

I. Representation of Female Protagonist in Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*

Racist practice takes institutionalized form in a society in which different cultural norms, life-styles and viewpoints cannot coexist harmoniously. In the society of Britain, the culture of the Bangladeshi immigrants and the hegemonic racist arrogance of the white come to the course of confrontation. Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* is a case in point. It dramatizes how dreadful the consequences of racism are. This research examines how racist practice occurs when people from different cultures live and interact one another. In Monica Ali's novel, *Brick Lane*, the Bangladeshi immigrants in London suffer from racist practice. They are confined in their own sequestered settlement.

In *Brick Lane*, the white employers put into practice racial discrimination. In the wake of the September 11 terrorist attack, the white people of London demonstrates anti-Islamic prejudice openly. Innocent immigrants are subjected into torturous experience. Karim is aggressively made the victim of anti-Islamic campaign. He feels so dehumanized and alienated that he could not help forming Muslim gang to respond to the white men's anti-Islamic campaign. Nazneen and Chanu get low pay not because they work for fewer hours but because they are treated as outsiders by the white inhabitants and employers of London. The racist arrogance of the British people is directed towards the Bangladeshi immigrants. They are discriminated, dehumanized and exploited because they are Muslims.

Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* dramatizes how Bangladeshi immigrants are subjected to vicious practice of racism. In London, they are deprived of getting peaceful and harmonious living conditions. Muslim immigrants fear the fate of being treated as terrorists by the white without any fault of their own. Karim and Chanu are subjected to a series of violence. Due to low pay for equal work and alienating social

practice, these immigrants often live in isolated estate community. Their children's fascination with the culture of the white stands in conflicting relation with their loyalty to their Muslim culture. Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* portrays how Bangladeshi immigrants fall victims to the racist arrogance of the white people. Honest and hardworking Karim is treated as terrorists. Chanu's family disintegrates due to a white man's forceful interest in his wife. These immigrants are denied access to the life of dignity, freedom, and sound social standing. The various outcome and implications of lingering vestiges of racism prevent them from achieving the lives of accomplishment and fulfillment.

Despite their hard work and sincerity, they are deprived of living decent life with freedom, justice and access to opportunities. Even the minimum rights of immigrants are violated flatly in London. To probe into this issue, the researcher dwells upon Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*. Even the wealthy and well-settled Bangladeshi immigrants like Mrs. Lovely do not ally with the white employers in inflicting racial discrimination among them. Only this aspect of discrimination is examined analytically in the novel, *Brick Lane* of Monica Ali. At the heart of the book lies a marvelous depiction of an adulterous affair. As a good Bengali wife, Nazneen does not enter lightly into her sexual adventure. Her lover is a fierce young Muslim who wants to radicalize the local community. He has deeply held beliefs against promiscuity. Karim comes to Nazneen's house day after day, bringing her the piecework for her sewing job.

Ali shows how the physical attraction that explodes between them destroys their moral expectations. She captures all the little details of Karim's attractiveness to Nazneen. But although she is so good at showing how this desire catches Nazneen unawares, the relationship between Nazneen and her husband is not given the short

shrill that one might expect in such a context. Ali has a deft comic touch. And at first Chanu seems to be not much more than a figure of fun. He is often mocked for his huge belly, his useless certificates for unimpressive qualifications, his crumpled trousers, his deluded ambitions, and the corns on his feet that poor Nazneen has to scrape away night after night. Ali paints a terrifically subtle portrait of how such a marriage is threatened in a culture in which a woman is encouraged to grow beyond it. He and Nazneen build a strange relationship of simultaneous closeness and apartness, how they hurt one another and also depend on one another.

The setting of *Brick Lane* is the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, a place in which most Bangladeshi immigrants are concentrated. However, Bangladeshis are not the only residents there. There are white people and black people living there or around. Nazneen has white neighbors: "In the flats immediately next door, there were white people" (304). Moreover, Bangladeshis meet people from different races when they carry out daily chores. When they go to shops, "a group of African girls tried on shoes [...] a white girl stood in front of a mirror turning this way and that" (392-94). In such a multi-racial society, racial issues cannot be overlooked. When Chanu talks about his plan to take his son back to Dhaka at Dr Azad's home, he refers to Britain as a racist society. No matter what makes Chanu think the place where he lives at the moment is a racist society, what cannot be denied is that the local residents think racial issues do exist in Brick Lane? It does not only exist there, it also brings so many effects that Chanu does not even want his son to grow up in this environment. He uses the word "rot" to indicate the influence it might exert on children. According to Chanu, Brick Lane is full of skinheads and drunks who fall into the category of Bad. In addition, children who grow up there are likely to lack due respect for their parents.

Chanu is talking about racists in Britain, but he cannot help showing his bias against Britain. He thinks the only way to keep his son from "rotting" is to take him back to Bangladesh. In his opinion, Bangladesh is a safe place for his child, away from the skinheads and drunks, and a proper environment for his son to grow up with respect to parents. Being aware of the discrimination from the British, Bangladeshis have prejudice against the British as well. That is the bilateral racism between natives and immigrants. In the book *Brick Lane*, Monica Ali does not talk about the racial issues specifically. But it can be detected through conversations and descriptions. Without knowledge of its culture and custom, one tends to judge a person by the appearance. When it comes to race, the skin color of the people is quickly noticed.

The troubled racial relation and racial politics are explored at length in most of narrative discourses created by the diasporic writers like Monica Ali and others Metropolitan writers. From the woes and agony of the immigrants to the problem of cultural assimilation, Ali's novels address the depth of human sufferings resulting from the corrupting practices of racism. Ali is the flourishing Bangladeshi writer who dwells in the metropolitan city of London. Though she adopts the metropolitan perspective, local Bangladeshi subject matters come recurrently in her representative novels. To Ali, Bangladesh is the hub of new and fresh literary subject matters. The subject matters that her novels handle range from communal riot, poverty, criminality, gang rape, prostitution, domestic violence and Islamic fundamentalism.

Monica Ali's novels including *Brick Lane* are so vivid and lifelike that they have received global accolade and acclamations. What charms readers at large is lucid mode of literary expression. Ali's literary nuance and expertise are approved and appreciated by a large number of critics. Focusing on the innovative nature of her

novel's local subject matter, Ishmael Reed, in *Brick Lane Babbles*, makes the following observation:

Monica Ali's loyalty to her native soil is clearly manifested in her choice of those subject matters and problems that have mushroomed in Bangladesh's society. Instead of depicting the lethargic and cliché ridden contents preferred by western readers, Ali tends to bring the local subject to the realm of international acknowledgement. Sometimes the question of the metropolitan perspective overriding the social reality comes in a puzzling way. But reality takes precedence over perspective no matter how many times perspective gains an upper hand. (27)

The proximity between the perspective and the content draws the attention of the critics. But the most striking aspect of Ali's literary affirmation is to achieve the lifelike characteristics of reality. Monica Ali affirms her responsibility to the oppressed and excluded groups and minorities. That is why she raises the burgeoning problems in her novels. Her finesse and nuance are unspoiled by obscurities and ambiguities.

The oppressive nature of patriarchy and its fatal effects are explored in the novel. Hasina is an exemplary female character in *Brick Lane*. She falls prey to the harmful forces of society in which she lives. She struggles to rise above the bondage of fatalistic forces. But the corrupt and ignominious forces of society cheat her. In *Monica's Vision and Vindication*, Ernest J. Gaines discloses the following remarks about how patriarchy in Bangladeshi society inflicts atrocity in women:

Hasina hopes to excel in the thing that tempts her naturally. She struggles to come out of the ambit of her dead mother's fatalistic

influence. But the lingering traces of patriarchal society in Bangladesh put her on the path of deviation. He is deviated from the sacred tie of marriage. Swayed by temptation of adultery, she leaves her husband. Her extramarital partner dumps her down. Shocked by her wrong decision, she struggles to earn her daily bread. But she is so humiliated that she is forced to be a prostitute. (37)

Patriarchal ideology is largely responsible for Hasina's moral ignominy and bankruptcy. Hasina's own gullibility and susceptibility are accountable for her moral ignominy. But the harsh pressures exerted by the patriarchal society of Bangladesh lead Hasina to the path of self-degradation. In this regard, it can surely be said that *Brick Lane* is a bold commentary of Monica Ali on the detrimental effect of patriarchy.

Structural balance is maintained tactfully in the novel, *Brick Lane*. Monica shows two different faces of two different societies. The letters of Hasina depicts the real Bangladesh and the predicament of Nazneen reflects the position of Bangladeshi immigrants in London. Focusing on this component of the novel, David Goldberg discloses these remarks:

Two different brands of realities are depicted in *Brick Lane*. One is the reality concerned with many women in Bangladesh and the other is the miserable conditions of Bangladeshi immigrants. Wherever women go and live, the world does not change for women. In the estate community of Bangladeshi in London, Nazneen is hassled by hardships and whims of her husband. In Bangladesh, Hasina is also affected badly by the oppressive nature of social structure. Both

Hasina and Nazneen are tempted by their extramarital affair. They are bored with their husbands. (47)

To free her from the charge of being subjectively biased to the portrayal of reality, Ali makes use of the technique of maintaining structural balance. For women, change in location does not bring change in the conditions of women. In London the rights of immigrant Bangladeshi women are not certified and safeguarded. Even in their own country, the position of Bangladeshi women and displaced minority are not safeguarded.

Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* is written to make the concerned authority of Bangladesh practically aware of how Bangladesh plunges into the vortex of insurmountable problems. If the state does not address these problems on time, country would become a failed state. Kamu Braithwaite makes the following explanatory remarks:

Major cities of Bangladesh are infested with troubles aplenty. These troubles consists of crime, urban robbery, gang rape, communal riot, domestic violence, Islamic fundamentalism, threat of terrorist attack, lack of nutrition to babies, increasing poverty, unemployment and various other troubles. National solidarity and individual's responsibility both are essential to the elimination of all these hurdles. In this situation, if anything becomes mostfatal flaw, it is disinterestedness on the part of those who are morally, and politically responsible to address such crises. (57)

Crime infested city of Bangladesh is portrayed as the most disgraceful area where the vulnerable people struggle to live. Though the author proposes

solution to the crises of Bangladeshi society, it is really challenging and tough to put those agenda in practice.

The psychic integrity of the victims of discrimination provoked by racism is likely to be broken. Assaulted by racism-backed discrimination, they are prone to nightmare, anxiety attack, hallucinatory condition and sinister premonition of being chased by an unknown person. This sort of condition is perfectly applicable universally in society where inequality lingers rampantly. Leo Robson makes the additional remarks regarding the effects of racism in society:

Racism is a classification system used to categorize humans into large and distinct population or groups by anatomical, cultural, ethnic, genetic, geographical, historical, linguistic, and social affiliation. People began to use the term to relate to observable physical traits. Such use promoted hierarchies favorable to differing ethnic groups. Social conceptions and groupings of races vary over time, involving folk taxonomies. (37)

The idea of classifying people belonging to different professional domains lies behind the politically motivated game of racial politics. There is a broad scientific agreement that essentialist and typological conceptualizations of race are untenable. Race theorists around the world continue to conceptualize race in widely differing ways.

Socioeconomic factors, in combination with early but enduring views of race, have led to considerable suffering within disadvantaged racial groups. The understanding of race was increasingly extended to denote not only noble families, but entire peoples. Matthew Boding briefly puts forward his view with regard to the inception of racist line of arrogance in the following extract:

However, the concept was still shaped by political concepts as opposed to biology. As an ethnological category, race is a modern idea. From the Renaissance onwards, study of the natural realm was increasingly distinguished from metaphysics. The pursuit of evidence became the paramount scientific occupation; empirical observation of difference supplanted unifying philosophies. (85).

Race is confidently taken by Boding as ethnological category. If so it is a new style of establishing sense of control and hegemony over the alienated vulnerable groups. Classical learning gradually lost its grip on the European mind. Racial differences became independent of political discourse, and instead were investigated as natural phenomena.

AnuradhaGoswami examines Ali and her popular work, *Brick Lane*. She takes Ali as that sort of author who relies on secondary sources due to her absence of direct and personal memories of her short time in Pakistan. Goswami makes the following remarks about Ali:

Ali is both Bangladeshi and British and as grown up in the country of the former colonists and therefore cannot be considered to be part of one or the other, East or West. She must be considered to be part of both worlds. It can be argued that a Third-world female might consider her to be westernized and, the Westernized woman might consider her to be in part oriental. Ali's multiculturalism can be traced to and, reflects upon the character development of Nazneen. Initially, Nazneen is a timid and observant housewife, eventually becoming an independent and strong individual. (73)

As contended by Goswami, Ali manifests these cultural and ethnic traits in both Eastern and Western culture. The core-structure or framework of the narrative is central to western based discourse on Islam and the oppression of Muslim women within Islamic society. The narrative can vary and told in several different ways, but most are western narratives of on Muslim women are in fact contradictive.

The ideas of othering and exclusion were popular during the nineteenth century. They still gained momentum in the twenty-first century. MuhamadKahf goes on to say that eastern scholars are beginning to challenge Western views on Muslim women by contesting the realities of their lives through modern history and social science. Kahf delivers the following remarks about this aspect of the novel:

Brick Lane does not suggest that the dress codes enforced onto Bangladeshi women are the main source of oppression. The nature of male Muslim dominance is shown through the psychological oppression on the part of Chanu on his wife and daughters and the physical oppression manifested by the violence against the antagonist, Razia. The Western Discourse the victimization of women is often symbolized through the use of the veil or the burqa and the segregation of women within Islamic society, which are believed to be comparative symbols of male Muslim oppression and female repression. (75)

Western notions of oppression contra repression are necessary components of Western Discourse in order to explain the Muslim woman in westernized terms. Oppression and repression are vital and important to Western Discourse, but not necessarily or entirely true within the varying Muslim societies in the world today.

These ideas stem from notions of how Islamic societies are founded, have developed and always seen to be the opposite.

Paul Smith detects the theme of cultural isolation in Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*. Smith argues that in the strange landscape of metropolitan city, immigrants are likely to face the music of cultural isolation. Smith dwells upon Brick Lane in the following citation:

Cultural isolation is one of main themes of *Brick Lane* and the author wants the reader to be aware of it at an early stage in the narrative. It can be argued that in chapter one Ali suggests to the reader that there are two types of cultural isolation to consider. She introduces her protagonist, Nazneen through her isolated struggle for survival soon after birth and the enforced isolation she must endure in the Tower Hamlets eighteen years later. Bengali culture dictates fate as the key factor to survival and her fate is to be isolated within the same culture in Britain (22).

Smith writes that younger Bangladeshi women born in Britain prefer to live outside of the more traditional Bengali areas. Generations of Bengali women are more ethnically dependent on the established Bangladeshi communities. Monica Ali creates clear contrasts and comparisons between the three generations of Bengali women both serving to make Nazneen unique and the two women stereotypical.

Although all these critics and reviewers examined this novel, *Brick Lane*, from different points of view and then arrived at several findings and conclusions, none of them notice the issue of racist practice from which Bangladeshi immigrants in London suffer. Since, the topic of the critique of racism is untouched and unexplored; the researcher claims that it is the fresh, new and original topic. With hope of achieving

better economic prospect, Bangladeshi immigrants immigrate to London. But they do not get conducive environment for the fulfillment of their dream. They are subjected to dehumanizing and atrocious practices like embarrassment. They are denied access to decent life with dignity, freedom and happiness. The racist mentality of the British people is directed towards the immigrants. By using the critical race theory and the theory of racism, the researcher probes into this topic.

Racism is a politically motivated and manipulated strategy to assert the hegemony and supremacy of one race over other. When racism takes an institutionalized form, it becomes a serious stumbling block. Racism is the biased programs to assert the superiority and hegemony of certain groupings of people. As claimed by Leo Robson, "Race is not a wrong conception. It is a fixed category which makes a person distinct and genealogically identifiable" (35). When the notion of race is used to dominate, exclude and oppress people of different socio-cultural and religious background, racism comes into practice.

Institutionalized racism lays the groundwork for the various discriminatory practices. Racism offers such a platform in which people belonging to the powerful race victimize vulnerable groups of people from different race. Racist practice colludes with mushrooming discriminatory practices. When racism-backed discrimination pervades in society, the victims of such discriminatory practices are culturally traumatized. In Robson's words, "the psychic integrity of the victims of discrimination provoked by racism is likely to be broken. Assaulted by racism-backed discrimination, they are prone to nightmare, anxiety attack, hallucinatory condition and sinister premonition of being chased by an unknown person" (72). This sort of condition is perfectly applicable in the novel *Brick Lane*.

As claimed by Leo Robson, "race is a classification system used to categorize humans into large and distinct population or groups by anatomical, cultural, ethnic, genetic, geographical, historical, linguistic, and social affiliation" (54). People began to use the term to relate to observable physical traits. Such use promoted hierarchies favorable to differing ethnic groups. Social conceptions and groupings of races vary over time, involving folk taxonomies. Even though there is a broad scientific agreement that essentialist and typological conceptualizations of race are untenable, scientists around the world continue to conceptualize race in widely differing ways.

Since the second half of the 20th century, the associations of race with the ideologies and theories that grew out of the works of many anthropologists. When people define and talk about a particular conception of race, they create a social reality through which social categorization is achieved. According to Arthur Arnold, "Social constructs develop within various legal, economic, and sociopolitical contexts. They may be the effect of major social situations. While race is understood to be a social construct" (51) by many, most scholars agree that race has real material effects in the lives of people through institutionalized practices of preference and discrimination.

Socioeconomic factors, in combination with early but enduring views of race, have led to considerable suffering within disadvantaged racial groups. As Europeans discovered foreign parts, the understanding of race was increasingly extended to denote not only noble families, but entire peoples. However, the concept was still shaped by political concepts as opposed to biology. As an ethnological category, "race is a modern idea. From the Renaissance onwards, study of the natural realm was different from metaphysics"(Boding 175). Boding says that "The pursuit of evidence became the important scientific occupation. It employs empirical observation of

difference supplanted unifying philosophies" (85). Classical learning gradually lost its grip on the European mind. As a result, racial differences became independent of political discourse, and instead were investigated as natural phenomena.

Racism is the organized and institutionalized practice to exclude, deprive and dehumanize those who come from different culture. Race is not bad in itself. But when the notion of race is used as a tool to discriminate, dehumanize, embarrass and deprive racially and culturally different people, it becomes race. The present researcher assumes that it is relevant to take additional theoretical insights from critical race theory. The researcher mobilizes essential theoretical insights of Leo Robson from his work; *Reflection on Racial Politics*. Matthew Boding's *Variations on Racism* furnishes supplementary insights related to the methodological framework. With this methodological conception, the researcher proceeds to produce a thorough analysis of the text.

Slaves were punished by whipping, shackling, hanging, beating, burning, mutilation, branding, and imprisonment. Punishment was most often meted in response to disobedience or perceived infractions. But sometimes abuse was carried out simply to re-assert the dominance of the master or overseer over the slave. Treatment was usually harsher on large plantations. According to Arthur Brown, "Plantations are often managed by overseers and owned by absentee slaveholders. Slave-men were required to pick 80 pounds-per-day of cotton, while women were required to pick 70 pounds" (37). If any slave failed in his or her quota, they were given lashes of the whip for each pound they were short. The whipping post stood right next to the cotton scales.

Because of the power relationships of the institution, slave women in the United States were at high risk for rape and sexual abuse. Many slaves fought back

against sexual attacks, and some died resisting. Others carried psychological and physical scars from the attacks. Sexual abuse of slaves was partially rooted in a patriarchal Southern culture which treated black women as property or chattel. Southern culture strongly policed against sexual relations between white women and black men on the purported grounds of racial purity but, before the late 18th century, the many mixed race slaves and slave children showed that white men had often taken advantage of slave women.

This research has three chapters. The first chapter introduces issue, elaborates hypothesis and quotes the different views of critics and reviewers. Typical characteristics of the author and some of her works are discussed. The first chapter mentions the point of departure and the purpose of the research. The second chapter deals with the theory of racism and racial identity as well as this chapter is also concerned with the thorough analysis of the text. The researcher analyzes the text by adopting the perspective of race and Identity. The last chapter projects the conclusive findings of the research.

Chapter II

Implications of Racism in Ali's *Brick Lane*

Plenty of racist practices against the Bangladeshi immigrants in Britain are described in Monica Ali's novel, *Brick Lane*. The whole novel is projective of how nonwhite immigrants struggle to survive with hope and self-esteem in the midst of racial bias, and other exclusionary practice. Bangladeshi immigrants are forced to face hostile the conditions in the British society. In the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, most of the Bangladeshi immigrants are concentrated. However, Bangladeshis are not the only residents there. There are white people and black people living there or around. Nazneen has white neighbors. Bangladeshis meet people from different cultures when they carry out daily chores. When they go to shops, a group of African girls tried on shoes. A white girl stands in front of a mirror turning this way. In such a multi-cultural society, racial issues cannot be overlooked. When Chanu talks about his plan to take his son back to Dhaka at Azad's home, he refers to Britain as a racially troubled society which is pregnant with the vast possibility of the emergence exclusion, segregation and marginalization. The following piece of the narrator's monologue is indicative of how deep-rooted the issue of racism is:

Self-esteem and the golden days of living with comfort are the far-fetched dreams of people like me. I don't need very much. Just enough for the Dhaka house and some left over for Ruku's education. I don't want him to rot here with all the skin heads and drunks. I don't want him to grow up in this racist society. I don't want him to talk back to his mother. I want him to respect his father. The only way is to take him back home. (111)

Chanu does not even want his son to grow up in this environment. He uses the word rot to indicate the influence it might exert on children. According to Chanu, Brick Lane is full of skinheads and drunks who fall into the category of bad. In addition, children who grow up there are likely to lack due respect for their parents. Chanu is talking about racists in Britain, but he cannot help showing his bias against Britain. He thinks the only way to keep his son from rotting is to take him back to Bangladesh.

Racism is often used in a loose and unreflective way. It is used to describe the hostile or negative feelings of one ethnic group or people toward another. Race, in particular, is the classification of the human beings into distinguishable groups that are based on physical characteristics. There is no biological basis for "distinguishing human groups along the lines of race. The socio-historical categories are employed to differentiate among groups. These categories reveal themselves to be imprecise if not completely arbitrary" (Winant 172). Racism is misbehavior of a group of people on the basis of color. It is a blinker hatred, envy or prejudice.

When racist practices reach apex, the victims appear to be anonymous. In the state of anonymity, the victims of slavery and institutionalized racism seek their identity. Their identity is solely based on the origin, culture and tradition of the victims. In this situation, the historic-cultural tradition and the ground reality at the present are often taken into consideration while exploring and affirming racial identity.

Racism is founded on the belief in one's racial supremacy over other. It involves a generalized lack of knowledge or experience as it applies to negative determined. Therefore, it is inherently unchangeable. The concept of race was originally introduced in the field of natural history merely "as a convenient way to

refer to groups of human beings in different geographic locations not with the intention of separating human beings into physiologically distinct groups" (Benjamin 27).

Nazneen feels guilt that she had done crime of adultery. She deceives Chanu. Ali depicts Nazneen to be or not to be situation that she was trapped between her loyalties to Chanu her commitment towards children and her love and desire. She could not understand whom to choose, "Chanu as unsuccessful, unromantic man or Karim confident, young and intellectual man through whom Nazneen realizes her sexual identity. Karim enhances her identity as intellectual and confident woman" (34). The sense of guilt leads loneliness and for the comfort Nazneen reads Qur'an. In his opinion, "She looked for familiar passages; the words that she knew would give comfort. In her panic, she could find none and the words on the page kept her out, hide their meaning and pushed her away" (Ali 359). Immigrant peoples' dream is to become successful and to earn money, achieve high degrees in abroad.

Chanu has all these dreams. He comes to the U.K. to achieve high degree and for settlement and for carrier migrates to London. Chanu Ahmed was a middle class man. At the outset, he is a confident person. He speaks English, reads quotes from British literature, has a degree from British University, considers himself as civilized on the other hand he prohibits Nazneen to learn English, bans her to go outside, to work in factory. He brought sewing machine at home so Nazneen will work in home, whereas Chanu claims that "I don't stop you from doing anything. I am Westernized now" (39). Chanu tries to maintain native culture but on the contrast he drinks alcohol. It seems that he was trapped between double identities; he was not firm regarding maintaining natal land's culture.

Race divides human beings into categories that loom in our psyches. Racial differences create cavernous divides in our psychological understandings of whom we are and who we should be. Constantine asserts:

Race is indeed a pre-eminently socio-historical concept. Racial categories and the meaning of race are given concrete expression by the specific social relations and historical context in which they are embedded. Racial meanings have varied tremendously over time and between societies. Racism continues to tear at the soul of America. Understanding the definition and impact of racism is critical to all citizens of this country, from parents to educators to politicians. (22)

Individual racism, institutional racism and cultural racism are three types of racism that can trouble our search for racial identity.

A great number of immigrants face racial discrimination, which leads to separating and organizing gangs based on nationality and religion. The mutual disrespect negatively influences the relations inside immigrant families. The national and religious problems are presented in *Brick Lane* in connection with the character of Karim. He was born in England and is toughened by having grown up in the city: "When I was at school, we used to be chased home every day. People are beaten up the whole time. Then we got together, turned the tables. One of us got touched, they all pay for it" (279). His father worked as a bus conductor for twenty-five years and had to retire because of the nerves: "Kids giving him cheek. Men giving aggro. Got a tooth knocked out. Someone was sick on his shoes" (247). Karim does not comprehend why his father calls him so often: "And what's he ringing up for anyway? Hasn't got anything to say to me" (246). When Karim was a child, his father had to take care of his ill wife.

Karim did not understand why "she was always lying down if he was around, and accused his father for not being a man" (323). In his childhood Karim is evidently searching for a male model, and his father did not fit the little boy's idea of a strong protective man. Karim meets Nazneen as a middleman for his uncle's garment business delivering her sewing work. He prefers speaking English to Bengali, in Bengali he stammers. He is a politically active person and organizes the first meetings of similarly radical individuals. The first meeting is held after the Christian Lion Hearts group of radicals has delivered leaflets to homes of Bangladeshi people.

Individual racism is conceptualized as a person's race prejudice based on biological considerations. It involves actual behavior that is discriminatory in nature. Specifically, Jones defines the individual racist as "one who considers the black people as a group, who are inferior to whites because of physical traits" (143). He believes that these physical traits are determinants of social behavior and of moral or intellectual qualities. An important consideration is that "all judgments of superiority are based on the corresponding traits of white people as norms of comparison" (41). Jones specifies a second form of racism commonly called institutional racism. It includes the intentional or unintentional manipulation or toleration of institutional policies.

Specifically, Jones defines institutional racism as "those established laws, customs, and practices which systematically reflect and produce racial inequalities in American society" (65). If racist consequences accrue to institutional laws, the institution is racist whether or not the individuals maintaining those practices have racist intentions. Institutional racism can be "either overt or covert and either intentional or unintentional" (438). Jones's third form of racism is cultural racism,

which is the more subtle form of racism and the most pervasive and insidious. This form of racism includes the individual and institutional expression of the superiority of one race's cultural heritage.

Jones defines cultural racism as "comprising the cumulative effects of a racialized worldview, based on belief in essential racial differences that favor the dominant racial group over others" (47). These effects are suffused throughout the culture via institutional structures, ideological beliefs, and personal everyday actions of people in the culture. As claimed by Allport, civilized men have gained notable mastery over energy, matter, and inanimate nature generally, and are "rapidly learning to control physical suffering and premature death. But, by contrast, we appear to be living in the Stone Age so far as our handling of human relationships is concerned" (132). Psychological and physical violence toward persons based on prejudice represents a world tragedy.

The content of the leaflets irritates the Muslim inhabitants: "For a history lesson your son will be studying Africa or India or some other dark and distant land. English people, he will learn, are wicked racists. Christianity is being gently slaughtered. When the truth is that Islam is a religion of hate and intolerance, it is unbearable to listen" (268). Karim initiates writing similarly sharp leaflets to respond. As the chairman of Bengali Tigers, a Muslim organization, he openly proclaims to support fighting Muslims in Chechnya, Egypt and other countries, where race and religious riots remain.

With Karim, Nazneen gains new knowledge about the political situation and religious clashes between radical Muslims and Christians. He invites her and her husband to come to the meetings. Nazneen does not mention this offer in front of Chanu, because he would not go, and decides to attend the meeting on her own will,

although the decision to go is a painful process: "She was tired today but she was restless. The fridge was stacked with Tupperware and there was no real excuse to cook. She washed a few socks in the kitchen sink, and then she went out" (251). The meeting is an example how a persuasive spokesman can radicalize and unite a group of ordinary people: find a powerful name, generalize the purpose of the organization and have a spiritual leader. This constant discrepancy of his attitudes is evident in his clothes. When he starts dating Nazneen, he wears jeans, trainers, shirts and a gold necklace rather than traditional clothes, he uses a mobile and his hair is very short. After 11 September 2001, when Karim prefers wearing "panjabi pajama and a skullcap" (409), he combines the traditional clothes with "a sleeveless fleece and big boots with the laces left undone at the top. The fleece and the boots were expensive" (409).

As asserted by Allport, "We all have to be involved in fighting prejudice, whether it is focused on racial or ethnic minorities (racism); women (sexism); gay, lesbian, or bisexual persons (homophobia and heterosexism); the elderly (ageism); or some other point of difference" (37). Allport once wrote, "The world is too dangerous to live in—not because of the people who do evil, but because of the people who sit and let it happen" (134). When prejudice takes aggressive form, it can degenerate into racist practice, which destabilizes social integrity.

The bilateral racism between natives and immigrants is the most haunting social disgrace. Without knowledge of its culture and custom, one tends to judge a person by the appearance. When it comes to race, the skin color of the people is quickly noticed. Speaking of color, Frantz Fanon makes a quotation from Sir Alan Burns's *Color Prejudice* while he is talking about the racial prejudice:

Racism is nothing more than the unreasoning hatred of one race for another, the contempt of the stronger and richer peoples for those whom they consider inferior to themselves, and the bitter resentment of those who are kept in subjection and are so frequently insulted. As color is the most obvious outward manifestation of race it has been made the criterion by which men are judged, irrespective of their social or educational attainments. The light-skinned races have come to despise all those of a darker color. (133)

Because color is the most obvious outward manifestation of racially charged culture, discrimination often begins with color. But the Muslim immigrants are not defeated in their search for racial equality. They seek to transform their lots with unflinching realism. The white people tend to put Africa and India together, where people are darker-skinned than themselves. Without mentioning Bangladesh, Chanu is still sensitive to the idea of countries like India, which is often connected with his own country Bangladesh. In his opinion, Bangladesh is a safe place for his child, away from the skinheads and drunks. It consists of proper environment for his son to grow up with respect to parents. Being aware of the discrimination from the British, Bangladeshis have prejudice against the British as well.

Todorov argues that the word racism, in its usual sense, "actually designates two very different things. On the one hand, it is a matter of physical characteristics different from our own; on the other hand, it is matter of ideology, a doctrine concerning human races" (Todorov 213). Du Bois provides the bleak picture of the Blacks living in white society. He suggests with the white, the strife of the Black while staying in society and studying in schoolhouse was so fierce. He argues:

With other black boys the strife was not so fiercely sunny. Their youth shrink into tasteless sycophancy or into silent hatred of the pale world about them and mocking distrust of everything white; or wasted itself in a bitter cry. Why did God make me an outcast and a stranger in mine own house? The "Shade of the Prison-house" closed round about us all: walls strait and stubborn to the whitest, but relentlessly narrow, tall, and unscalable to sons of night who must plod darkly against the stone.

(5)

To be black, in that sense, means to be so in exclusively white terms. A black living in the white society suffers from the double consciousness- the double standards of a citizen, where one is born an American but discovers that one is not fully a citizen by virtue of being racially designated black. This leads to the notion of irreconcilable doubleness, where being black does not equal being an American yet much of what is original about being an American. Then, there occurs a crisis in identity and the self-respect of the African American.

The whites impose feelings on skin color and categorize people according to skin-color. To Chanu, the skin color of people matters a lot. It is not an enjoyable idea for him to categorize Indians into the same group as Africans. Working among the white people, Chanu has many opportunities to experience racism. Cultural exoticism can be a barrier to further development in his career. He tells Nazneen about his thoughts of not getting his promotion, for which he has high expectations at first. Obviously, Nazneen accepts all his ideas of racial discrimination. She tells her friend, Razia:

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. It is what Chanu has concluded about the phenomenon of the hybridization of culture from all his decades of working among the white people. (72)

The white people are not willing to promote a non-white person because they are not of the same color. For the white people, Bangladeshi people are inferior. The saying "it will take him longer than any white man" may be just another way to say that it is impossible for the Bangladeshi people to get a promotion if there is any white man waiting on the list.

There are changes in the way the idea and the meaning of the race are rendered in recent times. As a result of changes that have appeared both inside and outside of the country, race is rendered differently. The meaning and representation of race politics have been greatly changed and its strategic importance relative to other aspect of government has been formed. "The theme of primal racial difference is not being articulated into political languages of nationality, culture and belonging in the simple exclusionary ways that it was not so very long ago" (Du Bois 227).

The discrimination is operated through newer strategies and policies such as deployment of positive of images and ideological and hegemonic racism. Omi state:

The continuing persistence of racial ideology suggests that these racial myths and stereotypes cannot be exposed as such in popular imagination. They are, we think, too essential, too integral, to the maintenance of social order. Of course, particular meaning, stereotypes and can change, but the presence of a system of racial

meaning and stereotypes, of racial ideology, seems to be permanent feature of American culture. (26)

In the recent times, the racial ideology shows the African American people in a positive way so that they can fit in the democratic social order of the U. S. society. They are not treated physically as harshly as they were treated before. Now, in the literature they are shown with the positive color like having knowledge, courage and calmness. This way of treating the people with some positive images is an identity politics that intends to keep the social order smooth.

When Shahana wears western cloths, Chanu gets angry and tells her "put on some decent clothes" (268). But by wearing British attire she wants to identify with her British friend. Chanu forces his daughters to recite Bengali poem "My Golden Bengal" in front of guest, Shahana hates Chanu for this behavior. Chanu did not like that his daughters are affected by western culture so he wants to go back in order to save from the effect of western culture. Not only Chanu but also Razia Iqbal also objects on cloths of her daughter. She complains that "Shefali tried to go out of the house wearing some little thing like this" (242). Tariq, son of Razia finds solution for the identity crisis in the form of drug. Tariq gets rebellious and hysterical and sold furniture, T.V. Video to earn money for drug, Razia express her plight about Tariq "How should he know what he wants, How can we know anything now" (388). The following extract is illustrative of how Bangladeshi immigrants in London are forced to deviate from the track of normalcy due to racism:

Ali depict immigrant's plea along with the panorama of the textile workers who are addicted by drug, alcohol because of unemployment in the twentieth century in London as well as in Bangladesh. Karim,

who is born in London but having Bangladeshi origin, He is a chairperson of the racist group 'Bengal Tigers' which fought for Muslim right and culture. Karim was affects by western culture Nazneen observes that when he spoke in Bengali he stammered.

(222)

The narrator establishes 'Bengal Tiger' group second generation displays their Muslim mendacity and racism in London but Karim cannot locate himself. He is caught between rush for recognition and racial segregation.

In American society, most of the blacks fall into the underclass and lower class as they were discriminated since their arrival at New Land. Since then onward, their aspirations to clamber up a higher rung of economic and social ladder have been overlooked in terms of color. The monogenesis structure of the American society overlooks the diverse social realities-reality of minority, ethnicity, race, immigrants. Clarifying this reality, Tyson outlines:

What about members of middle class? Are they economically oppressed or economically privileged. They have more financial stability than the lower classes, yet they are often hard hit by economic recessions and usually have good reason to worry about their financial future; they benefit from institutionalized forms of economic security, such as good medical insurance and pension plans but they shoulder an enormous tax burden relative to their income.

(51)

In a racist and discriminatory society, the culture and the aspirations of the working class are always under-theorized and subjugated. Extreme state of insecurity and the

recurrent fear of being abused are two factors that contribute to the victimization of the vulnerable groups.

There must have been a number of signs showing prejudice in his working environment as Chanu reaches this conclusion of racism. However, the second interpretation is the opposite of the assumption about the working environment. They have shown no racial discrimination against Chanu. Chanu does not get the promotion because he is not qualified to get it. He talks about racial discrimination because he does not want to admit his professional incompetence. Furthermore, Chanu himself has a sense of inferiority while working with his white colleagues. This is a symptom of self-doubt of the inferior people. The conversation takes place at the kitchen where Nazneen is doing dishes. Chanu talks to Nazneen:

You see, he said, a frequent opener although often she did not see, it is the white underclass, like Wilkie, who are most afraid of people like me. To him, and people like him, we are the only thing standing in the way of them sliding totally to the bottom of the pile. As long as we are below them, then they are above something. If they see us rise then they are resentful because we have left our proper place. That is why you get the phenomenon of the National Front. They can play on those fears to create racial tensions, and give these people a superiority complex. (38)

The white people would not like the non-white people like Chanu to leave their proper place. They are supposed to be at the bottom of the pile and make the white people feel superior. As long as the non-whites are in their position, they feel secure. They are sure that they can never be overtaken by the non-whites because they have the inborn advantage that is light skin.

Defining double consciousness, Du Bois argues:

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 twoness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two reconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.

(5)

What Du Bois argues is that double consciousness is a situation in which an African American sees his self from the perspective of an American. He finds two selves: American and African. And this twoness leaves him in bewilderment. The positioning and recognition of these stereotypes has been immensely useful. It enables to detect structural patterns of prejudice imbricate in society.

The Muslim immigrants need to wait for many things. In a community full of brown people, the black people should wait for the brown. It is the black people's profession, or it could be called their obligation. It is just like the white man's privilege over non-white people in promotion. If it was a family of whites waiting outside patiently, it would be strange. But people take it for granted that the Islamic people should give way to others and wait. The following extract is suggestive of the

confused conditions of the minds of those Islamic immigrants who struggle to dwell in London:

Chanu does not try to keep his voice down, but he tries to address his speech on the Africans to all the passengers on the bus. He must have felt he is superior because he does not have to be as polite as to his white boss. He is superior to the black man. It seems to be widely accepted as Chanu has the chance to make such a bold speech in public. In the meantime, it seems the conductor has to be responsible for his blackness and his ancestry. (129)

The attribute of being a Muslim is imposed with others' comments. The black man seems have to make sure that the commentators have enjoyed themselves in the process of remarking his blackness. The situation of the other nonwhite is equally pathetic and politically problematical.

Regarding the African American family tradition, Moynihan argues that at the heart of the deterioration of the fabric of African American society is "the deterioration of the African American family. It is the fundamental source of the weakness of the black community" (52). In essence, "The Negro community has been forced into a matriarchal structure which, because it is so out of line with the rest of the American society, seriously retards the progress of the groups as a whole" (29). Moynihan argues that African American family believes in the matriarchal structure and it is the cause of their regression.

Moynihan's point is that mothers work inside the house and fathers do outside the house. During the period of servitude, African family traditions, which varied according to national origin and religion, could not be replicated in the new world after Africans were forced into slavery. The slave trade was responsible for

breaking up African families. Husbands, wives, and children were liable to be sold separately because U. S. Law did not legally recognize their families. Enslaved Africans were denied a secure family life. Because enslaved men and women were property and could not legally marry a permanent family could not be a guaranteed part of an African American slave's life. They had no right to live or stay together, no right to their own children.

Living with different values and traditions, people hold different opinions on the same matter. For Bangladeshi immigrants in Britain, life is not easy. Chanu describes this life as immigrant tragedy. He explains to Mrs. Azad:

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. I'm talking about the feelings of alienation engendered by a society where racism is prevalent. I'm talking about the terrific struggle to preserve one's sanity while striving to achieve the best for one's family. I'm talking. (113)

The Islamic society takes women's silence as the manifestation of deserving feminine virtue. Any show of audacity and departure from the established norm is taken as the violent sense of threat to the integrity of society.

It was common for slave parents and children to live apart. Parents could not protect their children from the will of the master, who could separate them at any time. About one third of slave families suffered permanent separation caused by the sale of family members to distant regions. Ball Jeremy makes the following remarks in this regard:

Even after slavery was virtually abolished after 1852 in the northern states which meant that African Americans could legally establish families in the north, African American families in the North faced discrimination and poverty, and worried about being kidnapped by slave catchers. They had problem of maintaining their family ties. Mothers and fathers both worked so their children could become educated. Only, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century the ideas of affectionate marriages and loving, sentimental relations with children become dominant in African American family life. (77)

These attitudes first took hold among the urban, educated wealthy and middle classes, and later spread to rural poorer Americans. This change was due to the growth and increasing sophistication of the economy, which meant that economic issues became less pressing for families and production moved outside the home to specialized shops and factories.

The American Negro family has been "characterized as a matriarchy so often that the assertion is widely accepted as a truth rather than a proposition still in need of empirical evidence and critical analysis" (Ball 57). The fact is indisputable that father-absent families are relatively more frequent among Negroes. The conception, however, usually implies that even when a father is present, the mother is the dominant member of the intact Negro family.

By exploring the theme of absentee fatherhood, African American discourses "give a corrective response to the mainstream culture which thinks African American family values and the parental care along the line of matriarchal structure" (44). According to this, "A child identity is determined through the line of the mother"

(Ball 65). Father is absent in the family, for he has to go for the external works outside the family.

According to Ball, that family is the vertical transfer of a bloodline, of titles and entitlements, of real estate and the prerogatives of cold cash. It descends from fathers to sons and in the supposedly free exchange of affectionate ties between a male and female of his choice. It becomes the mythically revered privileges of a free and freed community. Ball says:

In that sense, African peoples in the historic Diaspora had nothing to prove, if the point had been that they were not capable of family, since it is stunningly evident. For instance, that Africans were not only capable of the concept and the practice of family, including slaves but in modes of elaboration and naming that at least as complex as those of the nuclear in the west. (75)

According to Citation, in the African American family tradition, child rearing is viewed in terms of motherly devotion. And the male are supposed to take on the other external burdens. The following lines mirror how the bodies of Muslim women become the site where aggression and exploitation occur:

I looked behind Chanu and saw that dear Nazneen, the fifth child of our mother, was discretely manipulating the medical device that captured her body's waste. The device was well-hidden under her dress, but the anxious Chanu had formed the habit of compulsively checking and rechecking the appliance. Chanu had needed a colostomy, and would never regain control over all her bodily functions. (51)

Physical torture and incarceration are frequently given setbacks to the women of Bangladesh. Nazneen is the pathetic victim who endured everything because she is trained to endure from her upbringing. Women like Chanu do not have the power to raise their voice against injustice and atrocity. The women who are victimized and who want to raise their voices are not enabled, encouraged and empowered. That is why the scope of freedom for the women of Saudi Arab is limited. The Islamic ladies who suffered at the hands of their husbands are from the royal families or elites.

The model of racial identity is originally developed for African Americans to understand the black experience in the United States. Tina Q. Richardson contends:

The individual ideally moves from a complete unawareness of race through embracing black culture exclusively toward a commitment to many cultures and addressing the concerns of all oppressed groups. The model of racial identity is helpful in outlining racial identity as a dynamic progression, as influenced by those in a particular individual's ethnic group as well as those outside it. Grounded in the context of the civil rights movement, this model is problematic. (147)

Richardson starts from the premise that before blacks experience identity, they are first unaware of their race and the race of others. He describes cycles of racial identity development as a lifelong, continuously changing process for blacks. He theorizes that individuals move through angry feelings about whites and develop a positive black frame of reference.

Color prejudice, culture clashes, and religious intolerance are some of the burgeoning problems faced by immigrants and expatriates in London. In the midst of these challenges, most of the Islamic immigrants try to search for hybrid identity. The

possibility of cultural pluralism is tainted with racial politics. The western values tend to be open while the Bangladeshi culture is more conservative. Having come to the new country, Bangladeshis have to tackle all the issues challenging their traditions.

Thirteen years of Nazneen's life after Raqib's death are described only in a fragmentary way as flashbacks in Hasina's letters. When Nazneen gives birth to Shahana, Hasina replies: "May daughter be as sweet as the mother" (165). After Bibi is born, she writes: "God bless me. Another niece! I think of her. I think of Shahana. Send photo of both"(175). Chanu's efforts concerning finding a respectable job are also reflected in her letters sounding ironically without meaning to: "Your husband is very good at finding jobs. What is Leisure Center? Is it Government job?" (178). From her remark, we learn about Nazneen's nervous problems when her elder daughter starts going to school: "If doctor gives pills you must take even in spite I do not know what kind of pill can cure disease of sadness. When you get used to Shahana being out from house you feeling like your old self again" (184).

Ideally fluid boundary of identity leads to a realistic perception of one's racial identity and to bicultural success. Richardson relates black identity directly to white people in a way that moves individual black identity from the unconscious to the conscious. To quote Richardson:

This model clearly delineates that when blacks brush up against white culture and negative differential treatment by others, feelings of difference are triggered and subsequently a consciousness of racial identity is as well. What is helpful in Parham's model is a sense of progression. In addition, the model outlines a movement from an unconscious to a conscious racial identity. Problematic in Parham's

model is his identification of unavoidable exposure to racial difference as the primary trigger for the development of racial identity.

Those who seek to construct race-based identity believe that the primary trigger for individual racial identity is immersion in one's own racial group and transference of a racial self through that immersion. Richardson's model presupposes the existence of white superiority and individual, cultural, and institutional racism. Primarily, individuals can be in more than one stage at a time.

The co-existence of two different nations is reflected in the novel from various points of view. Chanu, Nazneen's husband, and Karim, her lover, represent two generations of Bangladeshi immigrants. Chanu is twenty years older than Nazneen, grew up in Bangladesh and came to Britain to earn money and return home as a rich man. Karim is ten years younger than Nazneen, he was born in England, and pays attention to the political situation of Muslims in the world and becomes a founder of a radical religious group.

Chanu is ambitious, has a university degree from Dhaka and in Britain he has attended many courses to improve his skills. When he came to London, his dream was to become 'respectable' not only in the Bangladeshi community, but also by the British. He wished "to be a British civil servant. I was going to sit all the exams and be a High Flyer, Top Earner, Head of Department, Permanent Secretary, Cabinet Secretary, Right-Hand Bloody Man of the Bloody Prime Minister" (406). Chanu knows the works of leading philosophers, cites Shakespeare and other English poets, but he does not have the opportunity to use his knowledge. He plans to increase the education of his people by establishing a public library, but he is not able to finish the project. His dreams are never realized. He gradually loses his ambitions, works as a

taxi driver or rather, a fine collector, and the decline is described indirectly by the slight gradual changes of his clothes.

Benjamin instead refers to the status of white racial identity. His first three statuses outline how a white individual progresses away from a racist frame before moving to the next three statuses. Benjamin's model is helpful in outlining interracial exposure as a powerful trigger for the development of racial identity. Benjamin asserts his position thus:

Problematic in this model is Helms's confusion of an individual's development toward a nonracist frame with development of a racial identity. His premise is that racial identity for whites is about their perceptions, feelings, and behaviors toward blacks rather than about the development and consciousness of an actual white racial identity. Racial identity models all discuss what we would describe as an intersection between racial perceptions of others and racial perception of self. (67)

Victims' perceptions of others are important and act as triggers for development and consciousness. There is great value in the consideration of racial and ethnic identity for oneself and groups of individuals. The African American has absorbed many of the beliefs and values of the dominant white culture, including the notion that white is right and black are wrong.

At the beginning, when Nazneen marries Chanu, "he polished his shoes. He polished his briefcase. Those were the days when he talked of when. When the promotion would come" (102). During the following years his style changes: "He had on his green anorak. The one with the snorkel hood. His trousers were shiny at the knee, and the sole of one shoe was coming unstitched" (101). After his numerous

professional failures Chanu concentrates on his last aim: to return to Dhaka with his family and live in Bangladesh.

Although Chanu considers himself not to be bound by traditions or religion, he loves his native country, and follows the rules. He does not allow his wife to go alone along the streets: "She did not go out. Why should you go out? And I will look like a fool" (39). He does the shopping: "Chanu would push the pram and she would walk a step behind ... at the shops, Chanu would buy vegetables" (90). He is an excellent cook but never helps her in the kitchen and he believes that Nazneen does not need to attend the English course because she will never speak with British people. Later her daughters, Shahana and Bibi, become her English teachers. He loves Nazneen and their children but he is not able to express his feelings in words. When Nazneen wishes to go to work with Razia, Chanu does not agree but buys a sewing machine for her to work at home.

Though the internalization of negative Black Stereotypes may be outside of his or her conscious awareness, the individual seeks to assimilate and be accepted by Whites. In this regard, Wilson makes the following observation:

Instances of social rejection by White friends or colleagues (or reading new personally relevant information about racism) may lead the individual to the conclusion that many Whites will not view him or her as an equal. Faced with the reality that he or she cannot truly be White, the individual is forced to focus on his or her identity as a member of a group targeted by racism. This stage is characterized by the simultaneous desire to surround oneself with visible symbols of one's racial identity and an active avoidance of symbols of Whiteness.

(41)

White-focused anger dissipates so much of the person's energy who is directed toward his or her own group and self-exploration. The result of this exploration is an emerging security in a newly defined and affirmed sense of self. While still maintaining his or her connections with black peers, the internalized individual is willing to establish meaningful relationships with Whites. At this moment, even the whites acknowledge and are respectful of his or her self-definition. The individual is also ready to build coalitions with members of other oppressed groups.

Hasina works in a garment factory in Dhaka after she runs away from her lover. There she meets Aleya who makes money for her sons to get proper education, despite her angry husband: "Last month she best worker in factory and get bonus. They give a sari and for this sari she takes beating. ... The husband says he will beat twice each day until she tell name of the man" (164). Working women from the garment factories are often compared with prostitutes and Hasina's neighbor, who feels ashamed of the presence of Hasina reveals, this fact to her: "Well they [men] see a girl go around like that. And then they find out her a garment girl. Do you want that I take a stick and draw it here on the dirt for you?" (160). when Abdul, one of the garment factory clerks, starts accompanying Hasina to her house, it is Hasina who is discredited and punished by sacking: "Pretty girl eh? You boys! Have to get a little practice in before marriage eh?" (169). after she loses her job Hasina really becomes a prostitute: "They put me out form factory for untrue reason and due to they put me out the reason have come now as actual truth. Hussain still looking out for me, if he not looks out anyone take what they like and not pay" (177).

The immigrant issue is also dealt with throughout the novel. Problems of immigrants who came from Bangladesh in the first wave differ from those of their children. Karim and Chanu stand for typical representatives of the two generations

and their attitudes and preferences are described in detail. Another important feature is the shift of traditional roles within immigrant families from Bangladesh.

Particularly the family setting based on patriarchy is shattered: as the economic situation of the families grows worse women are forced to seek work and improve the financial situation of their families. Thus women become more equal to men by contributing to family budget and they also gain new responsibilities. Ali also concentrates on female and male characters and their reception and understanding of their religious traditions and rules of life in modern and secular city.

Racism is the issue that has to be tested in light of some of the relevant elements from the text. The present researcher makes use of various theoretical insights regarding racism, slavery and nonwestern identity to examine analytically the text. Muslim immigrants go back to their primal culture, oral tradition and history. Thus, race, slavery and affirmation of identity are inextricably connected.

The researcher examines how racist practice occurs when people from different cultures live and interact one another. In Ali's novel, *Brick Lane*, the Bangladeshi immigrants in London suffer from racist practice. The white employers put into practice racial discrimination. Innocent immigrants are subjected into torturous experience. Karim is aggressively made the victim of anti-Islamic campaign. He feels so dehumanized and alienated that he could not help forming Muslim gang to respond to the white men's anti-Islamic campaign. Nazneen and Chanu get low pay not because they work for fewer hours but because they are treated as outsiders by the white inhabitants and employers of London. Karim and Chanu are subjected to a series of violence. They are discriminated, dehumanized and exploited because they are Muslims.

With hope of achieving better economic prospect, Bangladeshi immigrants immigrate to London. But they do not get conducive environment for the fulfillment of their dream. They are denied access to decent life with dignity, freedom and happiness. The racist mentality of the British people is directed towards the immigrants.

Ali's novel *Brick Lane* address the depth of human sufferings resulting from the corrupting practices of racism. Ali is the flourishing Bangladeshi writer who dwells in the metropolitan city of London. Though she adopts the metropolitan perspective, local Bangladeshi subject matters come recurrently in her representative novels. To Ali, Bangladesh is the hub of new and fresh literary subject matters. The subject matters that her novels handle range from communal riot, poverty, criminality, gang rape, prostitution, domestic violence and Islamic fundamentalism.

In this way, the researcher analyzes the text by adopting the perspective of racism in second chapter.

III. Fabrics of Racism

It can be concluded that racism is the unavoidable phenomenon in the current context. The phenomenon of racism paves the way for the emergence of various cultural groupings and alliances. Many undercurrents of racism contribute to the origin of hatred and horror as well as social disintegration. Racism is inevitable in the current politico-cultural context in England. In the current era in which nothing exists independently in its pure and pristine form, the program of racial harmony is doomed to fail.

Coordinated and non-coordinated quest for distinct and unadulterated form of identity is no longer found in the current global and cross-cultural context. In Brick Lane, the white people may think that the entire immigrant from Bangladesh is Muslims and it is impossible for a white person to be a Muslim. For the white people, Muslims are extremists. They hold negative opinions of them. They believe the Muslims can do terrible things to whomever they resent. However, that some of the Muslims have organized some radical activities does not mean the entire Muslims act in a radical way. The bad impression of Muslims is over-generalized by the white people. Secondly, the white people regard high birth rate as one of the characteristics of Muslims.

Contrary to the expectation of the people, the councilor comes to flat after the riot with a reporter and a photographer. He is disappointed when Nazneen tells him she has only two children. The white people think Muslims are good at brainwashing. In their opinion, Muslims are propagating their religious ideas to absorb others into their group. Christians worry that their society is facing conversion. But they feel overwhelmed by Islam simply because they live in the community in which Bangladeshi Muslims are concentrated.

Immigrants presume that socio-politico-cultural landscape of Bangladeshi diaspora is dramatically affected by globalization and economic liberalization. The rise of the waves of technology transfer and then the subsequent modernization of social values has altered the conscience and conviction of people. But this expectation of the moor falls flat. Far from taking the advantage of the shifting cultural locale and potentiality, people in most of the south Islamic countries fall victims to ideological rigidity and other forms of inflexibility.

Other things remaining the same, people are tempted to die for the purity of their native culture. They are too stubborn to reject the creative onrush of power ideas and concept. The rigid and inflexible codes and practices have driven them. The power of adaptation is simply declining. For the religious difference and ideological diversity, inhabitants of Bangladesh and Pakistan can commit dangerous crimes and misdeeds. Their passion for the purity of doctrine and creed has worsened rather.

The inhabitants of Bangladesh and Pakistan have affirmed their longing for the singularity and purity of creed. The infatuation for cultural purity and religious narrowness have given birth the numerous cases of religious fundamentalism. Religious program, fundamentalism and the underlying threat of terrorism have corroded the foundation of diasporic settlement in England. These two challenges have posed threat to the integrity and foundation of country. Much of the structure of social conscience of Islamic immigrants is still alien to the modifying and transforming power of rational thought.

Muslim immigrants' fervid passion, frantic affirmation of religious belief and formidable search for purity and singularity in everything has given birth to countless challenges. Multiplicity, hybridity and hotchpotch of idea

have gone far away. Only the purity and singularity of identity have received momentum. That is why they are in problem.

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