

Cultures in Movement

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Edited by

Martine Raibaud, Micéala Symington,
Ionut Untea and David Waterman

Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing



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This book first published 2015

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN (10): 1-4438-7189-3

ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-7189-1

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INTRODUCTION

This volume is part of a larger research project under the aegis of The Center for International and Atlantic History (CRHIA), a research laboratory shared between the universities of Nantes and La Rochelle, France, focusing on societies, exchanges and power in the Americas and the Asia / Pacific region, as well as questions of identity representation on an international scale. More precisely, the contributors to this volume encourage us to re-think the very notion of culture by examining the experiences, situations and the representations of those who chose – or were forced – to change cultures from the nineteenth century to the present day. But beyond a simple study of migration, forced or otherwise, a secondary goal of this collective work is to re-examine the model of integration as it has sometimes been defined by historians, sociologists and anthropologists.¹ As recent entrants into new social settings may be perceived as affecting the previously-accepted social equilibrium, mechanisms encouraging or inhibiting population flow are sometimes put in place. From this perspective, "integration" may become less a matter of internal choice than an external obligation imposed by the dominant political power, in which case "integration" may only be a euphemism for discrimination and intolerance. The strategies of cultural survival developed as a reaction to the rising tide of cultural uniformity can be seen as necessary points of departure for an ever-growing shared multiculturalism.

Many different approaches and interpretations are proposed by the contributing authors, beyond the merely practical aspects of mobility. Broader definitions of nationality are considered, such as trans-nationality, multi-nationality and complex cultural identity which interrogate popular definitions of nationality, belonging and diaspora, and redefine the interactions between center and periphery. Accepting unpredicted changes determined by historical events, and integrating them into overall experience, remains the challenge that every community as a whole or its individual members have to face. Moving back and forth within the

¹ See, for example *Communalism and Globalisation in South Asia and its Diaspora* by Deana Heath and Chandana Mathur, New York, Routledge, 2010 and *Le Monde romanesque chinois au XXe siècle. Modernités et identités* by Zhang Yinde, Paris, Honoré Champion, 2003.

coherence of personal identity, without having to separate between now and then, here and there, represents one of the main tasks of the quest for a perpetually reevaluated identity. Mental representations of identity help individuals remain faithful to "past" or geographically-linked identities while trying at the same time to transcend cultural barriers in new social contexts. In today's world, views influenced by race and cultural uniformity continue to coexist alongside those emanating from hybrid identities. A long-term voluntary commitment to make cultural boundaries more flexible and allow a more engaged individual participation in the process of defining the self and finding its place within a culture in movement may represent a key element for cultural cohesion in a globalized world.

While some of the contributions to this volume approach "Cultures in Movement" from the historian's perspective, working from archives and public records in synchronic or diachronic fashion, many others tackle the question in terms of representation; how the experience of migration, crossing, return, nostalgia, exile and so on is narrated to the self and to others. Such fictional or fictionalized representations are not anti-historical, but fall instead into the category of what has been called historical fiction. History and fiction both contain gaps in the record, the first epistemologically, the second ontologically, yet knowledge and insight are to be gained from both; indeed, it is often the zone of transition between history and fiction which provides a space for critical interpretation of "the facts." For its part, historical fiction is able to account for incomplete knowledge and become more than history without necessarily becoming false, perhaps challenging the historical record or perhaps not, but in any case offering a complement to purely historical knowledge. This allows the author greater latitude to inject morality and ethics into history, for example, or foreground minor characters and events which the historical record has omitted (or which have never existed), or create a narrative of closure in a therapeutic, "storytelling" sense, or illustrate the deeper psychological and emotional aspects of characters who are actively participating in, even managing and orchestrating, history.² Ultimately, such historical fiction evolves into political fiction wherein truth becomes a matter of representational interpretation, perhaps

² See Beverley Southgate, *History meets Fiction*, Harlow, UK: Pearson, 2009, pages 27, 125, 168 and Horst Steinmetz, "History in Fiction – History as Fiction: On the Relations between Literature and History in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries." *Narrative Turns and Minor Genres in Postmodernism*. Postmodern Studies 11, eds. Theo D'haen and Hans Bertens. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1995, 81-103 (for the current paraphrase see pages 82, 88-89).

even leaving “real” history behind; one thinks of Tim O’Brien’s work on the Vietnam War, for example, or Pat Barker’s World War I trilogy.

The volume has been organized into five sections: Muneeza Shamsie begins the first section, *Challenging Communal Heritage Within New Collective Settings*, with her thoughts on the evolution of the image of the Americas in Pakistani English fiction, taking examples from Zulfikar Ghose and *The Incredible Brazilian* or Mohsin Hamid’s more recent *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, among others of the “diaspora.” Pakistani fiction, Shamsie concludes, is a crossroads where the novel form encounters geopolitics, globalization and multiculturalism in the wake of the postcolonial encounter and Partition of the subcontinent. Emigration, with its resulting cultural adaptation, is the theme of Iside Costantini’s essay on changing identities in Timothy Mo’s *Sour Sweet* and *The Redundancy of Courage*; Costantini suggests that Mo’s characters reject an identity based on ethnicity, favoring a more complex formula which includes the experience of colonialism and emigration. Louise Erdrich’s nonfiction *Books and Islands in Ojibwe Country* is more than simple nostalgia, according to Joëlle Bonnevin, but instead a multifaceted narrative which succeeds in legitimating the identity of the Ojibwe nation in both cultural and political terms, navigating between calls for restoration and reconciliation. Moving from the Native Americans of Minnesota to those of California, Katarzyna Nowak-McNeice examines Helen Hunt Jackson’s *Ramona* and its representation of displacement in the 19th century, a period of dishonor as well as progress. Jackson, who fought for Native American rights all her life, used the novel as a forum to denounce the conditions of California’s Mission Indians, thus aligning herself with other writers calling for moral change, such as Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Time and Memory: Beyond Binary Representations opens with *The Ambassadors* and its balancing act, seeking the best of the Old and New Worlds; Charles Brion presents Henry James’ novel as a particularly interesting example of travel writing, since it is not a quest to discover the new but rather a reverse trans-Atlantic voyage back to the old, in search of origins. Internal immigration in 19th-century Quebec, in this case the French-Protestants of Canada, becomes a site of cultural conflict. Catherine Hinault reminds us that in 19th-century Quebec, there were French Canadians who dared transgress confessional boundaries, and went on to embrace a Protestant-driven modernity, a complex and controversial posture to adopt for any French Canadian in that colonial context. Emmanuelle Andrès examines the concept of creation of the self, in a close reading of Toni Morrison’s *Home*, wherein the protagonist returns

from military service in the Korean War; his return deconstructs not only the idea of heroism in war but the policy of segregation at “home” after having served in a desegregated military overseas. Etienne Faugier traces the rise of the automobile and its effects on North American culture, including the influence on Quebec by the “asphalt nation,” the United States, during the 19th and 20th centuries. Faugier suggests that car culture in Quebec was initially the result of French influence as well as American, which then became a properly Quebecois car culture between the two world wars.

Traumatic experience linked to migration is the subject of Claire Chen’s article in the third section, *Migration: from Integration to Hybridization of Cultures*, using examples from lê thi diem thúy’s *The Gangster We Are All Looking For* and Fae Myenne Ng’s *Bone*. Crossing takes on diverse meanings in Chen’s analysis, whether the ocean or barriers of race and language, and becomes a necessary part of the healing process. Thomas Plançon looks at history through literature, suggesting that history, understood as factual and based on archives, can be enriched by what literature has to offer, namely a certain capacity to “remember” what official versions of history may have forgotten. In her chapter, “Scattered Like Ants,” Molly Chatalic considers the Tibetan minority; ever since the Chinese “liberation” of the country in the 1950s, the Tibetans have been a minority in their own country, as have the numerous Tibetans who have chosen exile. Chatalic highlights the difficulties encountered in the United States as the Tibetan diaspora struggles to maintain their culture while they seek international recognition for their plight. Joseph Egwurube is also interested in the challenges facing immigrants to the United States, in this case from Nigeria; he looks at questions of identity as well, especially how first-generation Nigerian immigrants have been able to negotiate their insertion into a society characterized by institutional and individual racism. Taking the notion of emigration one step further, Laura Brohan examines the situation of North Koreans who must first escape from their country before resettlement. Even those who manage to escape have a difficult time integrating elsewhere, even in South Korea, after years of communist inculcation, not to mention their feeling of guilt regarding family members left behind. Temporary immigrants is the term used by Tao Sha to describe Chinese students who choose the United States as their destination for higher education; she examines immigration data as well as changing visa rules since World War II to trace the progression of this new wave of middle-class migration.

The Arts of Identity as Survival Strategies first invites us to the Henan Opera, originally from the region of northern China of the same name; Eléonore Martin is interested in how this particular form of opera has been exiled to Taiwan, the changes it has undergone to become more locally popular, and the questions of cultural identity which arise. Following is a chapter which presents Sara Suleri's *Meatless Days*; Fauzia Janjua considers the symbolism of food in Suleri's novel of displacement from Pakistan: deception, religion, politics, relationships and writing are all linked to metaphors of eating. The traditional, Chinese feminine "I" is expressed differently in the context of migration, according to Xinyu Hu, and her examination of Yan Geling's *Fusang, Hibiscus* suggests that linguistic and cultural identity can be constructed through a nuanced writing of "I." Chinese plays on the Western stage are the focus of Shih-Lung Lo's research, in this case the eight-volume diary of the Chinese Diplomat Zhang Deyi exploited as a rich archive of the details of cultural representation. Although the plays are not named in the diary, their description is so complete that identification is possible, allowing precise comparisons, between *Fleur-de-thé* and *The Cat and the Cherub*, for example. Zang Tong traces the history of translations of Milan Kundera's works in China, then goes on to analyze the reasons for Kundera's continuing popularity, including the problematic diffusion of pirated versions of foreign language writers.

James Block opens the *Globalization and Cultural Cohesion* section with a focus on the articulation between people's material conditions and their search for meaning, especially in a postmodern context. Human beings, Block argues, can indeed become actors in the process of social transformation, especially by reconsidering the notion of "consent" as something beyond pro-forma acquiescence. Cultural globalization and the growing influence of the Spanish language in the United States are discussed by Sara Touijer, who suggests that future immigrants from Hispanic countries may well find it easier to integrate without having to renounce their linguistic and cultural origins. Concerning South American migration, Pauline Cherrier looks at the media representations of Japanese Brazilians at a precise moment, namely the centenary in 2008 of Japanese immigration, which coincided with the economic crisis and the resulting rise of anti-immigrant sentiments. The hybrid self, in its racialized, mulatto form, is examined by Geoff Pitcher; using examples of representations of the mulatto body, especially *Caucasia* by Danzy Senna, Pitcher concludes that rather than opening a third space of hybridity, the mulatto self challenges the political tenets underlying the very idea of a third space, ultimately denying existence rather than opening to a

complex, hybrid identity. Finally, Ionut Untea is interested in religious and philosophical questions. Using early modern perspectives on agency and voluntarism, Untea intends to bring a contribution to the ongoing philosophical debates related to the so-called incompatibility between Confucianism and democracy and argues that future philosophical and economic worldviews may benefit from a theoretical reevaluation of the role of agency and voluntarism in establishing social cohesion.

The editors.

PART I

CHALLENGING COMMUNAL HERITAGE WITHIN NEW COLLECTIVE SETTINGS

CHAPTER ONE

CHANGING PERSPECTIVES OF THE AMERICAS IN PAKISTANI ENGLISH FICTION

MUNEEZA SHAMSIE
(KARACHI, PAKISTAN)

Abstract

Pakistan and the United States have been uneasy allies since the Cold War, but there was little response to the Americas, north or south in early Pakistani English literature. In the 1970's, however, while teaching in Texas, the Sialkot born Briton, Zulfikar Ghose wrote about Brazil, his wife's country in *The Incredible Brazilian*, a trilogy, which spans four centuries. These three novels have no subcontinent characters but reflect very clear resonances with colonial India and a newly independent Pakistan. Similarly, the British Pakistani Adam Zameenzad's 1987 novel *Love Bones and Water*, set in a fictitious country, welds elements of South Asia and South America. In the new millennium however, a new generation of talented Pakistani English writers wrote of Pakistan's experience of the United States against the backdrop of geopolitics. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid captures the post-9/11 crisis of a young Pakistani in New York after 9/11 while Mohammed Hanif's satire *A Case of Exploding Mangoes* portrays Pakistan's involvement with the US-backed Afghan mujahadin in the 1980's. Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows* traverses the globe from Japan to South Asia, and North America between World War II to the present day and Nafisa Haji's *The Sweetness of Tears* tells of a young American woman's discovery that her natural father is Pakistani. This chapter explores the changing engagement with the Americas in Pakistani English fiction, as depicted by all eight of these novels

In 1947 the British Raj announced the transfer of power and the Partition of India into two dominions – India and Pakistan. Shortly afterwards General George C. Marshall, the then US Secretary of State, wrote to President Truman: “I believe it would be in our interest to accord recognition to the new dominion of Pakistan [...] [which] will

occupy one of the most important strategic areas in the world.”¹ This was the beginning of the Cold War. The Great Enemy was Communism and its stronghold was the Soviet Union.² Pakistan became an American/NATO ally although many intellectuals and journalists urged a more independent policy. This was complicated by American support for Pakistan’s first martial law but problems arose when the regime forged a firm alliance with Communist China. This tale of uneasy allies alternating between periods of enthusiasm and standoff has continued to this day: it repeated itself during Pakistan’s involvement with the US-backed Afghan mujahadin in the 1980’s and in the continuing post-9/11 conflict alongside Pakistan’s western borders and the hunt for al-Qaeda. This intricate narrative also has strong roots in colonial history and what is often known as the North South divide – several Pakistani novelists discussed here have found clear parallels between Pakistan and Latin America.

In the early years of Independence, Pakistani English language fiction was a little-known, little developed genre. There was very little writing about the Pakistani experience of America and Americans beyond the occasional memoir or political analyses. The Sialkot-born Zulfikar Ghose was possibly the earliest Pakistani English writer to migrate to the United States. In the 1970’s he received great critical acclaim for his trilogy *The Incredible Brazilian*. This sequence of novels has no sub-continental characters but Ghose’s portrayal of Brazil has clear echoes with colonial India and post-colonial Pakistan. A decade later, Adam Zameenzad’s *Love Bones and Water* set in a metaphorical fictitious country, also drew parallels between South Asia and South America.

In the new millennium, a talented generation of Pakistani English writers had emerged. Their work often engaged with the Pakistani experience of the United States against the backdrop of geopolitics.³ In the *Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Mohsin Hamid looks at the crisis of a bright young Pakistani in New York after the 9/11 bombings. Mohammed Hanif’s political satire, *A Case of Exploding Mangoes* portrays the last days of the dictator General Zia ul Haq, an American ally. Kamila Shamsie’s *Burnt Shadows* tells a tale of shared histories, friendships and intertwined bloodlines across Japan, South Asia, Britain and North America, from the end of World War II to the present day. Nafisa Haji’s

¹ Mehrunissa Ali, *Jinnah On World Affairs: Selected Documents (1908-1948)*, 48, 458.

² See also Muneeza Shamsie, “Covert Operations in Pakistani English fiction,” *Commonwealth Essays and Studies*, 15-25.

³ See also Muneeza Shamsie, “Introduction: Duality and diversity in Pakistani English literature,” 119-121.

The Sweetness of Tears interweaves Islamic history and modern Iraq in her story of a young American woman, Jo March, whose natural father turns out to be Pakistani. Together, all these novels capture the changing perspectives of the Americas in Pakistani English fiction, across forty years.

The first of these writers, Zulfikar Ghose is an early example of the “post-colonial” diaspora writer (as is VS Naipaul). His work has been forged by multiple migrations. He was born in pre-Partition Sialkot (now in Pakistan), grew up in Bombay, migrated to Britain in 1951, and moved to University of Texas at Austin in 1969. His eleven novels include only one set in Pakistan, *The Murder of Aziz Khan* (1967) which revolves around the tussle between a group of industrialists and a traditional Punjab farmer, the old and the new respectively. Many of its tropes and themes foreshadow *The Incredible Brazilian* including the attack on military rule and primitive capitalism.

In 1964 Ghose married the Brazilian artist Helena de La Fontaine and first saw her homeland in 1966. His trilogy was inspired by the anthropologist Gilberto Freyre’s book *The Masters and the Slaves* about eighteenth-century Brazil. The structure of the three novels was suggested by Thomas Berger’s *Little Big Man*⁴ an account of American history through the eyes of a 111-year-old American brought up by the Cheyenne and witness to the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Ghose’s equally colourful and unreliable narrator Gregorio Piexoto da Silva Xavier is four hundred years old. *Brazilian* is tribute to the “inventive genius”⁵ of Berger’s novel, including the “notion of a perfect world, the admiration for Indians and the fusion effortlessly of real and fantastic.”⁶

In *Brazilian* the surface story tells the history of Brazil through Gregorio’s three reincarnations. The central thread is the quest for Brazil as an ideal, a dream where people are free to forge their own destiny. This discourse has much in common with the utopian pre-Partition concept of Pakistan as a land where Indian Muslims would be free, but where reality was fraught with difficulties and conflicts, exploitation, and martial law. The trilogy also has a strong metaphysical aspect and is similarly embedded with rich metaphorical images where Brazil, a land of extraordinary beauty and diversity, symbolizes an elusive, mythical and mystical utopia. Brazil is likened to a desirable woman to be wooed and

⁴ Ghose and Berger’s 20-year literary correspondence is now preserved in the University of Texas Archives.

⁵ Chelva Kanaganakayam, *Structures of Negation, The Writings of Zulfikar Ghose*, 92.

⁶ *Ibid.*

won, an idea rooted in Sufi literature where the quest of the Seeker for the Divine is represented as that of the Lover and Beloved.

The trilogy's first book *The Incredible Brazilian: The Native* is set in the eighteenth century. There, European settlers have been changed over the generations by the New World and the land called Brazil, yet retain European notions of racial, cultural and religious superiority. Gregorio is the second son of a plantation owner of Portuguese origin in Bahia (now Salvador). His family's attitude towards their many black slaves and later, the native Indians knit together the narratives of North and South America. At the same time, the portrayal of a strongly competitive patriarchal society with its fratricidal tendencies reflects the history of warring nations.

On Gregorio's 14th birthday, his father marries for the third time. The 15-year-old bride arrives in a procession of palanquins and horse riders, reminiscent of traditional India. Suddenly, native Indians attack. They are repulsed with difficulty, observed by Gregorio. But he tumbles off a ladder and his wounds are mistaken for war wounds. He is elevated to family hero. As a result the precocious and pretentious Gregorio is allowed to accompany his older brother Antonio and a small band of war-hardened men, to hunt down the Indians. They enter a nearby territory which his father says "the hand of civilised man has not tamed"⁷ and where "savages live wild, making sounds rather than speaking a language."⁸ They are outwitted by the Indians and entrapped by the jungle. Antonio dies. Gregorio is rescued from certain death by Father Prado, a Jesuit priest who lives peacefully among the Indians. He studies their herbs and medicines. He points out that there is neither poverty, disparity nor slavery among the Indians. As such their way of life is superior in many ways. He says that when Brazil truly comes into being as a country, it will neither be owned, nor own any other country, nor be dominated by a particular class or creed. As Kanaganayakam points out, Ghose's work is strongly political and is informed by his own exile as well as "the hegemonic power of colonial rule"⁹ including the politics of race.

Gregorio becomes his father's sole heir. He squanders his inherited wealth, flees from creditors and is sold into slavery. He escapes to a community of free black slaves and marries there, but leaves ten years later, to make his fortune. He becomes very rich, remarries and lives

⁷ Zulfikar Ghose, *The Incredible Brazilian: The Native*, 77.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Chelva Kanaganayakam, *Structures of Negation: The Writings of Zulfikar Ghose*, 4.

through the gold rush, civil war, and the brutal French occupation of Rio de Janeiro.

In each *Brazilian* novel, Gregorio is born into great privilege but compelled to leave the certainties of home and fall back on his own resources. The second book, *The Beautiful Empire* begins with an epigraph which refers to the Ganges, the Euphrates and the Nile and adds that “the river of Amazons waters more extensive regions, fertilizes more plains, supports more people and augments by its floods a mightier ocean”¹⁰ while a second quote refers to Brazil as “an earthly paradise.”¹¹ As Kanaganayakam points out Ghose suggests the experience of Brazil is a paradigm for the colonial experience.¹² In 1851 Gregorio is reborn in an independent Brazil, ruled by an Emperor. His mother however is English and his parents migrate to her homeland but the teenage Gregorio runs away, enlists in the Brazilian army and fights in the war against Paraguay. Antonio, his older brother becomes Anthony Paxton Silver, a colonial administrator in India. The brothers embody the conflicting commercial interests of Brazil and The British Empire.

Ghose indicts Europe's imperial dreams and the avarice and brutality of European commerce after the industrial revolution together with the growth of scientific enquiry and technology. Gregorio enters into the employ of Mr. Hofman, a Dutch businessman in search of that precious commodity in the Amazon: Brazilian rubber trees. The indigenous Indians, to whom the land belongs, are gifted clothes carrying infectious diseases and wiped out. Gregorio's hubris, self-indulgence and myopia turn him into an accomplice of the imperial European enterprises which loot Brazil. While he enjoys a life of luxury and pleasure, he pays scant attention to a British naturalist, Mr. Wickham; more interested in plants than profits, Mr. Wickham collects rubber plant seedlings. They are transplanted in British colonies, under Anthony's supervision which destroys the Brazilian economy, irrevocably. While the army's overthrow of the Emperor as an egalitarian exercise leads to military rule.

The trilogy's final novel, *A Different World*, begins in 1954 with the suicide of the dictator Vargas and the imposition of another martial law. Gregorio is reincarnated the son of a Brazilian father and French mother into a society which looks to Europe, Britain and the United States for approbation. This “imitation society” resembles Anglicized South Asian

¹⁰ Fr. Cristobal de Acuna, quoted in Zulfikar Ghose, *The Beautiful Empire* (New York: The Overlook Press, Woodstock NY, 1975): np

¹¹ Sebastien Jose de Roche Pita, quoted in Ghose, *Empire*: np

¹² Chelva Kanaganayakam, *Structures of Negation: The Writings of Zulfikar Ghose*, 4.

ruling class with smatterings of a western culture to which it does not quite belong. At university in the United States, the Brazilian-born Gregorio is shocked by America's insularity, "apparently the United States has built a huge mirror round its frontiers; it could only see its own beautiful face."¹³ He is equally impatient with politicized Americans ranging from admirers of Castro and Che Guevara to superficial liberal intellectuals.

In Brazil, he deplores the politics of his brothers, Vicente, a conservative and Anibal, a left wing radical. He is drawn to the charismatic Capistrano, a rich older man and self-styled patriot. Capistrano's social circle includes Amalia, the girl Gregorio loves. Gregorio joins their fight against tyrannical "extremists" and "barbarians" who are arbitrarily arrested in thousands thanks to his activities. This includes the underground group he leads and which masterminds acts of violence to manipulate public opinion to discredit both government and revolutionary groups. In time, he comes to realize that he has been party to great evil.

A Different World comments on the financial interests of consumer countries which subvert fragile democracies and provides a vivid portrait of a country riven by social disparities and of a disempowered people's attempt to assert their rights. Ghose's description of a police state where spies, prisons and torture cells proliferate backed by paranoia, suspicion and over-zealous bureaucratic control find clear echoes in all the Pakistani English novels discussed here. The incidents of state oppression or bureaucratic control which Ghose describes also have resonance with 1960s Pakistan while many other episodes foreshadow the future destabilization of Pakistan at the turn of the twentieth century. This includes urban warfare, the kidnapping of prominent citizens and foreigners for ransom, and the proliferation of armed political groups. Ghose's description of an anti-US terrorist attack aimed at the American ambassador in Brazil involving aeroplanes, airports and flight plans has uncanny aspects of 9/11.

Meanwhile Gregorio is mistaken for a guerilla leader and becomes a fugitive. He finds sanctuary and solitude in Goais. There, through discussion with the multi-racial Lucio, he attains peace and self-revelation. He comes to understand himself, his reincarnations and struggles and his link with Brazil's history, particularly the historical figure of Joaquim Jose da Silva Xavier, whose last names he shared and who was best known as Tirandantes, the first Brazilian to demand equality for all.

By the 1980's, the contemporary Pakistan English novel began to develop and grow with the international success of writers such as Adam

¹³ Zulfikar Ghose, *A Different World*, 108.

Zameenzad, the author of six novels. He grew up in Kenya and Pakistan before migrating to Britain and his work follows a trajectory similar to Ghose: a first novel set in Pakistan, followed by fiction which transposes the experience of his homeland into other cultures and countries. Children are central to Zameenzad's fiction and the autobiographical theme of an unhappy rich man's son, finding greater companionship among the suffering poor, runs through his fiction, including his third novel *Love and Bones and Water*. Set in a fictitious country, it portrays endemic political exploitation and social disparity as a global malaise. The country he describes is ironically named New Heaven, its main characters bear the surname of Peruva and on the edge volcano called Mount Gretna, there exists a shanty town ironically called Gulroza – the Valley of the Flowers (Gul and Roza being the words for Rose in Urdu and Spanish respectively). All of this suggests a universalist symbolism which merges countries in Asia, Europe, North and South America.

The novel is deeply rooted in Christianity and the concept of redemption through suffering. The main protagonist, Peter is the neglected, undersized and sensitive child of rich parliamentary parents, Philip Peruva and Eleanor Poacher. Each parent belongs to opposing political parties, which share similar elitist undemocratic views disguised by a populist rhetoric of apparent confrontation. Philip and Eleanor also support a plan to bulldoze the ramshackle dwellings of Gulroza in the name of modernity and progress. This has a particularly strong echo with overcrowded Karachi where burgeoning hutments are often knocked down and their occupants moved to colonies miles away from their place of employment.

While playing on the beach, Peter befriends and helps a mutilated, tortured and tongueless man, washed up half-dead on the sand. Peter calls him “the grey man” because he is neither black nor white. Peter tries to tell his parents about the man. To Peter's dismay, they dispatch armed policemen to find him, but Jonah a humane and dedicated activist shelters the grey man in Gulroza. The novel is permeated with images and intertextual references to the Bible, including The Sermon on The Mount and Jesus's saying “Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me.”¹⁴ Gulroza's inhabitants belong to New Heaven's small Catholic minority and have biblical names: Isaac, Ishmael, Jonah, Maria, Magda, among others. They offer Peter warmth and kindness and understanding unlike his busy parents. Soon Peter's friend, the grey man, “assumes an

¹⁴ *King James Bible*, Matt. 19:14.

almost Christlike reputation”¹⁵ in the community. He offers strength and succour to a marginalized people coping with untold suffering and state oppression. Through Peter, his parents and his Gulroza friends, Zameenzad makes a universalist protest against social and political inequality.

In the new millennium however, the Pakistani English novel came into its own and a dynamic younger generation of writers, including Mohsin Hamid, Mohammed Hanif, Kamila Shamsie and Nafisa Haji, published novels in rapid succession between 2000-2011. Their work provides an “example of that world literature [...] [which brings] together in novelist form the experiences of the individual when directly confronted by the effects of geopolitics.”¹⁶ All of them have lived between Pakistan and the west. Their novels portray a crisis, not of culture or religion, but of the individual in an unequal globalised world. Of these writers, Shamsie now lives in London but grew up in Pakistan while Hamid spent his childhood in the United States, Pakistan and the Far East, as did the American born Haji. All three were educated at universities in the United States. Hamid worked as a management consultant in New York and London before moving back to Lahore, while Hanif left the Pakistan Air Force after a brief stint and became a journalist in Pakistan, and spent ten years with the BBC in London before returning to Karachi. Both Hamid and Hanif wrote novels which drew on their working background.

Most of these writers grew up during Pakistan’s involvement with the US- backed mujahadin during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan followed by the collapse of the Soviet Union. They were aware of the subsequent growth of the Taliban and al-Qaeda and the changing attitudes towards Muslims after the 9/11 bombing and the international reverberations of the wars in Afghanistan. In the west, there developed a pre-occupation with “terrorism”, “fundamentalists” and “Muslims” which defined Muslims as the Alien Other, “a problematic presence, troubling those values of individualism and freedom said to define western nations.”¹⁷ A spate of fiction by western writers “reinforce[s] Islam as a religion of violent fanatics.”¹⁸

¹⁵ *Kirkus Review*. “Review of *Love Bones and Water* by Adam Zameenzad.” Accessed 15 Sept 2013 <<https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/adam-zameenzad/love-bones-and-water/>>.

¹⁶ Peter Morey, “‘The rules of the game have changed’: Mohsin Hamid’s *Reluctant Fundamentalist* and post 9/11 fiction,” *The Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 136.

¹⁷ Peter Morey and Amina Yaqin, “Introduction,” 145.

¹⁸ Stephen Morton “Introduction,” *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 247.

Mohsin Hamid's second novel *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* was the first Pakistani English novel to challenge these assumptions. Morey describes it as a

sly intervention that destabilizes the dominant categories of the post 9/11 novel, undercutting the impulse to national normalization through the experience of its protagonist Changez and his journey from fully interpellated capitalist 'fundamentalist' and 'post political' transnational subject to racially profiled object of suspicion and finally anti-American firebrand.¹⁹

Fundamentalist looks at the relationship between Pakistan and the United States particularly after 9/11. Hamid makes clever use of innuendo and ambiguity, to challenges narratives of Otherness and contemplate the inequality of nations. In an interesting twist, it examines the strategies of cut-throat capitalism which it likens to the violence and brutality of war and terrorism. The novel consists of a monologue by the Anglicized Princeton educated Pakistani narrator, Changez describing his meeting with an American stranger at a Lahore teashop. This is located in the historic Anarkali bazaar, which together with the name he shares with the Mongol warrior Changez (Genghis) Khan suggests the cumulative burden of history that he carries: the glorious narratives of bygone Mongol and Mughal Empires, the lingering memories of British Empire and the impact of the new American Empire. Throughout Changez takes it upon himself to interpret the American's words and gestures and the American's voice is never heard – which also provides an interesting reversal (or subversion) of the traditional colonial novel.²⁰

Changez comes from a family belonging to professional Anglicized elite created by the British. Changez's family continues to venerate Urdu, their mother tongue, but had realized long ago that English was the pathway into the corridors of power during the Raj. Alas English and Anglicization did not bring about the hoped-for equality during the Raj while the post-independence, capitalist era, did not bring wealth – in terms of that global currency: US dollars. But in this brave new contemporary world, Changez has an opportunity to fulfil his family's great dream: to be a part of the global ruling class, to which he rightfully belongs, as an equal. His intelligence and his education at Princeton lead to a coveted job

¹⁹ Peter Morey, "The rules of the game," 136

²⁰ See also Muneeza Shamsie, "*The Reluctant Fundamentalist*." Accessed 19 June 2014. *The Literary Encyclopedia*
 <<http://www.litencyc.com/php/sworks.php?rec=true&UID=23135>>

at Underwood Samson, a financial firm in that great commercial hub: New York.

There Changez is taught the importance of professionalism and efficiency and told to *focus on the fundamentals* – a term which challenges, and draws parallels with, and subverts, the very word “fundamentalism” used today in the context of religion. In New York, Changez considers himself a member of Underwood Samson’s team, not as a Pakistani. This is reinforced by very initials US which “twin” Underwood Samson and the United States. During an assignment in Manila – a dynamic oriental city, embodied by skyscrapers and flyovers – so unlike Changez’s native Lahore – Changez starts to act as an assertive, demanding American. Suddenly television screens show the 9/11 bombing. Changez is “caught up in the symbolism of it the fact that someone had so visibly brought America to her knees.”²¹ His concern for his girlfriend Erica in New York comes as an afterthought. In the company of his American colleagues, he shares their sense of violation and horror, only to find himself interrogated at immigration in Manila and New York. He becomes aware of a new, palpable sense of threat and hostility towards Muslims in America. Suddenly any dark skinned, oriental-looking and bearded man becomes an object of suspicion to ordinary Americans. Changez’s crisis is accentuated by the American bombing of Afghanistan, followed by Pakistan’s near-war with India. His country’s helplessness and weakness embodies his own. The turning point in his life takes place in Valparaiso. He is sent there to assess and dismantle a publishing house managed by the elderly Juan Bautista. Waterman points out:

Of all the characters in the novel, Juan-Bautista has perhaps the greatest influence on Changez, as he draws closer and closer to home, and provides the impetus which fuses the personal [...] and the political; it is he who links identity not simply to the past, but to the future as well, and who incites Changez to interrogate the representational structure on which his identity is based.”²²

Juan Bautista engages Changez in a conversation about books, which reminds Changez that he belongs to a literary family and his uncle is well known poet. Juan Bautista says:

Have you heard of the janissaries? [...] They were Christian boys [...] captured by the Ottomans and trained to be soldiers in the Muslim army, at

²¹ Mohsin Hamid, *Reluctant Fundamentalist*, 43.

²² David Waterman, “Focus on the Fundamentals: Personal and Political Identity in Mohsin Hamid’s *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*,” 134.

that time the greatest army in the world. They were ferocious and utterly loyal; they had fought to erase their own civilizations, as they had nothing else to turn to.²³

Changez returns to Pakistan, becomes a university lecturer and key figure in an anti-American movement. The novel leads to a startling and ambiguous end. The interplay between Changez and the American is so intricate that it is never quite clear which is the predator/assassin and which the prey/victim. Hamid also challenges the reader to consider a third possibility: that this is but an innocuous encounter between two strangers but they are so weighed down by history and concepts of polarized civilizations, that they can only distrust each other.

On August 17, 1988 Pakistan's military dictator, General Zia ul Haq, was killed in a mysterious plane crash, together with his senior officers and Arnold Raphael, the American ambassador. The bomb was popularly believed to have been hidden in a case of mangoes. This provided Hanif with both title and plot for his witty first novel *A Case of Exploding Mangoes*. Hanif juxtaposes a number of real life characters in the corridors of power with the powerless and fictitious Ali Shigri, a cadet in the PAF Academy. The novel asks: who killed Ziaul Haq? And gives everyone a motive.

The novel, set during Zia's last ten days, is framed by the air crash. The book is strongly influenced by *The Feast of the Goat* by Mario Vargas Llosa which tells of the last days of Trujillo, the Dominican tyrant. *Mangoes* also provides a glimpse of Zia shortly after he overthrew the Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, executed him and allied himself with right wing religious extremists. Zia believes that he is chosen by God to bring 'Islam' to Pakistan. He quells the unspoken objections of his generals with hints at appointments to come as ministers and governors.

Hanif provides an irreverent glimpse of Zia's alliance with the United States and his dreams of winning the Nobel Prize for bringing peace to Afghanistan. There are vivid cameo portraits of the Saudi Prince Naif and his friend Bill Casey, the Director of the CIA. The American Ambassador, Arnold Raphael complains "Bill was always telling his old chum Ronald Reagan that it was the Wild West all over again, that the Afghans were cowboys with turbans and they were kicking Soviet ass as it had never been kicked before."²⁴ At one later point, a bearded lanky guest comes to Raphael's cocktail party. "I am OBL' he says. No one pays him much

²³ Mohsin Hamid, *Reluctant Fundamentalist*, 91.

²⁴ Mohammed Hanif, *A Case of Exploding Mangoes*, 67.

attention but the CIA chief said to him ‘Nice meeting you OBL. Good work. Keep it up.’”²⁵

Meanwhile in the cocooned, regimented world of the PAF Academy, established recreation activities such as obsolete World War II Anglo-American films are replaced by New Quranic Study Circles. The Old British Empire, which lingers at the Academy, in the form of archaic British colonial language, now jostles alongside the New American Empire. The latter is symbolized by the Academy’s new hashish-smoking American drill instructor Lieutenant “Loot” Bannon, a Vietnam veteran. He befriends Ali Shigri. Ali believes Zia to be responsible for the murder of his legendary father Colonel Shigri. He plans to avenge his father’s death by killing Zia at a parade with an elegant thrust of the sword. Ali’s fellow cadet and lover, Obaid realizes that Ali will only be gunned down. Obaid steals an aeroplane to cause a diversion and gives Ali’s call sign.

Ali is arrested, imprisoned, interrogated and tortured by the chatty chain-smoking Major Kiyani who had served under Ali’s famous and honourable father. Colonel Shigri had worked closely with the Americans to channel millions of US dollars to the US-backed Afghan mujahadin. But one day he had received an order to abandon a wounded officer and bring back a very important suitcase instead. He found it contained twenty five million dollars. He declared “Do I pimp my men for this?”²⁶ He burnt the money. He was found dead the next day. Bannon, a key CIA man reveals that the Americans were unable to investigate his murder because “the orders came from the top”²⁷ and “they [Americans] didn’t want to rock the boat.”²⁸ As such the novel raises profound questions on the nature of Pakistan’s “deep state” and American complicity; it also portrays the incarcerated victims of Zia’s “Islamic” laws – a poor socialist Christian, and a blind woman who was raped and accused of adultery.

America’s changing global role and the derailment of Pakistani society also runs through Shamsie’s fifth novel *Burnt Shadows*. As King point out “Fear, prejudice and inhumanity threaten even the most liberal societies”²⁹ and Shamsie’s novel encompasses a grand sweep of history across sixty years. Her tale begins with a brief “Prologue” describing an unnamed, newly arrived captive in Guantanamo. Thereafter, the novel sets out to answer his confused question “How did it come to this?”³⁰

²⁵ Ibid., 112.

²⁶ Ibid., 241.

²⁷ Ibid., 150.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Bruce King, “Kamila Shamsie’s novels of history, exile, desire,” 157.

³⁰ Kamila Shamsie, *Burnt Shadows*, 1.

Burnt Shadows consists of the intertwined history of two families, the Weiss Burtons and the Ashraf Kanaka's and tells of multiple migrations through which Shamsie explores identity, belonging and nationhood. The central character, Hiroko Tanaka is Japanese. In August 1945, she survives the atom bomb which is dropped on Nagasaki but her German fiance Konrad Weiss is killed. Hiroko is treated for radiation poisoning but "to escape her past"³¹ she travels to India, where she meets Conrad's sister Ilse, now Elizabeth Burton, the wife of James Burton, a British official in New Delhi. Hiroko falls in love with her Urdu teacher, Sajjad Ashraf. He belongs to an Old Delhi Muslim family. But the year is 1947. India is partitioned and overtaken by communal riots. After many difficulties and heartache, Sajjad and Hiroko migrate to Karachi in Pakistan. There miraculously Hiroko gives birth to a son, Raza Konrad Ashraf.

Raza is an aspiring college student by the time the Ashraf's receive an unexpected and welcome visitor: Harry Burton, the son of the now-divorced James and Ilse. In Delhi long ago, Sajjad had been his Urdu teacher. The three of them converse in English, Urdu and German. Raza, a born linguist, listens: to him Harry's American is straight out of the movies. Harry, an American Embassy official, posted in Islamabad, befriends the maladjusted Raza who "feels humiliated by the lack of racial purity and his mother's foreign customs."³² Unknown to the Ashrafs, he is also a CIA agent. In Karachi, a city inhabited by a vast underworld of spies, Afghan refugees, Afghan warriors during Pakistan's engagement with the US mujahidin, the friendship between the Ashrafs and Harry is observed with due suspicion. Raza's prank – passing himself off, among the Afghans, as a Hazara from northern Pakistan, because of his high cheekbones, ends in disaster. He is accused of working for Harry Burton. His father Ashraf is shot dead. The widowed Hiroko moves to New York at Ilse's invitation. Harry's dread of nuclear war is so visceral that he joined the CIA in hopes of preventing it by defeating the Communists, only to find that India and Pakistan too are nuclear powers. But the murky and uncertain world of espionage, intrigue and violence leads Harry into post-9/11 Afghanistan where he is killed. The grieving Raza is accused of the murder by Harry's American colleague. By this time Raza has worked with Harry, in his private military agency for many years.

To Harry, Raza is a virtual substitute for his estranged daughter Kim (the name is an intertextual reference to Kipling). Kim has been brought up by Harry's ex-wife in the United States. Kim reminds Harry that as an

³¹ Bruce King, "Kamila Shamsie's novels of history, exile, desire," 157

³² *Ibid.*, 158.