. Firstly, they are transnational characters who live in diaspora. Secondly, they carry the hybrid identity. Thirdly and mainly, they find their self divided between the host nation and home nation as their loyalty, mind and responsibility are divided between the host nation and the home nation. The female characters delineated in the novels are Ashima, Sonia, Moushumi, Nazneen, Bibi, Shahana, Hasina, Mrs. Azad, Mrs. Islam, Razia, Prema and so on. Among the major characters Ashima, Nazneen and Prema represent the first generation of immigrants whose loyalty to the home country India is more than that of host country America, whereas Nazneen’s daughters Bibi and Shahana, Sonia and Moushumi represent second generation immigrants who are much loyal to the host nation. But, one common aspect of them that the novels portray is their divided identity. Like Du



Bois' concept "One ever feels his two-ness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body" (8), they are South Asians having the identity of South Asian and American/ British. Their thoughts/minds are divided between West and East. These novels show how immigrant characters visit communities of their nation due to their attachment with the home country. As for Prema's divided consciousness, Guragain writes "Prema seeks to go to a Nepali community, called a Little Nepal, after she realizes that she can no longer live with her boyfriend, Luis, on the grounds of their cultural misunderstanding and conflict. Prema is happy and relieved after she rejoins the Nepali family" (19). Guragain depicts Prema's psyche how she wants to maintain Nepali identity despite having American identity. Nazneen's mind also revolves round Bangladesh and Britain, however, ultimately she determines to stay with her daughters in London at the cost of leaving her husband. Like Prema and Nazneen, Ashima's consciousness is also divided, but her division of mind is equal to both home country and host country since she decides to stay six months in India and six months in America showing equal loyalty to both countries. The novels reveal how the second generation female characters such as Shahana, Bibi, Sonia and Moushumi who were born and brought up in the host nation have the western mindset and show their much loyalty to host nation and are compelled to be loyal to the home nation only due to their parents' suggestions and insistence. Besides Ashima, Nazneen, Prema, Sonia and Moushumi enjoy the western liberalism in matters of love and sex, which are almost a taboo in South Asia. Regarding the female characters who enjoy western liberalism in sex and love, the host nation appears to be very favourable and fertile unlike the home nation whose patriarchal social construction deprives them of

taking advantage over love and sex. The different status earned by two Bangladeshi sisters Nazneen and Hasina who develop extra marital affairs are taken differently. Hashina who lives in Bangladesh is regarded as a prostitute, whereas Nazneen is regarded as an independent and determined mother. Mohamed Noufal N's claim:

It can be argued with the support of solid instances from the text, that her novel implies the liberation and freedom of Nazneen as a result of her exposure to the West in such a way that she could enjoy the benefits of western culture or civilisation, whereas Bangladesh is shown as a place where women are constantly harassed and oppressed and a counter foil to London.

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Thus, one major reason why South Asian female immigrants love showing their loyalty to the western nations where they live in diaspora though they suffer from double consciousness is they find the western nations far more secure than their eastern ones.

Like Jerrey's view on Du Bois' theory of double consciousness "Dubois coined the concept of 'Double Consciousness' and regarded being black and American as a hindrance to the progress of the black race" (25), being South Asian and American/British appears to be a great hindrance to the progress and identity of characters portrayed in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Brick Lane*. Changez is portrayed as the Pakistani immigrant to America and Nazneen, Chanu and Karim are portrayed as Bangladeshi immigrants to Britain. Why Changez, Nazneen, Chanu and Karim have feelings of double consciousness is they are colonized ones as their nations were colonized by Whites in the past. So, unlike Du Bois' focus on the double consciousness of the blacks, Fanon focuses on the double consciousness of the colonized ones. Fanon shows his closeness to Du Bois' double consciousness by

writing, “Overnight the Negro has been given two frames of reference within which he has had to place himself. His metaphysics, or, less pretentiously, his customs and the sources on which they were based, were wiped out because they were in conflict with a civilization that he did not know and that imposed itself on him” (110). Fanon shows double consciousness of blacks due to the conflict between the culture of blacks and new civilization of the White colonizers. However, one similarity between them is both of them regard Whites as the representation of dominance and exploitation. So, Marc Black argues: “There is a connection between Frantz’s work and W. E. B. Du Bois’ concept of double consciousness” (393). What Black’s argument indicates is both of the theorists Du Bois and Fanon focus on the black immigrants; only difference is Du Bois treats them as black immigrants, whereas Fanon treats them as colonized blacks. Hence, from the theoretical angles of these theorists, for Du Bois Changez, Nazneen, Chanu, Karim and so on can be regarded as South Asian immigrants, whereas from Fanon’s perspective, they are regarded as colonized South Asians.

Unlike Nazneen, Karim and other characters in *Brick Lane*, Chanu experiences a strong sense of dislocation, rootlessness and discrimination in the diaspora. His observation of the dominance of British culture over Bangladeshi culture enables him to show his loyalty to Bangladeshi culture and hence he encourages his daughters Shahana and Bibi to follow root culture. Chanu’s teaching his daughters ‘Golden Bengal’ from “O Amar Shonar Bangla, ami tomay bhailobashi. Forever your skies, your air set my heart in tune” (178) indicates that he is not only a British but also a Bangladeshi. It indicates his two-ness as Du Bois says. Chanu’s views “I’m talking about the clash between western values and our own. I’m talking about the struggle to assimilate and the need to preserve one’s identity and heritage. I’m talking about

children who don't know what their identity is" (113) show his sorrow of facing cultural clash. Because of identity crisis and low profile job he has despite his high qualification, his consciousness is split. In *Empire Writes Back*, Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin write: "sense of self may have been eroded by dislocation, resulting from migration, the experience of enslavement, transportation or "voluntary" removal for indentured labour. Or it may have been destroyed by cultural denigration, the conscious and unconscious oppression of the indigenous personality and culture by a supposedly superior racial or cultural model" (9). Ashcroft et al. argue that migration causes dislocations which appears to be the cause of split of self.

One great similarity between *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Brick Lane* is that the transnational identity of characters in both these novels is weakened by the event 9/11 in such a way that the degree of their double consciousness starts increasing. As for Changez, he enjoys the American identity or transnational identity having education from Princeton University, getting job in Underwood Samsons Company and having Erica a white American as girlfriend. Changez's statements "At Princeton, I conducted myself in public like a young prince, generous and carefree" (5) and "I was a young New Yorker with the city at my feet" (20) indicate how he ignores his divided consciousness before the 9/11 event takes place, but only has the pride of living and working in America. But, the event 9/11 weakens his American identity in such a way that he thinks he is only regarded as a Pakistani Muslim. About his divided identity, Bhat writes, "The episode of 9/11 perhaps makes Changez realize that he actually belongs to Pakistan and not America and he feels he needs to visit his family in Pakistan" (450). Like Changez, even Bangladeshi immigrants such as Chanu, Nazneen and Karim feel that they are treated as if they were only Muslim immigrants in London. Due to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Muslim identity is

endangered as Muslims are regarded as terrorists. They are regarded as the 'Other'. The formation of The Bengal Tigers by British Muslims to protest against the Lion Hearts which is the radical group of the White British is to protect and strengthen their Bangladeshi and British identity. Karim's statements "It's a world-wide struggle, man. Everywhere they are trying to do us down. We have to fight back" (243) show how British Muslims are not regarded as British but due to the veil as Du Bois says they are regarded only as Bangladeshi. Why South Asian Muslims such as Changez, Karim, Chanu and so on are discriminated and dominated can be understood from Edward Said's theoretical view "Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (88). Said's theory indicates that Whites cause non-white/immigrants to have double consciousness. Black explains Orientalism as "Orientalism means European colonizers and Whites have institutionalized their projection of identities onto people of color" (398). One similarity between Changez and Chanu is they leave their host nation due to excessive double consciousness, whereas the difference between Karim, and Chanu and Changez is Karim fights against discrimination and double consciousness. Thus, more or less the 9/11 event has a powerful impact on double consciousness of all the characters in both the novels, which is not found in *Seasons of Flight* and *The Namesake*.

Thus, double consciousness which is lack of single consciousness but the presence of two-ness or divided consciousness is the identity of South Asian immigrant characters the selected novels portray.

### **Double Consciousness as Threat**

Consciousness of the body is solely a negating activity. It is a third-person consciousness. Frantz Fanon, (*Black Skin, White Masks*)

The divided self of immigrants in the diaspora appears to be a threat for their identity, which the research has discovered in the selected novels. The South Asian characters who carry with them their cultural identity happen to face different cultural identity of the host countries such as America and Britain. The characters as immigrants to the West are from the South Asian countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. Though Nepal is not a postcolonial country like other three, the cultural identity of the characters of these nations is more over similar. People of these nations are being colonized dizitally, linguistically, and culturally. Tyson's argument "cultural colonization, the inculcation of a British system of government and education, British culture and British values that denigrate the cultural, moral and even physical appearance of former subjugated peoples" (366) indicates how postcolonial nations are under the British influence till today. Besides, since the beginning of the post war, the American influence is engulfing the world mainly eastern nations as America has emerged as the most powerful nation since the end of the Second WW. What I want to say is in the post war era the east is under the influence of the West, hence the South Asian immigrants find their identity endangered by the identity of the colonized nations and they have double identity. Here, Said's major claim "Orientalism as a western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient" (3) appears to be as a powerful logic to justify the dominance of South Asian characters by Whites/western colonizers. Apparently, minority groups such as the non-whites/colonized from the east appear to be dominated by the Whites/colonizers, but the fact is wherever the Whites go leaving the West, they appear to be dominating the colonizers/non-whites.

Despite being the citizens of the host nation, the immigrants are reminded and compelled by the Whites/local inhabitants to feel that they are actually citizens of

their root nation, which causes double consciousness in the immigrants. So, the immigrants feel othered and marginalized in spite of showing their loyalty to the host nation. As for Gogol, he is so much loyal to America enjoying American identity that he hardly regards himself Indian, but does so for the sake of his parents. Hence, the White lady Pamela's remark "you aren't Indian" (157) hurts Gogol and appears to be a threat to his identity since Pamela's remark shows Whites' lack of recognition of his self which is the American identity. Du Bois's idea "looking at one's self through the eyes of others, measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity" (8) is very contextual to show how Gogol is judged by others to be non-American. Karunesh asserts: "In an interview released by Houghton Mifflin Company Lahiri says that the novel is definitely about those 'who are culturally displaced or those who grow up in two worlds simultaneously'" (37). Lahiri means to say that her characters like Gogol are grown up in two worlds West/America and East/India. So, such displaced people do face divided consciousness which is unlike single minded consciousness. Moore argues: "A double consciousness can delude a person to believe they can mentally fixate themselves into someone else's reality" (759). Besides, due to double consciousness, immigrants adopt the culture of dominant society. Gogol's keeping name of Nikhil in place of Gogol also indicates it. Double consciousness causes mental conflict, which according to Moore's further statement "can psychologically detach the African from his or her heritage and cultural conflict can cause one to adopt the culture of the dominant society" (759). Moore's argument indicates that when immigrants are dominated by the cultural identity of the hostland, they develop double consciousness.

As the characters in my select novels are culturally displaced and straddle in two worlds, their having dual identity or divided consciousness appears to be common. As for *The Namesake*, it depicts Indian diaspora revolving round the

protagonist Gogol's divided identity. In 'The Missouri Review', Houghton Mifflin writes, "Lahiri gracefully shifts the narrative focus from the Ganguli parents to Gogol as he reaches school age. Gogol struggles with his name, which he regards as absurd and inappropriate, as well as with his Bengali American heritage" (178). Paudyal agrees to say that Gogol has dual identity, but he disagrees that Gogol has double consciousness as Du Bois says. Paudyal claims:

Dual identity, for example, is a key to Gogol's transnational identity. However, this dual identity is not exactly what Du Bois calls "double consciousness," because double consciousness is the experience of being several things and not being completely anything at once, an experience that causes the individual to understand himself through the eyes of another. (201)

Paudyal means to say that Gogol regards himself an American rather than an Indian though he is both an American and an Indian. But, Nurisyana claims, "The double consciousness that experienced by Gogol impacted his lifestyle, in which he shift his self depending on where he was; he would act as American with his friends, and as Indian when he was with his family or relatives" (135). Besides Gogol, *The Namesake* reflects divided mind of other characters such as Moushumi and Ashima. Despite being an Indian Bengali, Moushumi lives in America is determined to pursue PhD in France in French literature and has a Russian boyfriend. In one sense, she has multiple consciousnesses as Jerrey argues in case of Afro-Americans: "The latter observations endorse my overall argument which is that in place of two-ness of identities, African Americans manifest and can command multiple identities" (266). Even Ashima who finally decides to stay six months in India and six months in America being loyal to both India and America shows dual identity. If Lahiri's identity is taken in consideration, she is sure to carry multiple consciousnesses as she was born in Britain,



studied in America and later moved to Italy where she wrote in Italian language, too. But, the point of marking is for almost all characters double consciousness appears to be a problem due to lack of stability in love and marriage such as the case of Gogol, Moushumi and so on though Lahiri's case appears to be different.

Both Lahiri and Thapa locate their characters in America where the characters have divided identity, however, one difference between these characters is Thapa has portrayed her characters in the periphery of California, while Lahiri's characters move to different American cities such as New York, Boston, and Massachusetts, Paris, London and so on. Like her character Prema, Thapa was born in Nepal and migrated to America in search of identity. Thapa says in an interview with Terry Hong, "I'm very much a hybrid, rooted in Nepal but influenced by international displacement. That was a painful way to grow up, but now I'm really glad to have had exposure to both east and west" (2). Prema's life in America on the one hand represents life of Nepali immigrants in Nepali diaspora; on the other hand her life represents the divided identity of immigrants because when she has nostalgia or problems she visits Little Nepal, which is symbolically like visiting her nation Nepal from America.

Sunila Gurung writes:

Little Nepal represents the struggles, aspirations, the disillusionment of Nepali immigrants like Sushil and Neeru who are green card holders legally secure in the hostland, although economically deprived, rendering them powerless.

Then there are immigrants like Shyam and Ganga who are illegal;

'undocumented workers,' the most disadvantaged of them all. Prema found

Little Nepal a much-insulated space. (177)

In the sense of homeland, Little Nepal appears to be a powerful symbol of imaginary homeland as Rushdie says in 'Imaginary Homelands'. Besides, Prema's final words

of separation or breakup from Luis “I do not have a world! I left the world I had, and do not belong in the one I am now-your world. I do not have any place in the world” (186) reveals pangs of suffering and tragedy caused by her split identity in America.

Among the four selected novels, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* reflects the highest degree of threat to Changez’s double consciousness. Changez’s strong American/transnational identity is replaced by his weak double consciousness after 9/11 event in such a way that double consciousness appears to be a great threat to him. His double consciousness represents the double consciousness of Muslims throughout the West after 9/11 event. Hence, Changez’s voice reflects the voice of all the Muslims who felt othered, discriminated, humiliated and tortured in the West due to the 9/11 event. Shihad’s statements “The 9/11 attack in the United States of America arguably mark a turning point in shaping America to pre- and post- 9/11 America” (452) and “Hence, Islam and the Islamic world had subsequently become the target of President Gorge Bush’s “War on Terror” launched under the pretext of promoting democracy” (452) indicate how Du Bois’ veil works here for Whites in America as they failed to regard Muslims to be Americans in America, but started treating them as if they had been terrorists which is like Fanon idea’s of double consciousness, according to which colonizers dehumanize the colonized. Mohsin Hamid’s voice against the American imperialism and white supremacy gets reflected through Changez in the novel. According to Hamid, Muslim civilization was superior to Christian civilization in the past, but today Muslims are dominated by Christians, which Hamid hates. About janissaries, Hamid writes, “They were Christian boys’ he explained, ‘captured by the Ottomans and trained to be soldiers in a Muslim army, at that time the greatest army in the world’” (63). He seems to deconstruct American supremacy. Shihada argues: “By making his character, Changez, narrates his whole

story to the silent American visitor, Mohsin Hamid wants symbolically to tell that it is time for Muslims to speak about themselves and their experiences since they are always misrepresented, underrepresented, and misunderstood in the Western world” (455). How circumstances due to 9/11 event change Changez gets reflected in the novel. Besides, on the one hand his loyalty is divided; on the other hand, America’s relation with Pakistan gets weaker. Bradatan’s view “The double loyalty implied by the concept, loyalty to the origin as well as destination country, can become a problem when the two countries are in conflict, similar to what the Japanese experienced while living in the US during World War II” (172). Like this, Changez means to say that Pakistani Muslims or Arab Muslims suffered as Muslim nations did not have a good relation with America and America blamed Muslims for the terrorist attack 9/11. Thus, despite having a strong American/transnational identity, Changez’s double consciousness is threatened in such a way that he returns to his nation being a reluctant fundamentalist.

Like *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, *Brick lane* also reflects the impact of 9/11 terrorist attack upon mainly Muslim immigrants in Britain. One reason why both these novels reflect the impact of 9/11 event is both these novels depict Muslim characters who have been suspected by Bush administration to be involved in the terrorist attacks. Chandio’s statements “After the 9/11 attacks, all Muslims were perceived as responsible for act of a small group of Muslim activists/terrorists. Being treated as others of America, Muslims from diverse ethnic or national group showed solidarity, affiliation and commitment” (77) reveal the identity problem of American Muslims, which is similar to the identity problem of British Muslims that *Brick Lane* shows. *Brick Lane* depicts clearly how after 9/11 terrorist attacks, British Muslims such as Chanu, karim, Nazneen and so on become the specific targets of racist prejudice and hatred as a result Muslim immigrants get involved in different groups to

show solidarity. Ali's statements, "'Bengal Tigers, *zindabad!*' went the cry. Long live the Bengal Tigers" (471), "'But I think he went to Bangladesh' and Nazneen says, 'Yes'" (486) and "'Anyway, said the boy, 'I wouldn't go for jihad in some faraway place. There's enough to do here'" (486) indicate the political activities of British Bangladeshi against the Whites. Bengal Tigers was a group of Bangladeshi immigrants formed against Lion Hearts of Whites in London as Bangladeshi diaspora was affected by 9/11 event. Why British Muslims like Chanu feels having double consciousness is he is under the influence of White supremacy. Syed Khwaja Alqama and Rafida Nawaz write: "The history of modern Diaspora started when White imperial powers gained control over large swathes of the globe" (10). Likewise, regarding the weak identity of the colonized people, in *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon writes, "Every effort is made to bring the colonized person to admit the inferiority of his culture which has been transformed into instinctive 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" (158). So, the South Asian immigrants are under the influence of Whites and hence their identity gets weakened.

My research reveals double consciousness in the South Asian characters portrayed in the novels. But, how divided consciousness affects them is different. Prema's divided consciousness leads her to a chaos as she lives in America, but does not regard America her world. Her final decision indicates like postmodern ending of a novel, whereas the other characters' decision in the ending part is fixed like the close ending of a traditional fiction. As for Chanu, he returns to his native land. Likewise, Ashima is determined to be equally loyal to both India and America. Similarly, Gogol, Sonia, Moushumi, Nazneen, Shahana and Bibi decide to stay in the host land. As for Changez, his double consciousness causes him to return to his home

land. Thus, double consciousness appears as a great threat to all but mainly Changez, Chanu, Prema and Gogol.

Anyway, one difference between the major theorists' double consciousness they suffered and the South Asian characters they have gets reflected in the novels. Du Bois' two-ness indicates being both African and American, whereas Fanon's two-ness indicates being both American/French and colonized. As Du Bois experienced two-ness in the then America how Blacks looked at themselves from Whites' eyes/perspectives, his theory reflects his painful experiences. Besides, Du Bois' veil which indicates that Americans/Whites could not regard blacks as humans/American citizens is felt by Du Bois. Pecola's state of double consciousness Toni Morrison shows in *The Bluest Eye* is very relevant in Du Bois' case. A White girl Maureen's statement: "I *am* cute! And you ugly! Black and ugly black e mos. I *am* cute!" (73) reveals how blacks are dehumanized in a White society as a result blacks have double consciousness. However, the selected novels focus on the divided consciousness of South Asian immigrants of the post war era.

In this way, Du Bois and Fanon are both theorists and writers, who experienced double consciousness and dealt with the double consciousness of the blacks who were immigrants, slaves and colonized. But, Lahiri, Ali, Hamid and Thapa are only South Asian diasporic writers who also must have experienced double consciousness as they also wrote in the diaspora. However, by the time these South Asian writers started writing in the post war era, the state of blacks in America had undergone drastic changes due to different blacks' civil rights movements, which change the state of South Asian immigrants in the West. Anyway, the portrayal of South Asian characters shows how they are othered as Said says and treated by

Whites as if they were still colonized by them as Fanon says. Among the South Asian characters, double consciousness appears to be more threatening to Changez than the rest of characters.

### **Double Consciousness as Negotiation**

One common but major problem all my selected novels deal with is the identity crisis which is entirely related to double consciousness of the characters. The characters develop double consciousness in the South Asian diaspora which is the western location. America becomes the location for three of the novels, whereas Britain becomes the location for *Brick Lane*. One common aspect of these two nations is they are multicultural, liberal, democratic western nations which are known for white supremacy, centre of power, knowledge and opportunities. Hence, in spite of identity crisis, immigrants love to settle in these nations for embracing privileges of whiteness doing negotiation. Since it is nature of human beings to seek means for survival, exploring advantages in double consciousness becomes important for negotiating with double consciousness in the hybrid space according to Bhabha. Apparently, Du Bois' theoretical concept "It is a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others" (98) indicates divided consciousness which weakens and devastates African-Americans' identity. But, this double consciousness or mental dilemma of duality is considered as the positive force by Gilroy. Dennis writes about Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic*, "Modernity and double consciousness have joined to produce something revolutionary in western ideological, political, and philosophical thought: the formation of racial mutation and hybridity" (22). It indicates that unlike Du Bois, Gilroy regards double consciousness as a creative force which can help the immigrants/ blacks for revolutionizing in western politics, philosophy, education and

so on for their identity. Gilroy argues, “the black Atlantic politics of location frames the doorway of double consciousness” (19). In *Diaspora and Double Consciousness*, Dayal claims, “The transnational migrant’s double consciousness can continually reinvigorate the regulative ideal of an endlessly open and unpredictable negotiation of civil society and its quickening principle, social justice” (56). What Dayal means to say is immigrants should change their double consciousness to maintain negotiation in the third space (Bhabha 211) for survival.

The South Asian diaspora, which according to Bhabha is the third space (Bhabha 211), is the site where immigrants have to do negotiation for their survival. According to Bhabha, “this hybrid third space is an ambivalent site where cultural meaning and representation have no primordial unity or fixity” (37). The immigrants encounter different cultural identity of the host nation from the cultural identity of their home nation in this space. As it is the site where immigrants from multiple nations mix up, they face cultural clash and mainly they have double consciousness. Bhabha argues, “It is significant that the productive capacities of this Third Space have a colonial or postcolonial provenance” (38). Thus, what is important and worth knowing here is that the third space is the hybrid space where different cultures mix and hybrid identity becomes productive taking positively and hence negotiation with dual identities of immigrants becomes their strength for survival. In the third space, the positive aspect of Du Bois’ double consciousness that the African-Americans are “born with a veil and gifted with the second sight” (8) is applied. In this context, Ikas and Wagner claim: “the encounter of two social groups with different cultural traditions and potentials of power as a special kind of negotiation or translation . . . takes place in a Third Space of enunciation” (2). Thus, the hybrid third space is the site where immigrants try their best to do negotiation with double consciousness for their settlement and survival, which I want to explore in my selected novels.

The location of *Brick Lane* is Britain, whereas the location of other three novels such as *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, *The Namesake* and *Seasons of Flight* is America. One common aspect that all these novels uncover is the diasporic voices of the novelists that show their double consciousness, identity crisis and negotiation. As both the writers and characters are immigrants, the characters' voices reflect the voices of the writers, too. Regarding *Brick Lane*, most of the characters in this novel show negotiation with double consciousness except Chanu and Karim. I strongly argue that Britain or America that is the location for the immigrant characters proves to be the best place for most of the characters because they find the societies there far better than the societies in their home lands regarding education, social security, job opportunities, individual freedom and so on. One example why Nazneen does negotiation with her double consciousness in London is "When she thought about Gouripur now, she thought about inconvenience. To live without a flushing toilet, to abandon her two sinks (kitchen and bath room), to make a fire for the oven instead of turning a knob-would these be trades worth making?" (77-78). Noufal writes:

It can be argued with the support of solid instances from the text, that her novel implies the liberation and freedom of Nazneen as a result of her exposure to the West in such a way that she could enjoy the benefits of western culture or civilisation, whereas Bangladesh is shown as a place where women are constantly harassed and oppressed and a counter foil to London.

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Like Nazneen, her daughters Shahana and Bibi, Mrs Azad, Razia and other female characters in this novel do not feel dislocated though they live in the host nation, whereas Hasina does though she lives in her own nation despite their other problems. Besides, Chanu and Karim do feel displaced in the hostland though they try their best



to negotiate. Garg's views "the people like Hasina, Chanu or Karim who never feel located properly at any place, whether it is home or abroad and for the people like Nazneen and her daughters who never want to return to their so called original homelands" (364) reveal why Nazneen and her daughters do negotiation and why Chanu and Karim fail to do negotiation finally in the novel with their double consciousness.

*Brick Lane* reflects Nazneen's duality in two ways. Firstly, her mind is divided between her husband Chanu and her lover Karim. This duality of mind causes her divided loyalty, which deviates her from being a dutiful Bengali wife to her husband Chanu as she develops adulterous and passionate affair with a young man Karim. However, eventually she gets rid of this problem. Secondly, her mind is divided between her home country Bangladesh and host country Britain. Her sister Hasina's displacement in Bangladesh which she knows through letters and western freedom she with her daughters enjoys in London cause her to prefer Britain to Bangladesh for settlement. Hence, she does negotiation in the third space (Bhabha 211) in London despite having divided consciousness. Taking the positive aspect of Du Bois' double consciousness "born with a veil and gifted with second sight" (8), she enjoys regarding herself a Bangladeshi Muslim woman and a British citizen. Like a Bangladeshi woman, Nazneen gives up Karim to look after her family and like a British citizen, she embraces British liberalism and other privileges of education and job opportunities for her and her daughters' better life. On the one hand, the second sight of immigrants enables her to see what Whites cannot; on the other hand she maintains the dual identity like Du Bois' idea of two-ness.

Like other immigrants, Nazneen belongs to two cultures and two worlds, but does negotiation struggling, shifting, changing, assimilating, reshaping,

reconstructing, having frustration, pain and excitement. Ying Xu's statements "The between-world condition is a duality that is characteristic of all people in a minority position . . . . Between worlds is the 'divided consciousness' that W. E. B. Du Bois in 1903 noted as characteristic of blacks in America" (6) reflect a similarity of Amy Ling's view and Du Bois' view on double consciousness which Xu uses in her research work and is contextual to show the divided consciousness of immigrants like Nazneen. Like Nazneen Ali also dwells in two worlds. Ruth Yu Hsia reviews on 'Between Worlds: Women Writers of Chinese Ancestry,' "Between Worlds traces these authors' dual world to the historical development of the patriarchal tradition in China and the life of Chinese women in America" (132). Like Amy Ling's view that immigrant writers live in between worlds, all female characters in the selected novels live between worlds. What I explore in my research about negotiation of double consciousness is the way female immigrants such as Nazneen, Bibi, Shahina, Prema, Sonia, Moushumi, Ashima and so on try their best to negotiate in the third space (Bhabha). I find that South Asian females are potential characters who change double consciousness into the positive strength and become successful in the negotiating processes of identity formation since they are taught and trained to negotiate between two worlds- the world of their root home i.e. the parental home and the world of their husband's home due to the patriarchal structure of the South Asian society, which enables them to have dual identity. Secondly, they are the colonized ones in the land of the colonizers, so they have dual identity according to Fanon. Ling argues:

It is Elaine Showalter's 'double-voiced discourse' that 'always embodies the social, literary, and cultural heritages of both the muted [female] and the dominant [male].' It is Gerda Lerner's observation that 'women live in a duality—as members of the general [male] culture and as partakers of

women's culture,' which she recognizes as a paradox, for 'women are subordinate, yet central; victimized, yet active'. (177)

Thus, Ling shows the females' power of negotiation despite having double consciousness. This is what I have explored in my selected novels. Besides Ashima, who becomes a typical transnational character, all other female characters do not return to their home nations as Karim, Chanu and Changez do, but settle in the host nations doing negotiation.

Like female immigrant characters, major male characters Changez, Chanu, Karim and Gogol also try their best to do negotiation having double consciousness. Being characters from the previously British colonized nation, Fanon's double consciousness is suitable to show the state of divided consciousness of these characters as Fanon does not limit his double consciousness to black people's experience as Du Bois does, but his double consciousness shows the divided identity of all the colonized people. Fanon's views "Every colonized people . . . in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country" (18) shows how double consciousness creates inferiority complex in the colonized by the colonizers. Martin Luther King's statements: "The American Negro is neither totally African nor totally Western. He is Afro-American, a true hybrid, a combination of two cultures" (11) depicts hybrid state of double consciousness. Before the 9/11 event takes place, Changez has maintained negotiation in America despite having double consciousness as his American pride "I was a young New Yorker with the city at my feet" (20) due to having education degree from Princeton University, having Erica a white girl friend and having a job in Underwood Samson reflects. Besides, his saying "Do not be frightened by my beard: I am a lover of America" (1) indicates his hybrid and dual identity. However, after the

9/11 event, his awareness of divided consciousness becomes unbearably painful, about which Demirel writes: “a particular turning point of for him, which is the 9/11 attack to the Twin Towers, and this experience functions as an agent of self-awareness, shifting his sense of belonging from the host country, that is America, to the homeland, which is Pakistan” (116). Like Demirel and unlike Changez’s claim to have hybrid identity, I claim that Changez has failed to do negotiation in America along with his double consciousness. Like Changez, *Brick Lane* reveals the failure of negotiation of Chanu and karim along with double consciousness and they return to Bangladesh. But, as for Gogol, he becomes successful negotiating with American/transnational identity along with double consciousness in spite of having a lot of identity crisis.

As negotiation is a must for survival strategy of immigrants who are in minority in the hostland, the positive strength of Du Bois’ double consciousness should be applied, which becomes obvious from Du Bois’ lines:

The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife—this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He would not Africanize America...He would not bleach his Negro soul...He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American, without being cursed and spit upon by his fellow, without having the doors of Opportunity closed roughly in his face. (9)

Taking double consciousness positively, the adoption of double identity for negotiation and negotiation for progress and prosperity of immigrants in the diaspora can be manageable. So, the identity of two-ness can be maintained as the identity of one’s homeland and hostland is important for the immigrants. Thus, this idea of negotiation of immigrants in the third space which is like the contact zone for hybrid

identity becomes a blessing for the characters depicted in the selected novels. The key aspect of immigrants that I have explored in the selected novels regarding their nature and negotiating strength is South Asian female immigrants do negotiation more successfully than the male immigrants do apart from exception. This is the reason why Nazneen, Mrs. Azad, Razia, Shahana, Bebi, Sonia, Moushumi and other female immigrants negotiate with double consciousness, whereas Chanu, Karim and Changez fail to do so.

### **Conclusions**

Thus, my research has revealed that all South Asian immigrants as characters portrayed in the selected novels do have double consciousness. Du Bois' theory of veil, two-ness and second sight is very applicable here. Firstly, Du Bois focuses his double consciousness on divided consciousness of African-Americans, while Fanon does focus on divided consciousness of the colonized. Secondly, my research has focused on the double consciousness of the South Asian immigrants. So, Fanon's concept of double consciousness is directly applicable due to two reasons. Firstly, almost all immigrants except Prema can be regarded as colonized. Secondly, I strongly believe that whoever live in diaspora are sure to have double consciousness. What I have discovered is double consciousness appears to be desire of South Asian immigrants only implicitly. But, explicitly, double consciousness appears to be awareness of their divided identity, threat for their identity and usefulness and necessity of negotiation for their survival. On the basis of my research on the characters' double consciousness, what I have explored is the immigrants who fail to negotiate with double consciousness in the diaspora return to their home land. On the other hand, those who negotiate and settle in the diaspora seem to use the positive aspect of double consciousness for their success, prosperity and other privileges of whiteness.

## Chapter V

### Hybridity: A Transnational Reality of South Asian Diaspora

This chapter reveals the evolution of hybrid identities of South Asian immigrant characters depicted in the selected texts: *The Namesake*, *Brick Lane*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Seasons of Flight* across the national boundaries. It focuses on South Asian novels and how they represent conflicts, identity crisis and negotiations of the South Asian characters depicted in the literary works of the novelists within their experiences of cultural hybridity and transnationalism. The conflicts among the characters in the novels on the issues of culture, education, language and politics are rooted in the varying levels of hybrid identity they have acquired over different amounts of time they have spent in the diaspora. The sections that follow discuss whether the conflicts are resolved through negotiation or remain unresolved.

Due to cross-cultural interaction, the second generation immigrants are highly affected. In *Brick Lane*, Monica Ali writes, “Sahana did not want to listen to Bengali classical music. Her written Bengali was shocking. She wanted to wear jeans . . . Sahana did not want to go back home” (180). Thus, cross-cultural interaction and activities have been influencing human life since time immemorial. Migration, business, colonization, religious conversions, forced removal of people and so many other activities have caused cross-cultural encounters. These interactions between different people have formed an everlasting foundation for the modern social and cultural transformation. A new era of South Asian migration to the West began in the post-war. Politics and economics were the major causes for encouraging or curtailing migration abroad from South Asia. According to Judith Brown, Britain allowed the South Asians to visit immediately after the post-war years by virtue of their status as

citizens of countries within the Commonwealth, whereas America did in the 1960s particularly after 1965 due to the politics of immigration, race relations and the need for skilled labour (25). As South Asians started migrating to Britain and the US, they found identity crisis, had conflicts and tried to negotiate in the hybrid identities. This comparative research work focuses on the hybridity of the South Asian characters of the four selected novels who are located in British and American diaspora.

The selected novels show cross-border activities and social ties of characters between their home country and host country. Their back and forth movement between the home country and host country indicates their transnational character. Besides, they do not have a rigid identity as their identity changes in accordance with time and place. As for an instance, Changez, the protagonist of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* carries a transnational character due to his multiple identities and back and forth movement between Pakistan and America. According to, Mustafa Demirel, “a transnational character displaying the Pakistani experience of migration to America. The protagonist of the novel, Changez has bicultural characteristics and his idea of home changes in accordance with time and space” (116). Likewise, in *Seasons of Flights*, Dilu Gurung critiques, “It is a transnational text as it occupies multiple nations’ characters and their experiences. It shows the mixing of the East and the West” (11). One very important aspect of these novels is they reject fixed society, nation and boundary, which is similar to what Peggy and Glick Schiller view. They reject the idea that, “society and the nation-state are one and the same” (1003). Thus, most conflicts in the transnational novels are caused by the hybrid nature of the diaspora identity. In *The Namesake*, Gogol’s saying, “I don’t get it. How could you guys name me after someone so strange? No one takes me seriously” (100) reflects the intra-conflict created due to hybridity in the diaspora in America. Gogol, the son and representative of the second generation of immigrants has a conflict with his

parents who belong to the first generation immigrants since he hates his name Gogol which his parents have given him. Paudyal's statement "But Gogol does not understand why his parents had to follow Bengali tradition and give him a pet name that was neither Bengali nor American, but Russian" (204) reveals how Gogol's identity is affected by Indian cultures and American cultures. In *Brick Lane*, Nazneen, the female protagonist's freedom "Do you know what I did today? I went inside a pub . . . . I found a Bangladeshi restaurant and asked for directions. See what I can do!" (62-63) clearly shows how she ends the conflict with Bangladeshi community and enjoys the western liberal and multicultural democracy because of hybridity. In this context, Mohamed Noufal N writes, "Nazneen's transformation into an independent and self-reliant woman after her arrival in London suggests that displacement can be an empowering mode of interaction with the outside world" (449). The main objective of this chapter is to explore hybridity in four postcolonial novels: *The Namesake* by Lahiri, *Brick Lane* by Ali, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Hamid and *Seasons of Flight* by Thapa. Hybridity which is the major concept of this chapter is taken as the phenomenon resulting from the encounter of different people who meet in the third space carrying different national identities, have conflicts and do negotiation in culture, education, language and politics ultimately.

### **Hybridity in the Selected Novels**

The South Asian novels written by South Asian writers were written in the West. So, these novels reflect the blending experiences of the East and the West. The characters depicted are transnational ones having diasporic experiences. They carry hybrid identities. Besides, *Seasons of Flight* whose setting is in Nepal and the US, the settings of the three other novels are West and the colonized nations such as India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Bhabha's views on hybridity are meaningful. According to Bhabha, cultural hybridity is not absolutely general and hence hybridity appears in all



cultures. In Jonathan Rutherford's "The Third Space: Interview with Homi Bhabha", Bhabha defines hybridity:

All forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity. But for me the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the 'third space' which enables other positions to emerge . . . the process of cultural hybridity gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation. (211)

So, hybridity is an ongoing process due to the encounter and interaction between the colonized and the colonizers or between the South Asian immigrants and westerners in the West when we delimit the South Asian immigrants in the West. According to, Raihan Sharif, Bhabha's hybrid third space "is not like the frenzy of a multiculturalist melting pot but a space in which cultural transactions or translation is an ongoing process to keep going with much required practice of negotiation of meaning and identities" (4). Sharif's comment focuses on the hybrid third space which is different from the melting point concept, but is useful for the negotiation between the national and transnational identities.

Hybridity is a defining characteristics of South Asian novels dealing with the experience of the people living in the diaspora, "Postcolonial text is a hybrid, a dynamic mixture of literary and cultural forms, genres, styles, languages, motifs, tropes and so forth" (Rutherford "Identity" xiv). So, Rutherford's definition of hybridity also seems to be contextual and relevant for this chapter. Markwan M. Krandy focuses on the increase in hybridity along with the decolonization process. He writes, "Hybridity took on new meaning in the wake of the decolonization movement that emerged in the non-West beginning in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and saw their heyday in

the post-World War II decades” (320). *The Namesake*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Seasons of Flight* depict the American multicultural society where South Asian immigrants as characters live a hybrid life, whereas *Brick Lane* depicts the British multicultural society where Bangladeshi immigrants live in diaspora. Hybridity which is formed due to the encounters between South Asians and Whites living in those multicultural societies gets reflected through the characters portrayed in the novels. Although hybridity is not essentially a negative attribute of diaspora experience, hybrid nature of living and perspectives to life contribute to the conflicts within diaspora family and outside in the host community as portrayed in the novels.

As the second generation immigrants are born and brought up in the host country, it becomes obvious that the influence of host culture on them becomes more dominant than that of root culture. Regarding the root culture, they learn it from their parents/first generation immigrants, to which Robin E. Field seems to agree as he argues, “Lahiri also demonstrates how the second generation is educated about their roots, often not through a process of formal education, but as a private familial experience” (170). Both *The Namesake* and *Brick Lane* show that the hybrid identity of the first generation immigrants differs from that of the second generation immigrants. The first generation immigrants show their adherence and attachment to the home country, whereas the second generation immigrants do to the host country. Regarding cultural negotiation model, Tom R. Burns writes, “each individual human being pursues his or her personal values and self-interest, typically in the context of and against others rationally pursuing their own self-interest and their personal values” (197-198). So, the latter ones do negotiation in the third space more easily and comfortably than the former ones do. Nagendra Bahadur Bhandari argues, “The cultural negotiation experienced by these two generations in diasporic hybrid cultural

space renders fluid and unstable cultural identity” (1). Both these generations show different approaches to cultural negotiations in the novels. According to Bhandari, “the first generation immigrants feel that encroachment of the foreign culture threatens their cultural identity” (2). Ashoke and Ashima do not only follow their Bengali/native culture but also impose it to their children Gogol and Sonia. Ashoke and Ashima take their children to Indian cultural dance and music classes to let them know the root culture. Likewise, Ali’s *Brick Lane* which depicts the diasporic British Bangladeshi characters shows the difference between the first generation immigrants and the second generation immigrants. Irene Perez Fernandez examines: “First generation characters in the novels under analysis suffer an undeniable diasporic experience: they undergo physical dislocation when they leave their countries of origin to come to Britain. Second generation may not have undertaken a diasporic journey, but- due to the fact that they inhabit a border space, a hybrid space, a third space” (154-155). The main reason is their national identity has been hybridized in the diaspora due to physical dislocation, while their children do not feel so. So, Ali’s first generation characters Chanu, Nazneen and Karim show their attachment to the root culture, whereas the second generation characters Sahana, Bibi, Tariq and Shefali show their adherence to the host culture. A. Nejat Tongur writes, “Broad consensus exists on the difficulty of life conditions of the postwar first-generation immigrants in Britain; however, second-generation immigrants are not immune to social, cultural, economic and financial problems” (562). In *Brick Lane*, although Chanu insists on his daughters’ learning Bengali and reciting Tagore, they don’t do so as Ali writes, “Sahana did not want to listen to Bengali classical music. Her written Bengali was shocking. She wanted to wear jeans. She hated to wear her Kameez. . . . Sahana did not want to go back home” (180). Thus, both the novels show that the South Asians

living in diaspora have hybrid identities, but there are differences between the first generation immigrants and the second generation immigrants.

*Brick Lane* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* reflect how due to the 9/11 event, the hybrid identity of the South Asian Muslims living in diaspora appears to take the form of Islamophobia for the Whites, which has terrorized the Whites, but the South Asian Muslims have felt insecure and their identity questionable. *Brick Lane* depicts the Bangladeshi Muslim characters such as Nazneen, Chanu and Karim living in diaspora at Brick Lane in London, whereas *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* depicts the Pakistani Muslim Characters such as Changez living in diaspora in America. The 9/11 attacks in the US have changed the Americans' and Westerners' outlook towards mainly South Asian Muslims whose identity has been entirely doubted and weakened. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* reflects how the hybrid identity of South Asian Muslims has been weakened by 9/11 event. Hamid's statement "Living in New York was suddenly like living in a film about the Second World War" (49) shows how the 9/11 event caused the American war against terrorism, but innocent immigrants mainly South Asian Muslims became victims. Isam Shihada critiques in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, "The 9/11 attacks in the U.S.A. arguably mark a turning point in shaping America into pre-and post-9/11 America. There have been many changes following these tragic attacks, which have left their tragic impact on the Muslim world and affected the lives of Muslims and facilitated negative stereotypes about American Muslims, Arabs and Islam" (452). In this context, Bhabha's statement "Hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects" (112) is very meaningful and contextual. Fernandez opines, "The spatial dimension is an important factor in a multicultural society because spaces in such a setting are in an ongoing process of

negotiation and change” (148). Such spaces in literary writings represent the multiplicity of heterogeneous spaces which are multicultural societies. Shihada points out the conflict created by the 9/11 event, Bhabha’s theory points out the cause of hybridity and the need for negotiation and Fernandez supports the need of negotiation after the conflict. In this context, *Brick Lane* also reflects how the 9/11 event has acted as a catalyst to inflate and exaggerate a reductive hostile attitude towards Muslim extremism. The novel depicts socio-cultural discriminations, racist disputes and religious conflicts at Brick Lane in London. Monica Ali’s statements “Bengal Tigers, Zindabad! went the cry. Long live the Bengal Tigers” (470) indicate how Bangladeshi Muslims formed the Bengal Tigers as a protest against the Whites’ the Lion Hearts to preserve their hybrid identity which was endangered by the 9/11 attacks in Europe. Thus, the characters such as Changez, Nazneen, Chanu, Sahana, Bibi, and Karim have the feelings of discriminations, alienation, and religious segregation due to the impact of the 9/11 attack.

Thapa’s *Seasons of Flight* and Ali’s *Brick Lane* reflect how the dominant culture of the West changes and hybridizes the culture and identity of immigrants. Thapa’s statement “Prema hesitated, then said, ‘I am from India’” (104) reveals Prema, a Nepali immigrant’s forced identity crisis as a survival strategy. Likewise, Prema’s negotiation in the American culture gets reflected in “Prema celebrated her first Thanks giving that year. Luis’s mother and step father invited them to their home in San Diego” (121). Dilu Gurung critiques, “Luis and Prema are hybridizing their relationship and culture” (8) and “Prema faces multiculturalism and hybridity in America” (8). Similarly, the protagonist of *Brick Lane*, Nazneen undergoes a drastic transformation at Brick Lane in London. After her arrival at London, she is regarded as a traditional Bangladeshi Muslim woman as Monica Ali writes Chanu’s words,

“An unspoilt girl! From the village. All things considered I am satisfied” (320) and Karim’s words “A Bengali wife. An idea of home. An idea of himself that he found in her” (380). However, in due course, she not only learns English and does sewing work to be independent but also she ventures to give up her affair with Karim and stays with her children without going back to Bangladesh with her husband. Both Prema and Nazneen represent the South Asian working class immigrants whose native identity and culture get changed by the Western dominant culture. Bhabha’s theory of hybridity is contextually applicable here. According to Bhabha in *Location of Culture*: “Hybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal (that is, the production of discriminatory identities that secure the pure and original identity of authority)” (112). Thus, Bhabha’s notion that hybridity is the process which is undertaken by the colonial authority to change the colonized national identity ‘the Other’ into their own gets reflected in both Prema’s and Nazneen’s life in the third space.

### **Hybridity and Language**

When the immigrants live in the diaspora, their life reflects multilingual and multicultural experiences full of conflicts and negotiations as portrayed in the postcolonial novels such as *The Namesake*, *Brick Lane*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Seasons of Flight*. It is natural for the immigrants to be lured or compelled to use the language of the third space apart from the language of their origin. Because of their use of the host language in the work places or colleges or universities and the native language at home, they happen to use the mixed language i.e. the hybrid language. In his book *The Dialogic Imagination*, Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin defines hybridity, “It is a mixture of two social languages within the limits of a single

utterance, an encounter, within the arena of an utterance, between two different linguistic consciousnesses, separated from one another by an epoch, by some differentiation or by some other factor” (358). So, the people who live in diaspora are expected to be at least bilingual. As far as *The Namesake* and *Brick Lane* are concerned, the characters are delineated to know both English and Bengali. Gogol who is portrayed as the protagonist in *The Namesake* represents the second generation immigrants in America. At the time of admission in the kindergarten in America, Ashoke, Gogol’s father tries to convince the principal by saying that Gogol is “perfectly bilingual” (58). Likewise, Gogol is taught to read and write Bengali language in the Bengali class, “which begins at the back of his throat with an unspirated *K* and marches steadily across the roof of his mouth, ending with elusive vowels that hover outside his lips” (65-66). Ashima, Gogol’s mother is always aware of her children’s American English. Lahiri writes, “every afternoon Ashima has a nap, but before dozing off she changes the television to channel 2, and tells Gogol to watch Sesame Street and The Electric Company, in order to keep up with the English he uses at nursery school” (54). One reason why the immigrants have inferiority complex and feelings of dominance in diaspora is because of their problem of English. In *Decolonizing the Mind*, a Kenyan writer and literary critic, Ngugi Wa Thiong’O focuses on the power of language. He writes “The bullet was the means of the physical subjugation. Language was the means of the spiritual subjugation” (9). Nazneen the protagonist in *Brick Lane* faces identity crisis due to her lack of English. Although she lives in London, she is expected by her husband Chanu to be a traditional Bangladeshi wife only doing house hold chores, which becomes clear from Ali’s writing, “What’s more, she is a good worker. Cleaning and cooking and all that. The only complaint I could make is she can’t put my files in order, because she has no

English” (23). In course of searching for identity, facing different problems she becomes determined to learn English in college and takes permission from her husband Chanu, who is reluctant to give her permission, but underestimates her and says, “It’s not as simple that. Just to go to college, like that” (77). Garrett Ziegler writes about Nazneen’s transformation due to English, “While on the street, Nazneen is approached by a stranger, ‘brown-faced man’ who tries to speak to her in Hindi, Urdu, and English before she replies ‘sorry’ and he walks away” (154). Thus, the in-betweenness of languages: Bengali and English of characters in both the novels show that they use hybrid English and hybrid Bengali in the third space.

Everyone’s identity is shaped by the language. Linguistic hybridity which is a fusion and mixture of two separate languages is double-voiced according to Bakhtin and Robert Young. According to Bhabha, Said, Spivak and other postcolonial theorists, English is the language of the colonizers, which they use as a tool to have hegemony upon the colonized ones. The language has been constructed in such a way that on the one hand, the colonizers use it to control the colonized; on the other hand the colonized use it for the opportunity and survival strategy to build up their identity in the diaspora. In *Seasons of Flight* Thapa writes how the South Asians develop the inferiority complex about their native language in America, “For the first time in years, Prema spoke in Nepali, the language of her sorrows, ‘I used to live here with them a few years ago’” (167). Dilu Gurung points out about Prema, the protagonist of the novel, “She takes her native language as a language of sorrows. She does not like it and prefers to use English. She finds cultural differences in America and tries to adopt American culture” (7). The novel beautifully shows hybridity in the multicultural America where negotiation takes place in the third space. Gurung critiques, “The novel shows multiculturalism through the variety of languages that it



has used. It has used English, Nepali, Hindi, Mexican and Spanish languages” (9). Prema’s learning Spanish and Luis’s learning Nepali indicate how both lovers who are immigrants try to negotiate in the third space. Khem Guraigain explores, “Prema continuously seeks to fit herself into American society, which consistently denies her Nepaliness and her desire to retain her separate identity amidst the multicultural people of the Los Angeles Metropolis. Language and religion become the strongest markers of nationality and ethnic identity in the foreign land” (13). Guraigain claims that American multicultural society appears as the hybrid society where South Asian immigrants try to assimilate for their survival strategy.

The selected novels reveal a fusion of conflict and negotiation, protest and imitation, and revolt and conciliation. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is a postcolonial novel like others which show the conflict between the language of the East and West. However, unlike *The Namesake*, *Brick Lane* and *Seasons of Flight* that deal with the problems created by linguistic hybridity, too, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* seems to focus on the positive aspect of hybridity of Changez who is portrayed as the protagonist in this novel. The education of Princeton University and his job at the Underwood Samson give him an American identity. His national language Urdu does not become his problem. Instead, it makes him feel that he is even in Pakistan while living in America. Hamid states, “And that was one of the reasons why for me moving to New York felt-so unexpectedly- like coming home. But there were other reasons as well: the fact that Urdu was spoken by taxicab drivers” (14). According to Shirin Zubair, English is the language of the empire, which reflects the dominance and the pride of the West. The immigrants’ use of language(s) reflects linguistic hybridity. Lois Tyson’s idea of Eurocentricism also reflects it. Zubair argues,

“Language is inextricably linked with culture; with the use of English as the language of education, and literary expression, the imperial white culture is all-pervasive in that we cannot rid ourselves of the alien culture even after gaining independence from the colonizers” (68). Though linguistic hybridity does not create an obstacle in his life, his hybrid identity becomes a major cause for him to become the reluctant fundamentalist. The novel reflects various examples of White supremacy and racism, which enable him to despise America though he is proud of having American identity in the beginning. Changez’s feelings and reactions get reflected in “- of the twin towers of New York’s World Trade Center collapsed. . . my initial reaction was to be remarkably pleased” (31) and “no, I was caught up in the symbolism of it all, the fact that someone had so visibly brought America to her knees” (31). His such attitudes towards America are because of high discrimination shown to Pakistanies after the 9/11 event by American government. Thus, on the one hand, the novel explores how Changez faces conflicts in America due to his hybrid identity; on the other hand, it explores how he tries to negotiate. Anyway, thirdly the novel beautifully shows how he becomes a reluctant fundamentalist despite glorifying American civilization, too.

Thus, the above four novels reflect the diasporic consciousness of the characters who suffer because of their hybrid identity and try their best to do negotiation in the culture and language of the host nation for survival and identity. Fanon’s idea that colonial language acts as a source of dehumanization of the colonized becomes meaningful in these novels. However, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is different from other three novels as Changez does not try to do negotiation to settle in the host country, but ultimately returns to Pakistan despite the fact that he also embraces American identity in the beginning.

## Hybridity and Education

Out of the four primary novels, the major characters such as Changez, Chanu and Ashok in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, *Brick Lane* and *The Namesake* are influenced by western education. Changez got a scholarship to study in Princeton University, and Ashoke got a scholarship to study electrical engineering in MIT University. Eventhough Chanu did not go to Britain winning the scholarship as they did, he had also got a prestigious job due to his higher education. My main argument here is western education does not equally influence all the immigrants in the same way. Changez's statements "Princeton made everything possible for me" (7) and "I was a young New Yorker with the city at my feet" (20) reflect how immigrants like him are transformed by western education system. However, the 9/11 events change him to be reluctant fundamentalist as he claims, "I had always thought of America as a nation that looked forward; for the first time I was struck by its determination to look back" (49). It indicates the dual nature and ambiguity of western education. Changez's claim about education plays a key role for the formation of identity of people. Hybridity is related to colonialism. As far as European colonization is concerned, it became effective because of education, which the colonizers used as a tool of colonizing the East. They promote their culture and subjugate through education. According to Bhabha, the church mission society is the mission of the colonizers, which has been effective through education. Bhabha writes, "They would become attached to the Mission; and though first put into the school from worldly motives alone" (159). The western education is transforming immigrants' local and hybrid identity into the transnational identity. Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Nazneen, Bibi, and so on in *Brick Lane*, Prema in *Seasons of Flight* and Ashoke, Gogol, and so on in *The Namesake* are portrayed as South Asian

immigrants who embrace western hybrid identity, face conflicts and do negotiation. Shaheen Khan, et al. connect hybrid identity to education and claim: “Postcolonial theory has been used as theoretical lens to understand the identity crisis of the native through western education system” (221). Thus, the selected novels unfold that the hybrid identity of the South Asian characters is created by western education system, too.

The four selected novels can be divided into two groups although they reflect the impact of education upon the hybrid identity of the immigrants. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *The Namesake* focus on the best education of the West for Changez and Ashoke, whereas *Brick Lane* and *Seasons of Flight* focus on the importance of English language for the immigrants. Changez’s graduating from Princeton University on the basis of scholarship indicates his high intelligence. His claim “Students like me were given visa and scholarships, complete financial aid, mind you, and invited into the ranks of the meritocracy” (2) indicates American system of education of luring the South Asian minds to embrace western civilization. He feels proud of being a Princetonian when he explains, “Princeton made everything possible for me” (7) glorifying American education system. Demirel examines, “It is quite so since through Princeton he reaches to a good education, a group of young and wealthy friends, a nice girlfriend and a good job, all of which are thanks to his acceptance of belonging to America” (118). According to Demirel, Changez carries a transnational identity as he writes about Changez “Since there is not a principle for transnational individuals, their sense of belonging is not supposed to be fixed to a certain culture. Transnational concept of belonging is somehow ambiguous and dual-natured but never one-sided” (117). The changes of his identity such as Pakistani, hybrid and transnational throughout the novel support it. However, the impact of

education upon Changez is entirely different from the impact of education upon Gogol, Ashoke, Prema and Nazneen as education makes Changez reluctant fundamentalist after the 9/11 attacks, which Daryoosh Hayati writes “But after the 9/11 attacks and the racial profiling that accompanies it, he becomes ever more conscious of the need to define himself, and this leads to dissatisfaction with his adopted country” (37). Making Changez as the narrator, Hamid deconstructs the westerner’s gaze upon the Islamic world. Hayati writes, “*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* immediately de-stabilizes the gaze of the West upon the Islamic World” (35). Mainly, after the 9/11 event, his hybrid identity enables him to see different forms of injustice and biasness shown to him and Pakistanies by Americans. Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin write, “Indeed hybridity, rather than indicating corruption or decline, may, as Bhabha argues, be the most common and effective form of subversive opposition since it displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination” (9). Thus, he ignores American identity, which gives him education, hybrid identity, transnational identity and prestigious job at Underwood Samson Company and returns to Pakistan and becomes a strong opponent to America. Thus, due to education, the immigrants can fight against any biasness and injustice shown to them in diaspora carrying hybrid identity or they become capable of struggling returning to their own nation like Chanu and Changez.

Like Changez, in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Ashoke, a major first generation character and immigrant from India of *The Namesake* migrates to America because of education as he wins the scholarship to do PhD in Electrical engineering at MIT in America. Lahiri’s statements “Ashoke, a doctoral candidate in electrical engineering at MIT” (2) and “The husbands are teachers, researchers, doctors, engineers” (38) indicate that South Asian immigrants along with Ashoke enjoy their

hybrid and American identity due to education. Even, Gogol, the second generation immigrant in *The Namesake* enjoys American education and embraces American identity. Unlike Changez, the characters such as Ashoke, Gogol, and other characters portrayed in the novel do negotiate in American identity. Paudyal's statements "Many bachelors go to Calcutta one by one and return with wives" (201) and "They indicate their simultaneous allegiance to both India and the United States through their activities" (201) indicate South Asian immigrants' negotiation of their national identity with the transnational identity, which is found missing in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* in case of Changez. Thus, the American multicultural society where the immigrants live in diaspora appears to be the third space "within which the hybrid identity is positioned as lubricant" (Papastergiadis 56) and where immigrants do negotiation. This act of negotiation in the third space is similar to what Cristina Voicu writes "the hybrid strategy opens up a third space of/for rearticulating negotiation and meaning" (177). But, Changez's transformation of identity about which Hayati critiques "The book is about Changez's change or realization, which transforms him from an American financial analyst from Princeton to an individual reintroduced to his cultural identity and family" (43) is very similar to what Bhabha says in *The Location of Culture* "this hybrid third space is an ambivalent site where cultural meaning and representation have no primordial unity or fixity" (176). The third space is the hybrid third space where no identity is fixed. Instead, identities that immigrants carry with them get changed and hybridized.

Like Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and Ashoke in *The Namesake*, Chanu the first generation immigrant portrayed in *Brick Lane* values education which affects these characters to obtain hybrid and transnational identity. Chanu's version what Ali writes, "I have a degree in English literature from Dhaka University. I have

studied at a British University-philosophy, sociology, history, economics” (112) clearly indicates Chanu’s pride of being eligible for the transnational identity. Although his wife, Nazneen, the protagonist and second generation immigrant portrayed in *Brick Lane* does not have education and knowledge of English as Chanu does, she changes and strengthens herself to blend with the Bangladeshi community living at Brick Lane. Nazneen’s determination to stay in London along with her daughters leaving Chanu who returns to Bangladesh and skating in the ice indicates her embracing western liberal identity. Ali writes, “Nazneen turned round. To get on the ice physically . . . ‘This is England,’ she said. ‘You can do whatever you like.’”(492). According to, MA Ling Zhang Shun-sheng “Nazneen is the symbol of the connection between the British values and Bengali culture” (473). However, Chanu getting British identity only shows his connection with Bangladesh and highlights Bengali culture. Although Chanu enjoys joining the Civil Service and working as the Private Secretary to the Prime Minister in London in the beginning, he later does a low profile job such as working as a taxi driver, too. So, his unsuccessful career disappoints and disillusion him. Ali asserts: “I was going to join the Civil Service and become Private Secretary to the Prime Minister . . . . And then I found out things were a bit different. These people here didn’t know the difference between me, who stepped off an aeroplane with a degree certificate, and the peasants who jumped off the boat possessing only the lice of their heads” (34). His problem of the low profile job and failure in negotiating his national identity with British identity or transnational identity causes him to return to Bangladesh. Sangarika Chattopadhyay and Jaya Shrivastava argue, “The certificates, and knowledge of Shakespeare, that are meant to make Chanu an eligible member of British genteel society not only disqualify him from a promotion at office but also fail to offer him free admittance

into the home of Dr. Azad, a well-to-do Bangladeshi physician” (117) In *Empire Writes Back*, Ashcroft et al. claims:

A valid and active sense of self may have been eroded by *dislocation*, resulting from migration, the experience of enslavement, transportation, or ‘voluntary’ removal for indentured labour. Or it may have been destroyed by *cultural denigration*, the conscious and unconscious oppression of the indigenous personality and culture by a supposedly superior racial or cultural model. (9)

Had Chanu not been highly educated, he would perhaps have negotiated as so many peasants from Bangladesh according to him did. Education plays a similar role for Changez, but a bit differently as Changez did not have to do the low profile job as Chanu had to. But, in *The Namesake*, education causes the conflict between Gogol and his parents apparently as Gogol embraces American liberal identity enjoying with American girl friends who do not follow his home culture and mainly negotiation for the characters such as Ashoke, Ashima, Gogol, Sonia and Moushami who negotiate their Bengali culture with American culture.

Like Nazneen the protagonist of *Brick Lane*, Prema the protagonist of *Seasons of Flight* is not so much educated and faces identity crisis in the beginning. So, both of them do not get a good profile job regarding high education in the West and they try their best to negotiate in the western identity in the third space. As education plays a pivotal role for getting transnational identity, Prema and Nazneen face problems in the beginning due to lack of high education, whereas Ashoke, Gogol and Changez do not due to their high education. Winning the US Green Card Lottery, Prema migrated to America. The novel reveals the pathetic plight of Prema due to her identity crisis and she is located mainly in the foreign land, the Little Nepal (Los Angeles), where the



changing conditions of Nepalese living in diaspora but doing low profile jobs due to lack of high education is shown. Guragain writes, “Prema is in a hybrid position. Hybridity challenges the very idea of center and margin and challenges the established hierarchies. Thus, hybridity subverts the notion of identity as fixed and stable” (14). Throughout the novel Prema’s changing identities and loss of identities are shown. Prema’s narrative what Thapa writes “Prema said: ‘Neeru-didi, I lost my way’” (170) and “‘I do not have a world!’ Prema cried. ‘I left the world I had, and do not belong in the one I am in now- your world’” (186) reveals her lack of identity, lack of belongingness and failure in negotiation. This is exactly similar to what Stuart Hall claims, “Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference” (120). Thus, the role of education to live along with hybrid identity for the immigrants cannot be denied.

Thus, education becomes the cause of conflict and negotiation between the national and transnational identity of immigrants in western diaspora, which the above novels reveal. Ashoke, Gogol, Nazneen, etc. are portrayed as South Asian immigrants who face conflicts, but succeed in negotiating in the western identity or transnational identity. However, Changez, Chanu, and Prema are portrayed as immigrants who firstly try to negotiate, but ultimately have conflicts. But, one difference among Changez, Chanu and Prema is Prema does not leave the hostland despite her lack of negotiation, whereas Changez and Chanu do, which is because of high education of both changez and Chanu.

### **Hybridity and Culture**

Hybridity in culture is one major feature of postcolonial literature, which these novels reflect through different cultural motifs such as dress, food, festivals, music,

religion etc. Culture indicates the identity of people. Immigration, movements, assimilation, integration, imperialism and colonialism influence the national culture of the immigrants who have to maintain identity negotiation abroad in different fields such as universities, colleges, work places, and social environments, where they often have to confront with the norms of the White society. So, they often adopt hybrid identities or dual identities for the survival strategy. They carry the cultural identity of their home country and host country. According to Bhabha in *The Location of Culture*, postcolonial literature is “a shift from the cultural as an epistemological object to culture as an enactive, enunciatory site that opens up possibilities for other times of cultural meaning” (178). Bhabha’s argument indicates the hybrid nature of postcolonial literature which indicates the changing nature of cultural identity.

Both *The Namesake* and *Brick Lane* portray South Asian immigrant characters who belong to two different generations, in which the first generation immigrants differ from the second generation immigrants in matters of negotiating with the culture. According to Bhandari “The first generation does not only follow, but also imposes the native culture to their children” (3). Chanu teaches both daughters Sahana and Bibi who are born in London Bangali culture. Bibi began, “O Amar Shonar Bangla, ami tomay bhailobashi” (178). Ali writes, “Sahana did not want to listen to Bengali classical music. Her written Bengali was shocking. She wanted to wear jeans” (180). Chanu, first generation immigrant imposes home culture to his children Sahana and Bibi who are reluctant to learn, but are used to the culture of the host country. Likewise, Ashoke and Ashima who are the first generation immigrants teach their children Gogol and Sonia. Lahiri writes: “She teaches him to memorize a four-line children’s poem by Tagore, and the names of the deities adorning the ten-handed goddess Durga pujo . . . tells Gogol to watch *Sesame Street* and *The Electric*

*Company*, in order to keep up with the English he uses at nursery school” (54). The above lines show how the first generation immigrants teach/ impose their children to follow their root culture and secondly to do negotiation in festivals and music. Ashima teaches Gogol both Bengali culture and American culture so that Gogol can do negotiation. Lahiri asserts, “For the sake of Gogol and Sonia, they celebrate, with progressively increasing funfare, the birth of Christ, an event the children look forward to far more than the worship of Durga and Saraswati” (64). Gogol’s mother prepares him an American dinner once a week “Shake’n and Bake chicken or Hamburger Helper prepared with ground lamb” (Lahiri 65). Likewise, Gogol’s desire to spend time with Maxine “He learns to love the food she and her parents eat, the polenta and risotto, the bouillabaisse and osso buco, the meat baked in parchment paper” (137) indicates his act of assimilation with American culture. According to Bhandari “The second generation has a hybrid socio-cultural milieu in their domestic and public sphere. Inside the home, their parents’ adherence of their native culture influences their upbringing” (93). Regarding the second generation immigrants in *Brick Lane*, Fernandez writes, “Their identity is constructed according to British cultural norms, they have no sense of belonging to Bangladesh” (152). Thus, in both *The Namesake* and *Brick Lane*, the first generation immigrants make the connection between root culture and host culture and teach and encourage their children/ the second generation immigrants to follow even the root culture as they are mainly under the influence of the host culture. Bhabha’s idea of hybridity “Hybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities” (112) is very contextual here.

Like *The Namesake* and *Brick Lane*, *Seasons of Flight* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* also reveal the conflict and negotiation of immigrants in culture in the

diaspora. Prema's buying American dress "she bought a red bikini for \$24.99, and flip-flops for \$4.47" (63) shows her assimilation with American culture. Thapa's statements "Prema celebrated her first Thanksgiving that year. Luis's mother and stepfather Ron invited them to their home in San Diego" (121) reveal Prema's assimilating with American festivals and Christmas. Besides, "'Momos!' Prema explained" (171) indicates Prema's attachment with the root culture. Likewise, Thapa's writing "books: the Bhagavad Gita, the Mahabharat, the Ramayan, and the books about Osho, Krishnamurti, Vivekananda, Ram Das, Sai Baba" (155) shows Prema's negotiation through religious practices. According to Gurung, "The use of Hindu gods and goddesses in the novel connects the author and the protagonist to the root" (10). Both *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Seasons of Flight* focus on the cultural hybridity of mainly the protagonists Changez and Prema. Changez's enjoying American food "We ate grilled octopus and drank sparkling water and red wine" (9) and his taking Pakistani food "of a samosa and channa-serving establishment called the Pak-Punjabi Deli" (14) reveal his hybridity in culture. Likewise, Changez's saying "Do not be frightened by my beard: I am a lover of America" (1) and his keeping Erica as an American girl friend "she was very much a part of my life in New York, and I shall write to her shortly" (19) indicate his embracing American identity and keeping Pakistani identity. However, *Seasons of Flight* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* do not focus on two different generations of immigrants as *The Namesake* and *Brick Lane* do. Bhandari argues "They are living in, in Bhabha's term, 'in-between space'. This hybrid space deconstructs the bipolar notion of native and host culture" (97). This is how the third space is the hybrid space where the immigrants' identity gets hybridized.

Thus, these novels show how South Asian immigrants negotiate with different cultural motifs such as food, dress, festivals, music and religion though all the novels do not reflect negotiation of characters with all motifs. One basic difference between the novels is that *Seasons of Flight* and *The Namesake* reflect the Hindu religious/cultural identity, whereas *Brick Lane* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* reflect the Muslim religious/cultural identity. Besides, the hybrid identity of characters in the latter novels is highly affected by 9/11 event, which becomes the cause of cultural conflicts between westerners and Muslims, whereas hybrid identity of characters in the former novels is not affected by such events.

### **Hybridity and Politics**

Another important aspect of the selected novels is they reveal the impact of politics on the hybrid identity of the South Asian characters. These novels portray how due to the power politics of the West, the East has been dominated. None of these novels deal with the political issue equally well. *Brick Lane* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* reflect the powerful impact of national and global politics on the characters explicitly, while *Seasons of Flight* and *The Namesake* reveal the impact of national and global politics on the characters implicitly. Anyway, the impact of global politics on characters in the latter novels are a bit different. All these South Asian characters face identity dilemma since their identity keeps on changing and reshaping. In *Empire Writes Back*, Bill Ashcroft et al. write that there are four critical models of postcolonial literature. According to Ashcroft et al., the fourth one is the comparative models “. . . fourth, more comprehensive comparative models which argue for features such as hybridity and syncreticity as constitutive elements of all post-colonial literatures” (14). Despite the fact that their hybrid identity is fluid, they try their best to negotiate in the hybrid identity in the third space. Cristina Voicu declares, “The

metaphor of hybridity, in which countries are seen as floating together, leads to the existence of a fluid identity” (190). Voicu means to say that immigrants try their best to negotiate in hybrid identity in the diaspora.

*Brick Lane* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* depict how mainly, the politics of America and Britain due to 9/11 attacks in the USA mark a turning point in the identity of Muslim immigrants primarily in the USA and Britain, secondarily throughout the West. In *Diaspora and Multiculturalism: British South Asian Women's Writing*, Divya Girish Kumar writes, “Since the 9/11 attacks, the epithet ‘Islamophobia’ has increasingly become a buzzword that brackets ‘Muslims’ together as a monolithic, violent, non-progressive, anti-Western religious group reluctant to embrace internal development, diversity and dialogue” (167). Kumar further argues, “The USA and the UK, being two influential nations of the world, influence the international scene with their geopolitical strategies to tackle their ‘enemies’. The ‘war on terror’ invasions on Afghanistan and Iran . . .” (168). Changez’s, the protagonist of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* reaction to American identity was changed in course of time. His statements “At Princeton, I conducted myself in public like a young prince, generous and carefree” (5), “for me moving to New York felt- so unexpectedly- like coming home” (14) and “I was a young New Yorker with the city at my feet” (20) indicate his pride in embracing American identity. But, his statement “I was caught up in the symbolism of it all, the fact that someone had so visibly brought America to her knees” (31) reveals his hatred towards American pride and hegemony in the world. Isam Shihada writes how Changez’s identity gets changed by the 9/11 event, “He experiences inner psychological struggles to find out where he belongs exactly- to either the American society, which treats him as a potential threat or to his home country, Pakistan” (460). Similarly, *Brick Lane* reveals the politics of

Britain and political activities of Bangladeshi immigrants after 9/11 event. The novel shows the formation of Bengal Tigers whose president was a British Muslim Karim and Lion Hearts which was the league of White, and the conflict between them due to the 9/11 event. Karim's statements "Islamic terrorists. Islamic terrorists. That's all you hear. You never hear Catholic terrorist, do you? Or Hindu terrorist?" (407) show the painful experiences of the Muslim immigrants due to the discrimination and prejudice shown to them disgracing them as terrorists. One major difference between these two novels is that the western politics entirely changes Changez's identity in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. Shafayat Hussain Bhat writes, "The episode of 9/11 perhaps makes Changez realize that he actually belongs to Pakistan and not America and he feels need to visit his family in Pakistan" (450). The event changes Karim and Chanu, too, but most of the immigrants in Brick Lane embrace British identity negotiating their national identity with the transnational identity. Thus, due to the 9/11 event, the western politics affected the hybrid identity of the South Asian Muslims living in the diaspora.

*Seasons of Flight* and *The Namesake* reflect the implicit impact of politics on the characters. The political instability and upheaval caused by Maoist-insurgency in Nepal is the major cause for Prema to migrate to America. The lines "The Maoist rebels had come one day, recruiting one member from each family. From Prema's family they had taken her sixteen-year-old sister Bijaya" (4), "Prema's friends had hatched elaborate schemes to migrate to India, or farther, to Australia, Europe, Canada, America" (6) and "Two clashes between the Maoists and the army had claimed fourteen lives. A curfew had been imposed in a border town" (10) indicate the terror and insecurity created by the civil war, which caused Prema to leave Nepal and live in America despite her various types of identity crisis. Her American

boyfriend, Luis's ancestors had also migrated to America from their home country Mexico due to civil war. However, the impact of politics on characters in *The Namesake* is very indirect and hidden, but understood. Due to American politics of bringing potential manpower from South Asia and different parts of the world, her education policy to award scholarships to outstanding students like Ashoke is made. As a result, immigrants like Ashoke study in American best universities such as MIT and later serve America and settle there. In this context, Shamaila Haleem writes, "De tells that Homi K. Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* has theorized cultural hybridity as a result of the impacts of colonization and for him the imprecise, interstitial region or "place of hybridity" is a state of "in-betweenness" practiced by the colonized" (39). Thus, the migration of South Asian immigrants to the West is mainly caused by political instability of their home country and secondly due to the opportunities created by Western political system in the West.

Thus, these novels show the impact of the national and cross-border or global politics on the hybrid identity of immigrants in the diaspora. The immigrants who can assimilate or negotiate with the identity of the host country live there embracing the hybrid identity, while those who cannot, return to their home country showing their dissatisfaction and hatred towards the host country.

### **Conclusions**

Thus, from the above discussion, this chapter shows the diasporic consciousness of the immigrants who carry multiple identities, out of which the hybrid identity is one major identity. This chapter focuses on the hybrid identity and the different elements such as language, education, culture and politics that affect the hybrid identity of the immigrant characters delineated in *The Namesake*, *Brick Lane*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Seasons of Flight*. How these elements have



influenced the hybridity of the immigrants has been explored through the analysis and criticism with the application of different critical theories of Bhabha, Said, Hall, Gilroy, Ashcroft and so on. These selected novels portray the lifelike picture of the South Asian immigrants who embrace hybridity in terms of language, education, culture and politics, have conflicts and most of them do negotiation in the transnational identity in the third space, but those who fail to do negotiation return to their homeland, too

## **Chapter VI**

### **Negotiating the National with the Transnational**

Mainly first-generation characters portrayed in the selected novels migrate from their home of South Asian nations to the West in search of better education, job opportunities, business, social security and liberalism which appear to be privileges of whiteness as the characters migrate to America and Britain, the lands dominated by Whites. Firstly, since these characters transcend the borders showing cross-border mobility, social movements and networks of business people, they become transnational characters. Secondly, these characters' desiring whiteness becomes obvious from their movement to the land dominated by Whites in the hope of embracing white privileges although moving to the land of whiteness does not always mean to embrace whiteness. Besides, it does not mean that immigrants need to desire whiteness to be transnational. My argument is that the characters delineated in these novels desire whiteness because various evidences that the primary texts include have been analyzed in the previous chapters reflecting the desiring whiteness of the South Asian characters. Thirdly, these transnational characters' hybrid identity in the third space has been explored in the previous chapter. Fourthly, divided/ double consciousness of these characters in the diaspora gets reflected in the novels. On the one hand, they carry transnational identity; on the other hand, they carry national identity.

Nationalism is a theory or an ideology which indicates national identity of the people whether they live in their home land or in diaspora in the hostland. Wherever people travel, migrate or settle, they have feelings of nationalism. In this sense, nationalism is taken like patriotism. However, nationalism can be taken as aggressive patriotism as nationalists can not stand their nation being criticized. But, they love

others loving their nation as they do. Such people are nationalists. The characters in the select novels show their nationalism when they are in the diaspora and so they have conflicts with the transnational identity. Anthony H. Birch defines the term nationalism which “refers to a political doctrine about the organization of political authority” (4). He further argues, “nationalism can and should be expressed in terms of a general theory of good government” (4). Mainly people who are colonized, oppressed, suppressed and segregated in the foreign lands become nationalists. In *Nations and Narration* Bhabha argues about nationalism: “European nationalism was motivated by what Europe was doing in its far-flung dominions. The ‘national idea’, in other words, flourished in the soil of foreign conquest” (59). So, the idea of transnational people’s having nationalism becomes obvious from Bhabha’s statement that one need not be within the boundary of one’s nation to have nationalism.

Thus, nationalism shows one’s love for one’s nation uniting people together in the struggle against injustice shown to people of the home country whether they live in their home country or in the host country; whereas transnationalism means the cross-border mobilities, social ties and connections between nations and institutions. This research study uses both transnationalism and nationalism as major theoretical tools in the textual analysis of the dissertation.

### **Transnational/National Desire**

Transnational appears to be desire of people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century for business activities, education and various other opportunities as the world has been a global village. Vertovec’s argument in “Transnationalism and Identity”, “The literature on transnationalism generally underscores the fact that large numbers of people now live in social worlds that are stretched between, or dually located in, physical places and communities in two or more nation-states” (578) clearly indicates how people want to

be transnational in today's world. As for an instance, Changez has been portrayed as a representative transnational character in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* who moves between two nations America and Pakistan that are his host nation and home nation. Basch, Schiller and Blanc argue that "Today, immigrants develop networks, activities, patterns of living, and ideologies that span their home and the host society" (4). What the above critics/theorists say about transnationalism explains transnational characters' desire of being transnational in the selected novels.

Whenever the immigrants face identity crisis in the hostland, they have one common national desire of nationality, which they share with people of their nation. Their homeland or national desire always pulls them back wherever they settle. Their such national desire or nationality in the diaspora gets reflected in the selected novels. Why language, culture, music, national flag, religion and so on of the nation are shared by people of the very nation wherever they settle is they reflect nationalistic sense and consciousness though all the people who love their nation need not be nationalistic. For example, Chanu carries Bangladeshi culture in London. He teaches his daughters about Rabindranath Tagore, which reflects national consciousness throughout the world. So, Anderson says, "Part of the difficulty is that one tends unconsciously hypothesize the existence of Nationalism-with-big-N (rather as one might Age-with-capital-A) and then to classify 'it' is an ideology"(5) Like Anderson's view of nationalism, characters in the selected texts imagine the nations and nationality abroad, too.

All the novels show how the characters are portrayed in the western and eastern settings. Likewise, their transnational activities and national consciousness are described in detail. The characters' voices sound like the novelists' voices. What the study finds while analyzing the texts is like immigrants in real life who try to

negotiate in the west in the course of struggling, the characters try their best to do negotiation in the third space (Bhabha 211) between transnational and national identity. One difference among these novels is that *Brick Lane* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* show how the characters' national and transnational desire is related to Muslim identity and Islam, whereas *The Namesake* and *Seasons of Flight* show the characters' national and transnational desire is related to Hindu religious and cultural practices.

*Brick Lane* beautifully shows how on the one hand, transnationalism transforms Bangladeshi immigrants like a young, dependent and innocent Bangladeshi village girl Nazneen into an economically independent British woman, who, due to national desire, can connect her relationship to the root country sending money to her sister Hasina. Nazneen's activities about transnationalism are very similar to what Robin Patterson in "Transnationalism: Diaspora-Homeland Development", claims, "transnationalism is an emergent field of study with a focus on citizens who, through migrating from poor to rich countries, manage to construct and nurture social fields that simultaneously link their respective homelands and their new diaspora locations" (1894). On the other hand, *Brick Lane* shows the double bind of South Asian female immigrants like Nazneen. Cormack argues, "The novel is particularly of interest as an examination of the double bind that female migrants face, treated as alien by their host nation and as commodities by the men in their own communities. The paradoxes of migration are dramatized in the various characters, but especially through the central character Nazneen's relationships with her husband Chanu and her lover Karim" (700). Thirdly, the novel shows whenever Nazneen feels unhomey and dislocated, she tries to connect herself to Bangladesh recollecting past things and corresponding letters to her sister Hasina. Her distant nationalism is like Rushdie's in "Imaginary Homelands". In her book *Writing Diaspora: South Asian*

*Women, Culture and Ethnicity*, Yasmin Hussain argues, “The notion of a South Asian identity promotes unity and solidarity among the “imagined community” of the South Asian diaspora. People from various South Asian cultures have been treated typically as on monolithic people by the West” (2). Hussain’s view on South Asian diaspora reflects national desire of South Asian characters and western observation of it.

Besides Nazneen, Chanu is the character around whom *Brick Lane* revolves showing his transnational desire and national desire. He tries to create a Golden Bengal in the mindset of his daughters highlighting Bengali language, culture and proud history of Bangladesh in the course of teaching them. Chanu’s statements “In the sixteenth century, Bengal was called the paradise of Nations. These are our roots” (185) reflects his proud nationalism. His nationalism gets reflected in the following lines clearly:

If you have a history, you see, you have a pride. The whole world was going to Bengal to do trade. Sixteenth century and seventeenth century Dhaka was the home of textiles. Who invented all this muslim and damask and every damn thing? It was us. All the Dutch, and Portuguese and French and British queuing up to buy . . . . It was stable. It was educated. It provided- we provided- one- third of the revenues of Britain’s Indian Empire. (185- 187)

Chanu’s teaching his daughters proudly about the history of Bangladesh indicates his nationalism in the transnational setting in London.

Like *Brick Lane*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* reflects how the transnational activities and national desire of immigrants such as Changez are related to Muslims and Islam. Hamid portrays Changez such a transnational character who like a bildungsroman migrates from Pakistan to America, where he gets American identity studying in Princeton University, working at Underwood Samson and making Erica as his girlfriend. His travels to Greece, the Philippines and so on and his to and fro

movement between host nation and home nation reflect his transnational activities. Demirel regards him a transnational character saying “He is a transnational character whose flexible identity leads him to constantly altering sense of belonging throughout his life” (121). His transnational desire and national desire are affected by his unstable and changing identity, which is like Hall’s views on cultural identity. Hall states, “cultural identity is not a fixed essence at all, lying unchanged outside history and culture” (113). The novel which is in the form of the monologue depicts two characters: Changez as a narrator and an American as a silent speaker. Changez narrates this story to this American in a restaurant in the Old Anarkali district in Pakistan. Apparently, Changez’s voice “Do not be frightened by my beard: I am a lover of America” (1) indicates his desire of being transnational. But, Changez’s intended voice which is suppressed voice of Hamid reflects deconstruction of dominating nature and hegemony of American imperialism. His voice even represents the voice of the Muslims who are made the other by American hegemony.

Like Chanu who shows his nationalism highlighting the history of Bangladesh, Changez’s nationalism gets reflected in “Four thousand years ago, we, the people of the Indus River basin, had cities that were laid out on grids and boasted underground sewers, while the ancestors of those who would invade and colonize America were illiterate barbarians” (15). Changez recapitulates the past glory of Muslim civilization as a counter viewpoint to that of dominating American view point. Besides, unlike Chanu, Changez reveals his nationalism as a support to the Muslims globally feeling with a mysterious and meaningful smile to see the fall of American pride in the form of Twin Towers “of the twin towers of New York’s World Trade Center collapsed. And then I smiled. Yes, despicable as it may sound, my initial reaction was to be remarkably pleased” (31). What angers and dissatisfies

him about America is the way America intervenes in the internal affairs of other nations. His lines “I reflected that I had always resented the manner in which America conducted itself in the world . . . Vietnam, Korea, the Straits of Taiwan, the Middle East and now Afghanistan” (65) indicate his hatred towards American foreign policy, which symbolizes the voice of the Muslims against American dominance. Changez’s voice indicates his nationalism and broadly the Muslim nationalism. As Chanu and Changez experience nationalism in the host lands, Ernest Gellner’s view “Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist” (11) appears to be very contextual. Gellner like Anderson means to say that nations appear in the form of imagined communities for immigrants. Thus, the circumstances created in Britain and America force South Asian immigrants like Chanu and Changez to develop feelings of negativity towards the hostland and hence they develop nationalistic feelings.

*The Namesake* makes a clear portrayal of first and second generation transnational characters. Ashoke Ganguli’s movement to America to study electrical engineering at MIT enables him to earn American identity. Later, he brings his wife Ashima Ganguli and in the course of time they give birth to children Gogol and Sonia who are brought up along with American culture and identity. The back and forth movement of Ganguly family and other Indians delineated in the novel between America and India reflect their transnational activities. Lahiri’s statements “Like Ashoke, the bachelors fly back to Calcutta one by one, returning with wives. Most of them live within walking distance of one another in Cambridge . . . They sit in circles on the floor, singing songs by Nazrul and Tagore” (38) reveal their transnational activities, diasporic experience and patriotism. Portraying such transnational characters’ migrant transnational activities, Lahiri tells us how South



Asian immigrants migrate to America or she gives us a picture of the trend of migration of South Asian to America. Paudyal regards *The Namesake* as a model of transnationalism as he says: “Throughout the novel, Lahiri’s characters remain transnational agents who are routinely mobile, maintaining transnational ties with their country of origin” (200). In this context, I find Thomas Faist’s difference between diaspora and transnationalism worth quoting, which is:

Although both terms refer to cross-border processes, diaspora has been often used to denote religious or national groups living outside an (imagined) homeland, whereas transnationalism is often used more narrowly—to refer to migrants’ durable ties across countries—and, more widely, to capture not only communities, but all sorts of social formations, such as transnationally active networks, groups and organizations. (9)

Using Faist’s concept of diaspora and transnationalism, *The Namesake* mainly seems to be a transnational novel as the novel shows transnational activities, connections and active networks between people and organizations of America and India. Faist’s claim “transnational communities encompass diaspora, but not all transnational communities are diaspora” (21) enables me to conclude that this novel reflects transnationalism. Paudyal, who seems to agree with Faist in this context, also appears to regard *The Namesake* as a transnational novel. Thus, due to the transnational activities, cross-border network and connection, the characters delineated are transnational and the novel *The Namesake* is transnational.

My study finds *The Namesake* similar to *Seasons of Flight* in two ways: firstly the transnational setting of both the novels is America and secondly, though characters are from India and Nepal, their transnational activities and national desire get reflected in their Hindu religious and cultural practices. *Seasons of Flight* revolves

around the transnational female character Prema, the protagonist who migrates to America from a small misty hilly region of Nepal and lives in Los Angeles, USA. Her transnational desire appears in the form of American identity in America. Her back and forth movement between Nepal and America and different other transnational activities of characters along with Prema makes the novel a transnational novel.

Abdullah Khan writes, “*Seasons of Flight* is an account of a journey undertaken by Prema from a scenic Nepali village to a culturally and socially multi-hued metropolis in the U. S. The journey in this case is not only the geographical distance, but also the mental and the cultural one” (5). Her cultural activities, social activities and personality in search of self in the novel reflect her national desire. Anthony D. Smith argues, “a sense of national identity provides a powerful means of defining and locating individual selves in the world, through the prism of the collective personality and its distinctive culture. It is through a shared, unique culture that we are enabled to know 'who we are' in the contemporary world” (17). Thapa discovers Prema’s nationality linking Prema to Nepali language, nationhood and Hinduism. The reference of Prema’s visiting Mata Sylvia in America is what Prema sees and Thapa writes, “The shelves in the room were lined with books, the Bhagavad Gita, the Mahabharat, the Ramayan, the books about Osho, Krishnamurti, Vivekananda, ram Das, Sai Baba, Aurobindo, Mahrishi Mahesh Yogi” (155). Thapa reveals how Prema quenches her national desire getting solace in Mata Sylvia’s collected religious books. Besides, I find Ernest Renan’s view very meaningful and contextual to relate to Prema’s visit to Mata Sylvia. Renan writes, “A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul or spiritual principle. One lies in the past, one in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy

of memories; the other is present-day consent, the desire to live together” (19).

Renon’s view of nation seems to be similar to Anderson’s imaginary communities.

Thus, what I have explored is that the novelists have given a good projection of immigrant characters in the western transnational setting with their national desire irrespective of the geographical boundary. On the one hand, the selected novels show the South Asian immigrants’ growing trend of transcending the border to immigrate to the West in order to embrace white privileges in the form of education, job opportunities, liberalism in life and social security ; and on the other hand the novels appear to be the mouthpiece of the novelists to show how people are living aboard with the concept of geographical and national concepts, but with the concept of nationalism which binds them together wherever they go or live.

### **Transnational/National Identity**

Living across borders, transnational migrants break down the identification of nation and state and give rise to the paradoxical concept of deterritorialized state or, more accurately, deterritorialized space. . . . It is basically social space, that is, it is defined in terms of social networks rather than in relation to political or geographical boundaries. Ted Lewellen, 2002

I have used transnational and national perspective to discover how the transnational characters delineated in the selected novels have transnational and national identity and how they try to negotiate. The study deals with the negotiation of the characters and it explores how characters negotiate in the final section of this chapter. When people transcend the national borders and live in the hostland, they develop multiple identities such as transnational, hybrid, double conscious, triple consciousness and so on. Regarding hybrid identity and double consciousness of characters I have done textual analysis in the previous chapters. In this chapter, my

focus is on transnational and national identity of characters. What connects all the ideas together is identity, which is not fixed, but changeable and fluid like liquid. Regarding cultural identity, Hall claims, “It is not once-and-for-all. It is not a fixed origin to which we can make some final and absolute return” (113). Hall’s claim about cultural identity indicates flexible aspect of identity which gets reflected in all transnational characters in select novels. In his book *Liquid Modernity*, Zygmunt Bauman gives a similar view but using a metaphor ‘liquidity’ for identity showing how the attention has shifted from solidity to liquidity today, “It is how the contrived necessity of identity building and rebuilding feels, how it is perceived from 'inside', how it is 'lived through', that matters” (87). Thus, identity of people is like liquid which goes on changing according to time, space and type of people. As for an instance, Changez’s change of identity in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* reveals how a Pakistani student gets American identity, transnational identity and national identity and finally becomes a reluctant fundamentalist. Changez migrates to America to study at Princeton University on the basis of scholarship scheme, joins Underwood Samson, embraces American identity, but the 9/11 event changes him in such a way that he gives up his American dream, becomes a reluctant fundamentalist and returns to his home nation, Pakistan. In “The Backlash of 9/11 on Muslims in Mohsin Hamid’s *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*”, Isam Shihada writes, “Changez’s political activism against the American hegemony and its war against terror, which has left millions of people killed, injured, and homeless in Afghanistan and Iraq, has deemed him as an anti-American” (462). Shihad’s views on Changez indicate why Changez’s identity is changed in the novel.

To make a theoretical framework, the research study has applied transnationalism and nationalism as major theories to do textual analysis since

transnational and national perspectives appear to be very suitable and convenient. Regarding transnationalism, the transnational characters portrayed in the selected novels are neither emigrants nor immigrants. Instead, they are transmigrants as they make back and forth movements, get involved in cross-border activities and social networks between home country and host country. About transnational migration, Bash, Schiller and Blanc write, "Transnational migration is the process by which immigrants forge and sustain simultaneous multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement" (48). Getting transnational identity does not mean that the immigrants give up their national identity. Instead, they keep on strengthening and connecting the relationship between homeland and hostland through different social activities such as sending and receiving gifts, money and so on. In their book *Nations Unbound*, Basch et al. express their view on transmigrants: "Transmigrants take actions, make decisions, and develop subjectivities and identities embedded in networks of relationships that connect them simultaneously to two or more nation-states" (8), which can explain the transnational activities of characters such as Changez, Chanu, Prema, Nazneen, Gogol, Moushumi, Ashima and so on. In "Transnationalism and Identity," Vertovec argues about transnational connections of transnational migrants "Transnational connections have considerable economic, socio-cultural and political impacts on migrants, their families and collective groups, and the dual (or more!) localities in which they variably dwell" (575). Thus, on the one hand, their situation of belonging to more than one nation along with the back and forth movement between these two nations is pertinent distinctiveness of contemporary transnationalism; on the other hand, their connections and social activities have impacts on dual societies in both nations.

A transnational perspective indicates that transmigrants connect to each other beyond national and cultural borders, while national perspective indicates that transmigrants are like imagined communities wherever they live. Unlike the literature of diaspora, the literature of transnationalism shows that the whole world appears to be on the move. The national borders are blurred and transmigrants' identities appear to be quite fluid and unstable. They become busy building up, structuring and restructuring their identities for their survival and existence in the hostland imagining their homeland. Regarding transmigrants' identities, Josaine Ranguin claims, "such identities are not unified or stable, but are fluid entities which constantly push at the boundaries of the nation-state, thereby re-defining themselves and the nation-state simultaneously" (11). Their unstable identity in the hostland enables them to imagine or seek their national identity. Anderson takes nationality or national identity of immigrants in imagined communities and writes, "'national imagination' is 'at work in the movement of a solitary hero through a sociological landscape of a fixity' which can 'fuse the world inside' the transnational identities 'with the world outside'" (30). Thus, due to the fluid identity of transmigrants in the hostland, they value the national identity even in the form of imagined communities as Anderson states.

*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* portrays Changez as such a protagonist around whom the entire novel revolves displaying his fluctuating and flexible identity, which seems to be similar to Hall's view on identity "Cultural identities are the points of identification, the unstable points of identification or suture, which are made, within the discourses of history and culture" (113). Changez is portrayed as a transnational character who goes on transcending the borders, travelling to even other nations from America to Greece, the Phillipines and so on, making social and family relations and

networks between home country and host country. His sense of self is fluid and unstable. The first part of novel reveals how he adores and feels proud of his American identity. He even keeps double identity i.e. American and Pakistani. Demirel's statement "Changez enjoys his 'Americanness,' represented by the American education, the American girl and the American business" (118) reflects Changez's love of American or transnational identity. His statements "Princeton made everything possible for me" (7) and "I was a young New Yorker with the city at my feet" (20) reveal how he feels proud of having transnational identity in the first part of the novel. Vertovec rightly states, "Transnationalism and identity are concepts that inherently call for juxtaposition" (573). Changez's transnational identity clearly indicates how transnationalism and identity are related.

However, the second part of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* discovers his disillusionment with America due to the 9//11 event. His American pride has changed and he starts taking the side of Pakistan, Afghanistan and other Muslim nations whose citizens/Muslims are despised and discriminated in America as America starts accusing them of destroying Twin towers, the American pride. The second part of novel reflects his Pakistani nationalism and broadmindedly speaking his Muslim identity. Though he is in America, he does not feel he belongs there as he did before 9/11 event "I felt at home" (22). Changez's weak and fluid identity gets reflected in his divided mentality "I lacked a stable core. I was not certain where I belonged – in New York, in Lahore, in both, in neither" (64). Because of the 9/11 event, the American Pakistanis are questioned and doubted and so Changez feels dislocated and alien. His loyalty to America appears to be meaningless. Bauman's claim about identity "One thinks of identity whenever one is not sure of where one belongs" (19) appears to be contextual to show Changez growing interest in national identity after the 9/11 event due to which America endangers, questions and doubts his American

identity. Demirel states, “After the 9/11, Changez’s idea of “home” comes closer to Pakista. It is visible through his frequent use of phrases such as “we Pakistanis,” “my people,” and “my home.” He is now proud of what is Pakistani: food and his national ancestors who were saints and poets and – yes – conquering kings” (121). His growing nationalism reflects his national identity. This is how the transnational immigrants develop nationalism in the foreign soil when they find their transnational identity as well as national identity endangered.

Like *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, *Brick lane* also uncovers the transnational identity and national identity of immigrants. As transnational migrants have double identities and double loyalties, Chanu, Nazneen, karim, and so on who are portrayed as transnational characters in *Brick Lane* carry double identities and double loyalties. So, on the one hand, they have hybrid identity and double consciousness, too; on the other hand, they belong to two nations: home nation and host nation. Whenever they feel their transnational or international identity endangered, their nationalism enables them to return to their home nation which is already a substitute for them. Lloyd I. Wong argues, “Transmigrants have multiple identities which are grounded in more than one society and thus, in effect, they have a hybridized transnational identity. This identity simultaneously connects them to several nations” (171). Transnational identity of Razia, Mrs Azad, Mr Azad, Shahina, Bibi and Nazneen appears to be strong, while transnational identity of both Chanu and Karim appears to be weak. Anyway, the noticeable aspect of transnationalism is transnational characters maintain ties between host and home country. The communication between Nazneen and Hasina in the novel through the correspondence of letters indicates transnational ties between sisters of the home nation and the host nation. Hasina’s writing from Bangladesh to Nazneen in London “*Sister I think of you every day and send love. I send respect to husband. Now you have address you will writes and tell all thing*



*about London*” (26) reveals Hasina’s social connection with her sister Nazneen.

Regarding transnational network and activities between home country and host country reflecting the transnational society, Raymond Aron states:

Transnational society reveals itself by commercial exchange, migration of persons, common beliefs, organizations that cross frontiers, and lastly, ceremonies or competitions open to members of those units. A transnational society flourishes in proportion to the freedom of exchange, migration, or communication, the strength of common beliefs, the number of non-national organizations, and the solemnity of collective ceremonies. (93)

Aron’s concept of transnational society appears to be a model transnational society to reflect the activities of transnational characters not only in *Brick Lane* but also in other three selected novels. In one way, the back and forth movement of Gogol, Ashima, Sonia and Ashok give a clearer picture of transnational identity of transnational characters portrayed in the transnational society.

The dilemma of Nazneen, Chanu and Dr. Azad in *Brick Lane* reveals that transnational characters do not have a fixed identity and fixed home though Nazneen decides to remain in London and Chanu decides to return to Bangladesh in the final part of the novel. However, Dr Azad lives in London in a state of indecisiveness till the end of the novel. The traditional notion of fixed territory or ancestral home has been entirely deconstructed. In ‘Home Away From Home?’ Wong argues, “the traditional notion of home being associated with a single country of origin or birth does not necessarily always apply. Rather, home becomes trans- or multilocal” (169). Wong’s view can be related to the divided loyalty and attachment of transnational immigrants. Garg’s claim “Transnationalism also induces the dilemma of belonging to two places at one and the same time which further tends to generate stress and

conflict within small migrant communities as well as between these communities and the host country” (364) also means that the transnational people are in dilemma regarding their identity and home.

As transnational characters have dual identities, the transnational identity of immigrants appears to be their national identity of the hostland after they become citizens of the hostland, too. But, in these novels the national identity mainly refers to the transnational characters’ identity of home country. In this context, transnational identity does not weaken the national identity, but it strengthens the national identity since in the transnational setting, the immigrants develop the network of immigrants who regard nationalism as imagined communities according to Anderson. According to Anderson, the nations appear in the form of imagined communities. Although immigrants in the different hostlands from the same homeland do not know one another, they share similar concepts of nation. In *Nations and States*, Hugh Seton Watson states about the nationalism, “It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (5). Watson seems to agree with Anderson’s view of nation and nationalism. Dr Azad shared his views with Chanu regarding Bangladeshi immigrants in London as, “They don’t ever really leave home. Their bodies are here but their hearts are back there. And anyway, look how they live: just recreating the village here” (32). Dr Azad’s views indicate how the transnational people imagine their nation in the hostland. Even Chanu’s highlighting Bengali culture and teaching it to his daughters in London, and claiming “Sixteenth century and seventeenth century Dhaka was the home of textiles” (185) indicate his nationalism. Renan’s view also appears to be similar to Anderson and Watson. Renan’s statements “A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things that, in truth, are but one constitute this soul, this spiritual principle. One is in the past,

the other in the present” (261) tend to be truly helpful to show the nationalistic feelings of transmigrants in the hostland.

Lahiri’s *The Namesake* in its illustration of the transnational experiences of the diaspora characters such as Ashoke, Ashima, Gogol, Sonia, Moushumi and so on was written after her first collection of short stories entitled *The Interpreter of Maladies* (1999) for which she won the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for fiction. Her *Unaccustomed Earth* (2008) and her fourth novel *The Lowland* along with *The Interpreter of Maladies* and *The Namesake* reflect Lahiri’s art and craft in delineating characters not only in the national setting but also in the transnational setting. Lahiri portrays Ashoke as such a transnational character who studies Electrical Engineering at MIT, goes back to India, marries Ashima, brings her to America and in the course of time makes back and forth movement between India and America with his family. Paudyal states: “Ashoke and Ashima to continue to practice Indian culture, while adopting some American practices in due course of time. In this regard, *The Namesake* offers a model of transnationalism, in which the characters maintain cultural practices from their country of origin while also adopting cultural practices from their newly adopted country” (200). Lahiri’s characters’ transnational activities. Likewise, Paudyal’s claim “Throughout the novel, Lahiri’s characters remain transnational agents who are routinely mobile, maintaining transnational ties with their country of origin” (200) uncovers how the characters are involved in transnational activities and in interconnectivity. Lahiri’s way of showing the characters’ national consciousness through their celebration of national cultural festivals such as Durga and Saraswati Pujo in America indicates that transnationalism does not negate nationalism. Instead, nationalism is maintained by transnational characters in the diaspora, too. Paudyal’s argument “Transnationalism, here, is not the negation of nationalism and histories, but

at once the practice of both Indian and American cultural values, in adaptive ways, on American soil” (211) indicates how immigrants maintain both national and transnational identities in the diaspora.

Like *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *The Namesake*, *Seasons of Flight* is also set in America. Comparatively, Prema, the protagonist of *Seasons of Flight* does not seem to have as strong connection to homeland as Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Ganguly family in *The Namesake* and Chanu in *Brick Lane* do. These characters except Prema seem to have forged a strong relation with their family in homeland. Basch et al. rightly argue, “Transnational migration is the process by which immigrants forge and sustain simultaneous multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement” (48). However, Prema’s search for identity from Nepal to America and in different parts of America along with her movement between America and Nepal reflect her transnational activities. In spite of being in America, she searches her Nepali identity/national identity visiting little Nepal in California, eating momo, sharing experiencing with Nepali immigrants such as Niru, Shushil and so on and visiting Mata Silvia. Her search for cultural and national identity is as Hall opines, “‘cultural identity’ in terms of one shared culture, a sort of collective ‘one true self’, hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed ‘selves’ which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common” (110-111). She as Hall says shares her national identity with Nepali immigrants living in Nepali diaspora because for her the nation is like imagined communities as Anderson says.

Like the characters, the novelists are South Asian transnational writers who write about their transnational experiences living in diaspora and making back and forth movement between home country and host country or between one host country

and another host country. Mainly, these South Asian characters delineated in the novels show their interconnectivity and social relations between home country and host country maintaining their transnational and national identity although they face different problems of identity crisis.

### **Transnational/National Threat**

Transnationalism is a process and phenomenon which appears as a transnational threat to hostland whose citizenship the transnational people take. On the one hand, transnationalism appears to be a threat to the security of the hostland as transnational people's activities are supposed to weaken the nationality of the hostland. In *Transnationalism*, Vertovec argues, "For the United States Department of Defense, transnationalism means terrorists, insurgents, opposing factions in Civil wars conducting operations outside their country of origin, and members of criminal groups" (5). During the Second World War American-Germans and American-Japanese as transnational people appeared to be a great threat to the security of America, which was fighting supporting the allied against the Axis power whose main members were Germany, Japan and Italy. On the other hand, due to wrong activities of few transnational people transnationalism appears to be a threat to the nationalism of the transnational people's homeland, too. About German transnationals in the US, Arnold Kramner writes what J. Edgar Hoover, the director of FBI claimed, "that there is a Fifth Column which has already started to march is an acknowledged reality. That it menaces America is an established fact" (23). Kramner expresses Hoover's views about threat created by American- Germans in 1940. Likewise, Jeffery F. Burton writes about American-Japanese, "In February 1942, the United States government began a concerted effort to forcibly remove and incarcerate people of Japanese ancestry from several western states. Never before had the government cast aside core principles of American democracy, in the spirit of protecting the people, land, and war

effort from the perceived threats posed by people of a certain nationality” (9), which indicates how American- Japanese appeared to be a great threat to America during the Second WW. Likewise, America accused Muslim terrorists who were American-Muslims of attacking upon Twin Towers on 11<sup>th</sup> Sep., 2001. Regarding George Bush’s War on Terror due to 9/11 event, V. Fouskas and B. Gokay write, “the Bush administration an opening to assemble the required authority and public support to subdue the ‘evil dictators’ of the world” (13), which also reveals America’s anger against the Muslim transnationals in America. Besides, Simone Schuller’s claim “The major event of the 9/11 terror attacks is likely to have induced an increase in anti-immigrant and anti-foreigner sentiments, not only among US residents but also beyond US borders” (1) indicates the effect due to transnational threat.

On the other hand transnationalism appears to be a great threat to the existence and identity of the transnational people in the diaspora in times of war between the host nation and the home nation, which becomes obvious from the case of the Second WW and terrorist activities such as the 9/11 event. It becomes very difficult for the transnational people to show their nationalism when the host nation has a conflict with the home nation, which is indicated by the state of transnationals during the Second WW and after 9/11 event. Due to the 9/11 terrorist attack, Bush’s declaration against the terrorists which is included in “America’s War on Terror” edited by T. Langsford, R.P. Watson and J. Covarrubias “Every nation in every region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists” (13) shows a great threat to the transnational people mainly in America, Britain and other European nations such as Germany.

Thirdly, transnationalism becomes a threat to the cultural practices, religious identity and national identity of the transnational people in the hostland. Using transnational and national lenses the present study explores how transnationalism

becomes threat to the national security of the hostland, transnational people and the cultural practices and national identity of the transnational people. Two of the four selected novels *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Brick Lane* reflect transnationalism as threat to the host nation and transnational people in the hostland, while *The Namesake*, *Seasons of Flight* and *Brick Lane* reflect transnationalism as threat to national cultures and language of the homeland of transnational people.

Because of few transnational Muslims' terrorist activities, the 9/11 terrorist attack happened, whose aftermath gets reflected in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. The impact of the 9/11 event upon the protagonist Changez represents the impact of the 9/11 event upon all transnational Muslims mainly in the West and broadmindedly throughout the host nations where Muslims live in minority. After Changez had returned to America from Manila, he was terribly segregated and separated from other Americans. Changez's statements "When we arrived. I was separated from my team at the immigration. They joined the queue for American citizens; I joined the one for foreigners" (32) show how he as a Muslim Other was humiliated and suspected to be a terrorist. He felt his American identity valueless. Changez observed different scenes of blind and aggressive American nationalism such as "They all seemed to proclaim: We are America- not New York, which, in my opinion, means something quite different- the mightiest civilization the world has ever known; you have slighted us; beware of our wrath" (34), which seems to be a great threat to the transnational Muslim immigrants and Muslim nations whose citizens America suspected to be involved in the 9/11 event. M. Scanlan's statement "the intermittent deportation of Muslim migrants and lent inevitability to the invasion not only of Afghanistan but also of Iraq" (82) reveals the impact of 9/11 event upon Muslim nations. He felt his American identity as a danger for his national identity. Hayati critiques, "Hamid uses

the predator and prey dichotomy to cultivate a relationship of mutual suspicion between Changez and the American” (50). PA’s argument “Post 9/11 scenario disillusioned him” (68) enables him to understand America’s real attitudes towards immigrants, which is like othering the orientals by the occidentals according to Said. Thus, Changez’s disillusionment of American pride and American civilization was entirely changed by the 9/11 event which was caused by transnational Muslims.

Like *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, *Brick Lane* uncovers the impact of 9/11 event upon the Bangladeshi Muslims in Britain. Karim who is portrayed as a young British Muslim in *Brick Lane* shows his nationalism with Muslims uniting Muslim immigrants in London, forming the Bengal Tigers against the Lion Hearts ( the rebellious group of Whites) and fighting against the discriminatory practices of White British towards the Muslim British after 9/11 event. Karim who is the chairman of the Bengal Tigers and representative of young Muslims in London raises voices against the othering policy of British government to show solidarity with America to fight against the terrorists. Karim’s claim “Islamic terrorists. Islamic terrorists. That’s all you hear. You never hear Catholic terrorists, do you? Or Hindu terrorist? What about Jewish terrorist?” (407) reflects his anger and hatred towards dehumanizing and othering of Muslims in London. Ali like Hamid shows the conflict between West and East in the name of terrorist attack 9/11, which particularly affected transnational Muslims mainly in the West. Shihada’s argument “Islam and Muslims are negatively represented as potential threats to the stability and democratic values of the American society” (453) points out that transnational Muslims appear as a great threat to the national security in the West. Muslims’ transnational or American or British identity appears to be very fragile.



On the one hand, transnationalism appears as a vehicle of globalization which has made the entire world a global village; on the other hand, transnationalism appears as a threat to culture and identity of homeland. Firstly, due to transnationalism, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century more and more people belong to two or more than two societies and nations deconstructing the national borders or geographical boundaries. Basch et al. write, “Transnationalism is a Process by Which Migrants, through Their Daily Life Activities and Social, Economic, and Political Relations, Create Social Fields that Cross National Boundaries” (28). *Seasons of Flight*, *Brick Lane* and *The Namesake* reflect such transnational cross-border activities and connections. Secondly and mainly, transnationalism does not only appear to be a great threat to the security of the hostland as I have analysed in the previous paragraphs but it also appears to be a great threat to the language, culture and religion of the characters’ homeland, which weaken and devastate the national identity of transnational people.

*Seasons of Flight* unravels the protagonist Prema’s migration to America and identity crisis she faces once she steps into the land of multicultural and liberal America. The novel shows her dissatisfaction and inability to form her clear identity, but she forms hybrid identity. Dilu Gurung’s comments “She gets in an in-between position after she reaches America. She can neither be a complete Nepali nor an American. She takes her native language as a language of sorrows. She does not like it and prefers to use English. She finds cultural differences in America and tries to adopt American culture” (7) indicates how transnationalism acts threat to Prema’s identity and national culture. Regarding the negative impact of transnationalism upon immigrants, Basch et al.’s claim “At the heart of the metaphor of “America the melting pot” was a model of immigrant settlement in which immigrants eschewed the

national identity as well as the customs and language of their birth” (51) tends to support my argument that transnationalism weakens and endangers the national language and culture of homeland.

Unlike *Seasons of Flight* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, *The Namesake* and *Brick Lane* discover the negative impact of transnational activities mainly upon the culture and language of the home nation of second generation immigrants who are born and brought up in the host country. The first generation immigrants maintain a balance between the past and the present by keeping the traditions and culture. Hence, they show loyalty to both homeland and the hostland. But, since the second generation characters such as Gogol, and Moushumi in *The Namesake*, and Shahana and Bibi in *Brick Lane* are influenced by the cultural practices and language of the hostland from their very birth, they mainly and only show loyalty to the hostland whose identity they embrace, but just because of parents’ insistence and compulsion, they tend to show loyalty to the homeland, too. Shreemoyee Chattopadhyay’s views on second generation immigrants “Gogol struggles to find his identity as an American living in an Indian household. He shuns his family mostly because of their cultural ties to India” (43) and “Like Gogol, Moushumi too dislikes her Bengali parents, the culture and traditions they tried to teach her. She also prefers American food over the Indian ones” (44) suggest that transnationalism appears as threat to the homeland culture, language and nationalism. Similarly, second generation immigrants such as Shahana and Bibi portrayed in *Brick Lane* oppose their father Chanu’s teaching and imposing Bengali and Bangladeshi culture and language. Ali states showing Shahana’s reluctance, “Shahana did not want to listen to Bengali classical music. Her written Bengali was shocking. She wanted to wear jeans. She hated her kameez” (180). Ali further adds showing Shahana’s indifference as: “When Bangladesh was

mentioned she pulled a face. She did not know and would not learn that Tagore was not more than poet and Nobel laureate, and no less than the true father of her nation. Shahana did not care” (180). Ali’s such statements about Shahana reflect second generation immigrants’ reluctance and lack of loyalty to the culture and language of the homeland, which hints the threat of transnationalism to the national identity of the immigrants.

Thus, this research study shows how transnationalism appears not only as threat to the nationalism of the host country but it also appears as threat to nationalism of the home country as the language, culture and life style of immigrants are highly affected by transnational activities in the diaspora.

### **Transnational/National Negotiation**

Since Lahiri, Ali, Hamid and Thapa themselves are South Asian transnationals, the characters portrayed in their novels reflect the writers’ own experiences. The objective of research study is to explore whether South Asian characters succeed in negotiating in conflicting situations in the third space or they fail and remain in conflict. Such experiences of transnational characters are taken as examples from the novels to do textual analysis. Regarding textual analysis to discover negotiation between the transnational and national, I am using transnational, national and third space theories.

Due to transnational and global activities, people’s cross-border activities, connections and social networks between people of two or more than two nations are increasing. On the one hand, the concept of one home or root home is changed and they have multiple homes; on the other hand, they have dual or multiple identities, loyalties, and citizenships. Wong’s views regarding transnational people in the USA, Canada and Australia “People in these communities have dual or multiple loyalties,

homes and citizenships” (170) indicate that these nations are multicultural nations where transnational people have multiple homes, and identities. Why transnational people have more than one home is “Globalization and transnationalism facilitate deep attachment to more than one home” (170), according to Wong. Due to dual citizenships, the transnational characters are prone to show their nationality to both home nation and host nation, but nationalism of such characters is mainly taken in context of their homeland. So, for such people, the sense of nationality, nation, and nationalism are rooted in their root land which they have left behind. But, Anderson regards nations as imagined communities and Rushdie regards nations as imaginary lands. For Smith every nation should be unique with definition, location and so on. Smith’s remarks “It is through a shared, unique culture that we are enabled to know 'who we are' in the contemporary world” (17) and “This process of self-definition and location is in many ways the key to national identity” (17) reveal his view of national identity with separate definition, location and culture from other nations. But, Rushdie’s view of nationalism is due to international with the transnational phenomena in the third space, which Rushdie in *Imaginary Homelands* claims “America, a nation of immigrants, has created great literature out of the phenomenon of cultural transplantation,” (20). Rushdie focuses on cultural transplantation. In matters of cultural transplantation, theorists of nationalism may not agree with transnational writers such as Ulf hannerz who claims about transnational experiences, “experiences which touch on issues of time, space, loyalty, and identity, and which relate somehow uneasily to national boundaries” (83). Due to the globalization and transnationalism, cultural transplantation is created in the transnational setting deconstructing the territory and national border. Besides, the idea of shared culture developed in the transnational setting by the immigrant characters, they have

nationalism outside the nation or the characters such as Prema, Ashoke, Ashima, Nazneen, Chanu, Changez and so on develop nationalism in the South Asian diaspora.

My study has explored how these characters on the one hand have multiple identities such as hybrid, double consciousness, transnational and national; on the other hand, they getting lured by the privileges of whiteness do negotiation in the third space for their better survival. The conflicts and negotiations between national and transnational identities of characters on different issues such as culture, education, language and politics are found in the novels. The western site where South Asian characters mix with characters from different nations and mainly from the host nation appears to be the third space according to Bhabha who argues in *The Location of Culture*, “The production of meaning requires that these two places be mobilized in the passage through a Third Space, which represents both the general conditions of language and the specific implication of the utterance” (36). Regarding this third space, Bill Ashcroft states, “But this space is also a transcultural space, a ‘contact zone,’ the excess of fixed subjectivity—that space in which cultural identity develops” (108). Ashcroft regards the third space as a contact zone for culture of two nations or more than two nations where a new culture or hybrid culture develops that becomes new cultural identity.

On the one hand, *Brick Lane* and *The Namesake* portray how the transnational characters of second generation do not negotiate between the transnational and national as the characters of the first generations do. Both the novels unravel the cultural conflict between two generations of characters. As the first generation of characters such as Chanu and Nazneen in *Brick Lane* and Ashoke and Ashima in *The Namesake* were born and brought up in their root nations, naturally they appear to be more loyal to the root nation despite the fact they got changed a lot by transnational activities in the host nations. Chanu represents such first generation transnational

characters who seem to be unable to do negotiation in the third space due to high nationalism. His way of teaching his daughters Bengali language, culture and highlighting Bangladesh indicate his nationalism. Chanu's statements "If you have a history, you see, you have a pride. The whole world was going to do trade" (185) and "We provided- one third of the revenues of Britain's Indian empire" (187) reflect his nationalism, which was also a cause for him to fail to negotiate in the third space. However, unlike Chanu, another first generation character Mrs. Azad disagrees with Chanu and tells him: "Assimilation this, alienation that! Let me tell you a few simple facts. Fact: we live in a western society. Fact: our children will act more and more like westerners. Fact: that's not bad thing. My daughter is free to come and go. Do I wish I had enjoyed myself like her when I was young? Yes!" (113). Mrs. Azad's views of assimilation indicate her negotiation in London, which Chanu fails to do. Unlike Chanu and like Mrs. Azad, Ashoke and Ashma do negotiation in America. Not only both of them try to negotiate in culture of both India and America but they also teach their children Gogol and Sonia to do so. Lahiri writes, "For the sake of Gogol and Sonia they celebrate, with progressively increasing fanfare, the birth of Christ, an event the children look forward to far more than the worship of Durga and Saraswati" (64). According to D. R. Patel, the first generation transnational characters do not only try to negotiate between the national culture and transnational culture but they also teach their children to negotiate between the culture, language and identity of both home and host nations. Both Ashoke and Ashima teach their children to follow naming ceremonies, death rituals, celebration of Hindu festivals and so on. They celebrate Bengali feasts and festivals to "preserve their native culture in a new land" (150). Ashima's cooking Indian food in America "combining Rice Crispies and Planters peanuts and chopped red onion in a bowl; she adds salt, lemon juice, thin

slices of green chili pepper, wishing there were mustard oil to pour into the mix” (6) reflects her negotiation in native culture in the third space (Bhabha 211).

On the other hand, Fernandez’s statements “second generation characters such as Nazneen’s teenage daughters Shahana, and Bibi or Razia’s children Tariq and Shefali present different levels of assimilation to British culture. Their identity struggles are different from the struggles of their parents” (152) indicate how second generation characters’ way of negotiation is different from their parents’ negotiation. They can easily integrate and negotiate in the British culture and society, while they fail to negotiate in Bangladeshi culture and society. Tongur’s claim “Ali portrays young Bangladeshis, Shahana, Shefali, Azad, who were born and raised in Britain and therefore adapted to British culture, British society and British identity as they voice their distaste with Bangladeshi culture, language and life style” (562) indicates the second generation characters’ interest in Britishness. Fernandez seems to agree with Tongur as Fernandez writes “Chanu insists on his daughters’ learning Bengali and reciting Tagore” (152), but they do not do so. Chanu loves Bangladeshi classical music, but his children hate it as Lahiri writes “Shahana put her fingers in her ears and screwed up her face” (359) when Chanu tried to play classical music.

Like the second generation characters in *Brick Lane*, the second generation characters in *The Namesake* such as Gogol, Sonia, and Moushumi negotiate in American culture, language and religion in place of negotiating in Indian/ Bengali one, which indicates one major aspect of the second generation characters in the diaspora. Gogol’s negotiation in American culture as Lahiri writes about his eating American food at Maxine’s home “the polenta and the risotto, the bouillabaisse and osso buco, the meat baked in parchment paper” (137) indicates Gogol’s love for American culture. Like Chanu in *Brick Lane*, Ashima in *The Namesake* teaches her

children to do negotiation in the national identity. Lahiri writes, “She teaches him to memorize a four-line children’s poem by Tagore and the names of the deities adorning the ten-handed goddess Durga during pujo” (54). Thus, second generation immigrants easily negotiate to the culture and identity of the hostland as they are born and brought up there, and taught by their parents to negotiate with the culture and identity of the root nation.

Unlike *Brick Lane* and *The Namesake* whose most of the immigrant characters try to do negotiation, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Seasons of Flight* focus on the negotiation strategy of protagonists who are Changez and Prema. On the one hand the transnational characters as protagonists in the novels seem to have a good connection with the home nation as Waldinger says, “connectivity is a part and parcel of the migration experience itself: what flows across borders—information, resources, and support—provides ample motivation for family members separated by space to maintain strong social ties” (39). On the other hand, these transnational characters with the help of printed materials know what is happening in their nation and so they show nationalism. Changez knows how the 9/11 event is engulfing not only the South Asian Muslim communities but also the Muslims in the West and Arab world due to printed materials and internet. But, before internet was developed, the only effective means of communication that increased people’s nationalism was the print-languages. Anderson’s claim “These print-languages laid the bases for the national consciousness” (44) hints the importance of printed materials. Anderson focuses on the importance of language for the 19<sup>th</sup> century European nationalism. Hannerz’s claim about Anderson’s print- language “Anderson argues that it was in large part the commoditization of the printed word that made it possible for rapidly growing



numbers of people to recognize that there were people much like themselves beyond the face-to-face community” (20) implies the importance of language for the growing nationalism. However, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* shows how Changez does negotiation between Pakistani culture, language and Muslim identity and American culture, English language and transnational identity in the first part of the novel, but in the final part of the novel, he develops a strong sense of nationalism, which enables him to give up his job at Underwood Samson company, and finally leave America. Though Changez succeeds in negotiating in American education, culture and language, he fails to negotiate in American politics due to the 9/11 event, which segregated and othered him as Said’s argument “Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the orient” (3) reflects the western dominance over the non-western.

But, *Seasons of Flight* shows the protagonist Prema’s search for identity in America differently, where on the one hand, she faces identity crisis like other transnationals due to multiculturalism and hybridity; on the other hand, she enjoys sexual liberalism due to American multiculturalism. She does negotiate in language, culture, religion and so on. Dilu Gurung writes, “Luis and Prema are hybridizing their relationship and their culture. . . . The immigrants are from multiple nations, so there are multiple cultures in America brought by them” (8). One very important aspect of Thapa is that she places Prema in the national and transnational setting very well. She shows Prema’s national identity in Mata Silvia’s negotiating in Hindu religion, Nepali language, eating Nepali food such as momo and her transnational identity negotiating in American language, culture, Christmas, Easter and so on. Her transnational life shows as Nelson Shake’s statement, “National borders become porous and permeable, and the nation loses some of its centrality as the demarcating point” (8), which shows

with some loss of centrality of the nation due to transnationalism. But, Glick Schiller's argument "On the contrary, transmigrants helped to construct nation-states in many regions of the world in the past and are active participants in the constitution of transnational nation-states" (99) indicates that transnationalism does not weaken the nation-states.

Thus, on the one hand, South Asian female characters appear stronger than the male ones to assimilate, adapt and negotiate in the western transnational setting or in the hybrid. Firstly, perhaps due to the patriarchal structure of the South Asian society, South Asian females being subaltern in the homeland are used to negotiating outside the home as their home becomes the foreign land and husband's home/foreign land becomes their land. They get cultural and social training from very birth to assimilate, adapt and negotiate out. Secondly, western setting appears to be the liberal site for the South Asian females who use sexual freedom which is almost impossible in their homeland. The massive transformation of Nazneen in *Brick Lane* can be taken as such an example. On the other hand, male characters such as Chanu and Karim in *Brick Lane* and Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, who mainly due to their failure in negotiating in Muslim identity return to their home nations. But, most of the characters succeed in negotiation because firstly they are from poor nations and material gains become lucrative and secondly, as Purkayastha claims "According to the new law, this immigration generation was allowed full access to citizenship rights and nuclear family reunification privileges" (18) and thirdly, they can have multiple identities such as hybrid, divided identity, national and international identity even in the transnational setting.

### **Conclusions**

In this way, on the basis of the textual analysis of the four selected novels, this research study has discovered that South Asian characters who migrate to the West

have national desire even in the transnational setting. Getting transnational identity or identity of hostland they do not seem to forget and give up their national identity and loyalty to their homelands. Instead, they maintain both national and transnational identity in the third space where they do negotiation in that contact zone despite identity conflicts they face. Due to different transnational activities such as cross-border and social connections, they get connected to their homeland despite materializing their dream in the hostland. The modern technology such as internet, telephone and, fast means of travels such as jet planes help them to connect the hostland to the homeland. Their nations appear to be like Imagined Communities (Anderson) and Imaginary Homelands (Rushdie).

## Chapter VII

### Findings, Conclusions and Suggestions for Further Study

This chapter deals with findings, conclusions and suggestions for further study. Firstly, whatever has been discovered in course of textual analysis of the selected texts *The Namesake*, *Brick Lane*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Seasons of Flight* in chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 is briefly written in 'Findings'. The focus is given on the key ideas explored in course of the textual analysis. Secondly, the ideas expressed in chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 are systematically concluded in 'Conclusions'. Finally, suggestions are given to scholars, researchers and other readers for further study who consult this dissertation.

#### Findings

Firstly, the South Asian immigrants desiring whiteness come to the USA and Britain for better opportunities such as gaining higher education, earning money, getting social security/safety, doing business and enjoying western liberalism. Diaspora, globalization, multiculturalism and cultural diversity lead to the hybrid forms of cultural identity. Most conflicts in transnational characters are caused by hybrid nature of diaspora identity.

Secondly, one major difference between the first generation immigrants and the second generation immigrants is that as the first generation immigrants are born and brought up in the home nation, they become more loyal and attached to the home nation than the host nation. So, when they feel insecure in the host nation, their nationalism increases, they find their home nation a better and safer land and they return. As for instances, Chanu from *Brick Lane* and Changez from *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* can be taken. But, as the second generation immigrants are born and brought up in the host nation, they are not familiar with the homeland, but are familiar

with the host nation, which appears to be the homeland for them. Besides, these second generation immigrants become more loyal and attached to the host nation than the home nation as they regard themselves citizens of the host nation unlike their parents. Therefore, they give the first priority to the culture and language of the host nation, whereas the culture and language of the home nation have to be taught or imposed to them by their parents. As for examples, Ashima and Ashoke teach their children Gogol and Sonia Bengali culture and language in *The Namesake* and Chanu teaches his daughters Shahana and Bibi Bangladeshi culture and language in *Brick Lane*. Thus, though both first generation immigrants and second generation immigrants get hybrid identity in the third space, hybrid identity of the first generation immigrants differs from that of the second generation immigrants.

Thirdly, the immigrant characters, who come to the host nation from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, face conflicts, identity crisis and hence they try to do negotiation between their indigenous root culture and adapted host culture in food, dress, festivals, language, music and different life styles as a process of gradual progress from nationalism to transnationalism. The research study shows how for their survival the transnational immigrants use different strategies such as assimilation, adaptation, adoption, absorption, acculturation, denial, resistance and returning to the home nations as a process of negotiation between national and transnational identities. Gogol, Sonia, and Moushumi show adaption, assimilation, adoption, acculturation in America in *The Namesake* and so they settle there, whereas Ashima appears to be a typical transnational character as she decides to spend six months in home nation (India) and six months in host nation (America). Prema in *Seasons of Flight* and Nazneen, Shahana, Bibi and so on in *Brick Lane* in spite of cultural conflicts between national and transnational adapt, assimilate, absorb, and

adopt in Britain. Those who fail to do negotiation showing resistance and denial return to their home country like Chanu and Karim in *Brick Lane* and, Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*.

Fourthly, one major difference between *Brick Lane* and other three novels: *The Namesake*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Seasons of Flight* is that *Brick Lane* focuses on female subjectivity, too in spite of the fact that all the novels reflect the conflict and negotiation between national and transnational in the third space.

Fifthly, transnationalism appears to be threat to the security of the host nation as the 9/11 terrorist attacks are caused by transnational people in America, which is reflected in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Brick Lane*; on the other hand, the blind nationalism of the host nation may target the transnational identity of the immigrants. As for an instance, double consciousness and weak transnational identity of Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and of Karim in *Brick Lane* show how transnationalism is threat not only to the host nation, but also to the transnational people. Transnational immigrants have dual loyalties, nationalities and identities. But, whenever there are conflicts between national and transnational issues, the western nations doubt the loyalty and nationalism of the immigrants to the very host nation and mainly regard the South Asian immigrants as transnational immigrants rather than citizens.

Sixthly, this research work reveals how South Asian females rather than males feel more comfortable in the western liberal societies. The idea that the present work has explored about South Asian female immigrants' reluctance to return to home countries despite identity crisis in the West becomes obvious from Chanu's and Changez's return to the home countries, but Nazneen's and Prema's determination to settle in the western societies. This research study has focused on this issue. What the

research study shows is South Asian females appear stronger than males to assimilate, adapt and negotiate in the hostland since according to the patriarchal structure of the South Asian society, females are culturally trained to adapt, assimilate and negotiate in their husbands' houses which are like the hostlands, but are made like the homelands by females due to their strong cultural training and bond. The study adds something valuable to this issue as the research gap needs to be filled in this knowledge domain.

Seventhly, non-Muslims who are Hindu characters such as Ashoke, Ashima, Gogol, Moushami and Prema seem to show their greater assimilative power than Muslim characters such as Chanu, Karim, Changez and so on do. The former characters/Hindu characters do negotiation in the third space between the national and transnational identities, whereas the latter characters/Muslim characters fail to do negotiation and return to their host nations. The impact of the 9/11 event seems to affect mainly South Asian Muslims, which is reflected in *Brick Lane* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* as Muslim immigrants are accused of their involvement in the event

Likewise, all female novelists such as Lahiri, Ali and Thapa seem to show that South Asian females get indulged in sexual activities in the transnational setting ignoring chastity, while the male novelist Hamid does not portray any South Asian female characters to show it. So, it seems to indicate that South Asian female novelists still want females to maintain chastity as they used to do in the past by hook or crook.

Besides, all the selected novels reveal that South Asian immigrants' identities such as hybrid, divided, national and transnational are flexible and changeable. However, the select novels reflect that the national identity of the transnational

immigrants depends on their position in the host nation. As long as they have a strong transnational identity, they enjoy in the diaspora and they do not seem to raise national issues. However, once their transnational identity or international identity gets endangered or they get segregated or affected due to racism, they seem to have all of a sudden a strong sense of nationalism. The examples of Chanu and Karim in *Brick Lane* and Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* can be taken.

In the same way, one significant discovery of the study is that both Hamid through Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and Ali through Karim in *Brick Lane* portray those characters as aggressive nationalists ready to give counter to the west, whereas Lahiri in *The Namesake* and Thapa in *Seasons of Flight* do not portray any characters as aggressive nationalists.

Finally, the research project deals with the life experiences of characters that reflect the blending of fact and fiction. As for an instance, Prema, the central character of Thapa's *Seasons of Flight* can be taken. *Seasons of Flight* reveals her day to day life experiences affected by Maoist Insurgency during her stay in Nepal and her day to day life experiences in Nepali diapora at LA in the US.

### **Conclusions**

My research study deals with the conflicts and negotiation between national and transnational in the diaspora in the West. The research is based on the four South Asian novels *The Namesake* by Lahiri, *Brick Lane* by Ali, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Hamid and *Seasons of Flight* by Thapa, which reflect the South Asian characters' transnational activities in the West that cause the conflicts, identity crisis and finally negotiation in the third space. Since the South Asian novelists themselves are the transnational writers, the novels reflect their transnational experiences and diasporic consciousness.



The specific sites of encounter between the national and transnational, the reasons for South Asian immigrant characters for coming to America and Britain, and South Asian characters doing negotiation between national and transnational in the third space as key ideas about the statement of problem and research questions are elaborated in the hypothesis of the first Chapter.

The qualitative research methodology is applied in the research work. For a broad theoretical framework, postcolonial theory is applied. As for conceptual framework, concepts such as transnationalism by Vertovec, Basch et al. and Waldinger and nationalism by Anderson and Anthony D. Smith, which incorporate other conceptual ideas such as hybridity by Bhabha, Double Consciousness by Du Bois and Fanon and Desiring Whiteness by Fanon and Seshradi-Crook are applied. Likewise, the general over view of the study and significance of the study are written in the first Chapter. Besides, the literature review work in the second chapter, a key part of the study, focuses on how the critics critique on the primary novels to discover the conflicts, identity crisis and negotiation of the South Asian transnational characters depicted in the novels, which provides a pattern for the textual analysis in chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6.

The third chapter deals with desiring whiteness of South Asian transnational characters. Desiring whiteness of the immigrants appears to be desire as well as threat for the South Asian immigrants. The study shows textual analysis of the selected texts with the help of theorists Seshardi- Crooks and Fanon. As the immigrants in *Brick Lane* visit Britain and in other three novels they visit America, their desiring whiteness becomes obvious. The textual analysis reveals that whiteness for the immigrants indicates privileges of higher education in the world recognized universities such as MIT and Princeton, job opportunities, social security, business

and freedom. Whiteness appears to be identity of the immigrants as they want to have the identity of the whites due to white privileges. But, whiteness becomes a threat to them, too as they seem to suffer from racism in the diaspora. However, for the sake of white privileges to make life better, the South Asian immigrants want to do negotiation in the third space.

Likewise, the fourth chapter deals with the Double Consciousness of the South Asian immigrants in the selected novels. Although Du Bois' theory of Double Consciousness is applied to show the divided identity of African-Americans in the US, this theory of Double Consciousness of Du Bois and Fanon is applied in course of the textual analysis of the primary texts, which indicates that immigrants in any diaspora do have Double Consciousness. Double Consciousness does not seem to be the desire of the South Asian immigrants explicitly, but it seems to be identity, threat and negotiation for the immigrants explicitly. One aspect of identity crisis of South Asian transnational immigrants is explored as divided identity in the diaspora, which is caused by racism and colonial nature of the westerners. The study reveals how the South Asian immigrants develop inferior complex because of split identity in the transnational setting.

The fifth chapter deals with the hybrid identity of the South Asian immigrants in the third space in the West. This chapter shows how hybridity is a transnational reality i.e. transnational characters are sure to have hybrid identity, which the textual analysis of the primary texts uncovers. The South Asian transnational writers with the help of their writings are exploring and sharing different problems of the immigrants' communities mainly identity issues they themselves are facing, too and they are addressing the centre from the centre. Rootlessness, alienation, foreignness, and marginalization are the major issues of the immigrants. Globalization, diaspora,

transnationalism, multiculturalism and cultural diversity lead to the hybrid form of cultural identity in the third space. My study shows that different strategies such as assimilation, adaptation, acculturation, rejection, and negotiation are adopted by immigrants for their adjustment and settlement in the diaspora and those who fail to do negotiation return to the roots. Bhabha's theory of hybridity is mainly applied in the textual analysis of the primary texts.

The sixth chapter deals with the national and transnational perspectives to discover conflicts, identity crisis and negotiation of the South Asian characters in the third space in the primary novels. This chapter shows how hybrid identity and double consciousness of transnational people are affected by their nationalism and transnationalism. The study reveals that transnational and national theoretical lenses are applied to do the textual analysis of the primary novels. In course of the analysis, on the one hand, desiring whiteness, hybrid identity and divided identity of the South Asian immigrant characters are revealed; on the other hand, the national and transnational consciousness and identity of the immigrant characters are revealed. The study uncovers that the South Asian transnational characters regard nations as imagined communities like that of Benedict Anderson and Imaginary Homelands like that of Salman Rushdie. The study indicates lack of fixity of identities of transnational characters in the diaspora as Hall says. In this chapter, negotiation appears to be dominant since it deals with the negotiation of South Asian transnational characters between national and transnational. Mainly, the South Asian characters do negotiate in different motifs such as language, politics, education, culture and so on.

### **Suggestions for Further Study**

Every research work becomes a store house of knowledge and a source of information for the students, researchers, and intellectuals in any relevant field. The

study mainly focuses on the South Asian transmigrants in the west. The study does not focus on the postcolonialism. However, different sources about postcolonialism are applied. The following given suggestions are made on the basis of the findings and conclusions of the study:

1. Different South Asian novels written in English can be studied for exploring even different identity issues of South Asian immigrants in the West that these selected novels fail to reflect. As this study deals with South Asian writers from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal, the novels of writers from other South Asian nations can also be studied.
2. In course of searching materials for desiring whiteness, different writers on whiteness such as David R. Roediger, Ian Lopez, Ruth Frankenberg, Malcolm X, W. E. B. Du Bois, Frantz Fanon and Kalpana Seshadri-Crooks have been consulted, hence study on Whiteness or Racism can be made.
3. The literature of Native Americans, Aborigines of Australia and other indigineous literature of the world can be studied to explore the impact of transnationalism and globalization on them.
4. The study on Desiring Whiteness and Double Consciousness shows that the further study even on Black Studies can be made.
5. This Research Study has focused on transnational and national issues. Hence, further study can be done focusing on the Diasporic study of South Asian immigrant characters in the western setting of Australia, Canada, and so on besides America and Britain that are used in this study to discover whether South Asian immigrants in other western nations such as Australia and Canada face identity problems and have negotiation in the same way as the immigrants do in the selected novels in this study.

6. The further Study can be made focusing on the Double Consciousness of the Whites in the East.
7. In place of the theorists applied in the Research of Hybridity, Nationalism and Transnationalism, more other theorists such as Gayatri Spivak, Aijaz Ahmad, Lawrence Buell, Vimal Dissanayake, Arif Dilrick, Valentina Mazzucato, Arjun Appadurai, Eliezer and Yitzhak Sternberg and E. J. Hobsbawn can be consulted and studied to explore the resistance of the colonized South Asians in postcolonial time in India.
8. This Research work leads to Further Study on Globalization, Cosmopolitanism, Postnationalism and so on.

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