

Obsessive ‘Westoxification’ versus the Albatross of Fundamentalism and Love as Collateral Damage in Kamila Shamsie’s *Home Fire*

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ABSTRACT: *The paper critically analyses Kamila Shamsie’s highly political novel Home Fire by juxtaposing the character; Karamat Lone and Parvaiz Pasha as the two extreme viewpoints representing the rise of obsessive ‘Westoxification’ and an ever clinging sticky ‘Fundamentalism’ respectively that pit the Aneeka/Eamonn love affair to the inconsolable destiny of their collateral damage. The paper, taking for granted the most popularly established interpretation of the novel as a present day fictive adaptation of Sophocles’ drama Antigone, advances another dimension of literary interpretation, beyond Antigone, by playing out the concepts of ‘Westoxification’ and ‘Fundamentalism’ as linked with the postcolonial studies by the postcolonial critic Klaus Stierstorfer. The paper marks Shamsie’s novel as a timely overture to the perils of rising Islamophobic ‘Westoxification’ of so called Muslims like Karamat Lone and its devastating effects on innocent people like Aneeka and Eamonn. Shamsie’s fictive depiction of a post-9/11 Britain is essentially of the one that has reeked herself of intolerance and in her installation of extreme safety measures has introduced draconian laws of citizenship that run the greater risk of estranging its innocent citizens to the fading human face of multicultural secular England that once bore the banners of civilization. This research argues that Kamila Shamsie, by portraying the battling trends of obsessive ‘Westoxification’ and an overwhelmingly reclaiming ‘Fundamentalism’ among Pakistani-British diasporics, complicates and confronts the widespread stereotyping single dimensional Islamophobic discursive misrepresentations of Pakistani-British Muslims voluminously exacerbated post-9/11 and post-7/7 events.*

Keywords: Postcolonial Studies, Westoxification, Fundamentalism, South-Asian British Fiction, *Home Fire*

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Introduction:

The terrorist attacks of 9/11(2001: USA); the 11-M bombings (2004: Spain); and the 7/7 bombings (2005: England) are some of the major terrorist events that changed the shape of the world by triggering an environment of inter-faith distrust. Starting from America the whole of the West was grazed by the fire of Islamophobia and extremist reactions became rampant against the diasporic Muslim communities settled in the West for centuries. The word ‘Islamophobia’, meaning “hatred, hostility, and fear of Islam and Muslims, and the discriminatory practices that result”, came into vogue after the British Government, in order to revisit its “race relations”, commissioned the Runnymede Trust in 1996 to compile a report on British Muslims and Islamophobia. With the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Iranian Revolution of 1979, and the Rushdie Affair of 1988-89 in the background, the report, entitled “Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All” (1997), confirmed that the “prejudice against Muslims has reached a scale requiring action to protect the basic rights of Britain’s Muslim citizens” (Green 9-11). However with the advent of transnational terrorism by the start of 21st century the word ‘Islamophobia’ has gained currency in the political discourses as the Muslims living in the West have suffered extreme Islamophobic restrictions on civil, social, political, religious, and personal liberties, let alone the recommendation for protection forwarded by the Runnymede Report. Unlawful detentions and deportations, heinous hate crimes, headscarf bans, eccentric legislations and counterterrorism measures have virtually made Muslims a “besieged minority community in the West in the post-9/11 era” (268). In such circumstances it is not improbable that a contingent of diasporic Muslims, which by all means doesn’t represent all the Muslims of course, responds in a violent manner by adopting terrorism as a strategy against their white and non-white community members in the Western countries. This extremist and fundamentalist response to the Westernization of diasporic Muslims and the Islamophobic white natives, with its causes and complications, is the matter of concern for kamila Shamsie. It is this context of post-9/11 Western paranoiac Islamophobia and a reactionary response of joining terrorist states or forces by some drifting young Pakistani-British Muslims that surrounds Kamila Shamsie’s latest novel: *Home Fire*.

Shamsie’s *Home Fire*, modelled on Sophocles’ *Antigone*, interplays literature with mythology and politics. It depicts the trials and tribulations of a family with a legacy of terrorism in the present day England. Set in 2015 the novel portrays the disintegration of a home

plagued by terrorism. Isma Pasha and her two twin siblings: Aneeka Pasha and Parvaiz Pasha, with the history of silence about their jihadi terrorist father: Adil Pasha, are suddenly claimed by it when Parvaiz is trapped by Farooq, a recruiter of warriors for the terrorist state of ISIS, and leaves for Raqqa the capital of ISIS as a recruitee. As Isma is to leave for America to pursue the dream of her life, after almost a decade of a tiring upbringing of her orphaned siblings, by accepting a PhD fellowship she knows very well the price she and her sister Aneeka will have to pay if they keep Parvaiz' joining of a terrorist state a secret. So she reports the truth about her brother's missing to British authorities before leaving for America. Aneeka breaks up with Isma for betraying Parvaiz when she accidentally comes to know about it from Aunt Naseem. She hatches a plan to bring Parvaiz back to England by attracting Eamonn: the son of Britain's newly appointed Home Secretary Karamat Lone, who comes to deliver the M&M (American confectionary) package that he had picked from Isma while visiting his maternal grandparents in Amherst, Massachusetts. Although started as a manipulative plan by Aneeka through the lure of a sexual relationship with Eamonn, both of them find themselves head over heels in love with each other very soon. Convinced by Aneeka that Parvaiz' motives behind joining ISIS were more steeped in frustrations of an idler youth than in politics of dissidence, Eamonn talks to his father about his plan of marrying Aneeka and also that he wants to seek forgiveness for Parvaiz as he wants to come back to home after recognizing his folly and the true face of ISIS a state where it was impossible "to know who was a true believer and who was playing along for any of a host of reasons from terror to avarice" (Shamsie 169).

Karamat Lone is a diehard enemy of those who betray their homeland so he locks up Eamonn, preventing him from meeting or contacting Aneeka any further. Aneeka's British passport is confiscated when she tries to fly to Istanbul to escort Parvaiz back to England at her own after receiving no response to her numerous calls on Eamonn's cell number. Parvaiz on the other hand is intercepted by Farooq in his efforts to flee from Raqqa to England via Istanbul and is killed just outside the British Consulate in Istanbul. Karamat Lone, as he has lately passed the Bill from the parliament introducing the law of revocation of citizenship for those British citizens who have joined terrorist forces and have a dual citizenship, bars Parvaiz' dead body from a burial in England as he has, according to the new laws, lost his British citizenship. Parvaiz' dead body is sent to Pakistan: his other nationality. Aneeka, heartbroken and ferocious on the unforgiving and inhuman British laws, travels to

Pakistan on her Pakistani passport and collecting Parvaiz's dead body gives a protest sit-in in a park near the building of British Deputy High Commission in Karachi. She needs justice for her dead brother and makes requests, via media, to the British Prime Minister to allow her to give proper burial to her dead brother in England as a British citizen.

Eamonn, somehow, manages to sneak out of his detention at his ex-girlfriend Alice's estate in Normandy ordained by his father and confesses his love for Aneeka and his belief in her cause by uploading a video message on internet and leaves for Karachi to be by his beloved's side. Karamat in the meanwhile, issued a security threat and confined to his house's basement bathroom, is chastised by his Irish-American wife Terry who makes him realize what a great loss is impending for him as he has not only estranged his son but his wife too by being less devoted to them and more concerned with a set of unbending and unforgiving laws only obsessed with a legal crackdown upon British dissident citizens instead of integrating them with the nationhood. As Karamat recognizes his mistake and resolves to fix it he comes to know that the security alert issued to him was actually meant for his son whose video footage was now repeatedly shown on television. He is shown entering the park where Aneeka is sitting by her brother's dead body. As soon as he enters the park he is surrounded by a couple of men who make him wear a detonation belt. Aneeka runs to Eamonn to hug him knowing that he is to blast in no time by the bomb in the belt tied around his waist. But the two lovers embrace their deadly fate at peace in each other's arms. The terrorists have, for sure, taken Karamat Lone for his blind and obsessive integration into Western culture and his constant bitching of British Muslims for their adherence to Islam which according to him is a great hurdle in the way of British Muslims from syncing in with Western culture.

Shamsie's novel is a wake-up call for the British government as it, in making exclusive anti-immigration and anti-terrorist laws, is further isolating and estranging its dual nationality citizens belonging to Pakistani Muslim diasporic communities. The novel being a clarion call diverts its readers to a challenging dilemma post-9/11 and post-7/7 faced by the British government relating to the family members of those families whose any member's leaning to terrorist organization not only cause immense distress of loss but also social excommunication on top of which is governmental forsaking. Shamsie, by narrating the story of a family with the history of terrorist father and terrorist brother, intervenes in time by asserting that such families deserve more attention, both

socially and governmentally, to keep them in solidarity with the nation by being more warm and considering to them rather than putting them under constant surveillance and demonizing them as 'Others' for the misgivings of their family members 'lost' to fundamentalism and terrorism. Bitching at them and stripping them of their citizen status by revoking their national status is no solution to the problem of rising fundamentalism among its Muslim diasporic communities but only an indication of the rising Western obsession with Islamophobia. As these extremist and exclusive steps of states, fighting with fundamentalism and terrorism, will not only encourage Islamophobes but will also incite more aggressive terrorist enlisting and alienation from the subjects already pushed to margins and peripheries. Instead of introducing more draconian laws of immigration and terrorism the governments need to check the popularity of Islamophobia trending in their societies after 9/11 and 7/7.

Literature Review:

Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire*, immediately included to the Man Booker longlist for 2017 alongside its release, attracted a large number of reviewers who positively noted and appreciated the novel's adaptation of Sophocles' time tested tragedy *Antigone* as well as Shamsie's attiring the story with much pressing contemporary concerns regarding the new dilemmas faced by Pakistani-British diasporic community after the terrorist events of 9/11 and 7/7 that have changed the shape of the world.

Many of the early reviews of the novel restricted themselves to bringing forward the similarities and differences of artistic execution, on the part of Kamila Shamsie in writing of *Home Fire*, from Sophocles' play *Antigone*. Natalie Haynes in *The Guardian* (2017) reads *Home Fire* as "a contemporary reworking of Sophocles" and explains Shamsie's "debt to Jean Anouilh's adaptation of *Antigone* than to the Sophoclean version" because Shamsie like Anouilh makes Aneeka (*Antigone*) the younger sister of Isma (*Ismene*) whereas with Sophocles' original version it is vice versa. Lakshana Palat in *Hindustan Times* (2017) also reads the novel as "[a] modern retelling of a popular Greek mythology classic" and finds mythology as a favorite retreat of Kamila Shamsie to which she keeps re-coursing somehow in all her novels. Katharine Weber, in *The Seattle Times* (2017) pointing out *Home Fire* similar to Sophocles' *Antigone* in dealing with the theme of "a family's dark legacy", observes that Shamsie's novel "treats its source [*Antigone*] much more distantly" by providing it more recent and contemporaneous context. Both, Arifa Akbar in *London Evening Standard* (2017) and Lucy

Scholes in *The National* (2017), giving the same titles to their respective reviews, read Shamsie's novel as "a contemporary take on a Greek tragedy".

As some early reviewers have highlighted the Sophoclean baggage that Shamsie has carried out and improvised upon, some other reviewers have also recognized the contemporaneous depth and relevance of the novel to its perturbed post-9/11 times. Claire Chambers in *The Hindu* (2017) dubs *Home Fire* as "a post-9/11 *Antigone*" and quoting from Gayatri Spivak reiterates her argument regarding the attitudes to the Other- very much subject of *Home Fire* too- by observing that "we must 'listen to the [O]ther as if it were a self, neither to punish nor to acquit'- even when that [O]ther is a terrorist". Parallel to the question raised by Spivak that 'Can the Subaltern speak?', Chambers improvises upon the question by rephrasing it as "can the oppressor listen?" and keeping in mind the complexities of the present times answers her question in a "no" herself. Chambers marking the novel *Home Fire* "[a]ll about hearing and being heard", observes that it too raises the same question: 'Can the oppressor listen?', albeit regardless of the answer.

Dwight Garner in *The New York Times* (2017) highlights "immigration, jihad and family love" as the main themes of *Home Fire*, whereas Michael Schaub in *NPR* (2017) observes that "tension between Muslims and Westerners in the post-9/11 era form the basis for *Home Fire*", although it "puts a topical spin on ancient Greek tragedy". Julia Felsenthal's review-cum-interview in *Vogue* (2017) traces the thematic link of Shamsie's *Home Fire* with Theresa May's efforts in 2014 to change the British laws of citizenship by "revok[ing] the citizenship of naturalized citizens suspected of terrorism". She, observing that how *Home Fire*, initially started by Shamsie as a contemporary dramatic adaptation of Sophocles' *Antigone* at the request of her friend Jatinder Varma who runs Tara Arts: a theatre in London, shifted shapes from a would be drama to a novel, maintains that *Home Fire* "is *Antigone* in the age of ISIS" and also stands successful prospects of being turned into a movie. John Boyne in *The Irish Times* (2017) also marks the timely intervention of *Home Fire* in the wake of a complex world. He observes that the novel with its "nuanced examination of the place of Muslims in a hostile world" is indeed a "provocative work from a brave author" which at the same time runs the risk of infuriating a particular set of "readers expecting a more black and white depiction of terrorists versus non-terrorists, Muslims versus non-Muslim, the role of the state versus the

right of the civilian". Abeer Hoque in *The Aerogram* (2017) marks the intensity of the subject matter of the novel that stretches "from family ties and community to the wider sweep of global terrorism, religion and radicalism, immigration and nativism, and what we do for love and war".

The brief review of some of the immediate critical positions of the reviewers of *Home Fire* brings forward both the streaks of interpretation to the novel: one highlighting Shamsie's playfulness of Sophocles' *Antigone* plot and the other referring to the contemporaneous side of her novel that goes beyond *Antigone*. Nevertheless, it is this contemporaneous aspect of the novel beyond *Antigone* that is the subject of our interpretative interpolation which by contextualizing the concepts of 'Westoxification'- literal translation of the Persian word 'Gharbzadegi', and 'Fundamentalism' as seen through the perspective of the Postcolonial Studies, aims at mapping the post-9/11 complications of diasporic identity in the fictive representation of Pakistani-British Muslims.

Theoretic Framework:

Chantal Zabus in her *The Future of Postcolonial Studies* (2015), referring to the so called impasse faced by the Postcolonial Studies by the end of the twentieth century that declared its "imminent death" by considering it as "an exhausted paradigm", locates a new breath in the discipline of Postcolonial Studies after its "intra-actions with other identity markers and differentials such as,...comparative literature; religion studies; ecocriticism; queer theory; transgender theory; and the new technologies" as it enters the second decade of the third millennium (Zabus 4-5). As Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin in their 2002 edition of *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Postcolonial Literature* had pointed out that "since the Enlightenment the sacred has been ambivalent area in a Western thinking that has uniformly tended to privilege the secular" so they found it urgent for postcolonial critics and theorists to indulge in the "debates about the sacred" as they recognized it to be "the most rapidly expanding area of post-colonial study" (Ashcroft et al. 212). Pramod K. Nayar in his book: *Postcolonialism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (2010), observes that the beginning of a "Transnational terrorism" since the event of 9/11 and the subsequent "war on terrorism" have questioned the postcolonial "themes of ambivalence, diaspora, and hybridity" as the "borders have become porous to terror and migration" and the West has reclined to colonial binaries of 'us' and 'them' by policing their territorial boundaries more ferociously than before and "constructing itself in an antagonistic

relationship with the Islamic and Asian Other” (Nayar 200). This post-9/11 Islamophobia, according to Nayar, can be corrected if the Asian writers decide to take Postcolonialism ahead by writing about “mutuality of potential destruction, precarity, and harm” (Nayar quoting Judith Butler) for both extremes of the ‘us/them’ binary and also about an ‘other Asia’ that is ‘multicultural’, ‘tolerant’, and ‘adaptive’ therefore fixing the crisis of Postcolonialism (203-204). Kamila Shamsie’s *Home Fire* fictively imagines this ‘mutuality of potential destruction, precarity, and harm’ through her characters of Karamat Lone and Parvaiz Pasha in a Pakistani-British diasporic setting.

Klaus Stierstorfer through his essay “Fundamentalism and Postcoloniality: Beyond ‘Westoxification’?” in Chantal Zabus’ *The Future of Postcolonial Studies* (2015) addresses the downplay of religion (the ‘sacred’ with Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin) “in the early cartographies of Postcolonial Studies” by calling for an active studying and “theorizing of the place of religion” in the discipline of Postcolonial Studies in the directions of “both in its historical ramifications and in its present-day importance” (Stierstorfer 109-110). Stierstorfer, giving the ‘postcolonial explanation’ of Islamic “fundamentalism as a socioreligious phenomenon”, sees it as a form of ‘writing back’ or in other words ‘striking’ back to the processes of secular Westernization in the Colonial and Postcolonial times (102). He notes that colonialism as a vehicle of importing modern Western culture and values helped invade and sabotage indigenous Islamic culture and values therefore causing the reactionary rise of Islamic “fundamentalism-cum-terrorism” fight against “secular modernization” caused by ‘Westernization’ or better to be called as ‘Westoxification’ within postcolonial societies (104-105).

Another “tangible and imminent threat than the unease caused by fundamentalisms emerging in postcolonial societies”, observes Stierstorfer, is that of “the heightened Western fear of fundamentalism arising from within its own, increasingly multicultural societies” formed by the “migrants from former colonies who have constituted diasporic communities in the Western metropolises” (106). As he points out Hanif Kureishi’s “My Son the Fanatic” (1994) and *Black Album* (1995) as well as John Updike’s *The Terrorist* (2006) as literary fictions exemplifying “fundamentalist potentials in diasporic communities”, likewise the present study of Kamila Shamsie’s *Home Fire* projects the complications of Muslim identity squashed between the two extreme positions of ‘Westoxification’ and violent and terrorist ‘Fundamentalism’ of Pakistani- British Muslim diasporic communities in Britain. Stierstorfer

suggests the practice of a specific critical inquiry in the field of Postcolonial Studies supported by the Religion Studies that is "more global" and "less Eurocentric" as well as comprehensive of "local and culture specific contexts" of fundamentalism as this 'interralation' of Postcolonial Studies with other disciplines is extremely valuable for its thriving future (111).

The study in hand by combining the concepts of 'Westoxification' (a postcolonial situation of Islamic societies) and 'Fundamentalism' (a reaction to the 'Westoxification'), as given by Klaus Stierstorfer, aims at carving a methodological theoretic framework to inform our study of Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* that marks both the rival social trends of 'Westoxification' and 'Fundamentalism' in Pakistani-British Muslim diasporic community in Britain through its portrayal of the characters of Karamat Lone and Parvaiz Pasha.

Discussion:

Beyond Antigone

Shamsie's *Home Fire* is no doubt heavily indebted to Sophocles' *Antigone* (441/440 BC) as it too raises the themes of the relationship of the individual to the state; subordination of the individual to the state and its laws; and the relationship of morality to state laws (Fainlight and Littman L). The close spellings proximity to the names of Sophoclean characters: Isma-Ismene; Aneeka-Antigone; Parvaiz-Polyneices; Karamat-Creon; and Eamonn-Haemon, is suggestively maintained by Shamsie. The characters' radius of actions and emotions also predictably follows Sophocles' *Antigone* closely. Nevertheless Shamsie allows her novel to reach in its scope beyond *Antigone* by incorporating an urgent sense of contemporary times post-9/11. Shamsie replaces the socio-political contexts of Thebes, stricken by murder, incest, pollution and plague, with the socio-political contexts of present day post-9/11 and post-7/7 Britain, plagued by the contradictory social trends of Islamophobia, Fundamentalism, and Terrorism among its citizens due to insensitive state laws.

Where *Home Fire* heavily draws from *Antigone* plot and improvises upon it, Shamsie seems to be deeply enamored by her viewing of the Mani Ratnam movie *Dil Se* (1998), meaning literally 'from heart', that explores the delicacies and complexities of love through the characters of Meghna (Manisha Koirala) and Amarnath Varma (Shahrukh Khan) in the political backdrop of terrorist insurgency led by the Northeast Indian dissidents from the Indian state of Assam.

The novel's link with the Indian film *Dil Se* is established when the author shows Eamonn listening to one of the songs: "Chal Chaiyyan Chaiyyan" from the movie (Shamsie 87) and also when the novel reaches its end by suggesting a blast (260), similar to the one at the end of the movie *Dil Se*, that ensues after Aneeka runs into Eamonn to hug him knowing that he has been tied to a suicide belt. The character of Aneeka not only borrows its features from *Antigone* plot but also incorporates the mysteriousness and unpredictable nature of the headstrong character of Meghna- a suicide bomber in the film *Dil Se*- intercepted by her obsessive lover Amarnath Varma and both are blasted into gory scatters by the bomb in the detonation vest worn by Meghna in the last frame of the movie. Shamsie improvises upon it by blasting both the lovers: Aneeka and Eamonn by the bomb in the suicide belt imposed upon Eamonn by the terrorists, seeking revenge on Karamat Lone for his obsessive 'Westoxification' and making anti-Muslim laws, hidden among the mob and media personnel present at the park near the British Deputy High Commission in Karachi where Aneeka is keeping vigil to her brother's dead body and playing upon the nerves of British authorities and citizens to allow her brother's dead body a decent and proper burial in Britain as that of a British citizen and Eamonn has joined her too to show his solidarity with Aneeka's cause by defying his father.

Although Shamsie's borrowings from *Antigone* and the Indian movie *Dil Se* give the impression of the author's finding easy exits from the creative complexities of impossible impasses faced by authors in routine while writing, still they serve the purpose of making a story wedged deep in the contemporaneous history post-9/11 with its complexities and delicacies that need to be dealt with and brought to notice. Shamsie, no doubt, goes beyond her sources of inspiration for the story of her novel by allowing it detailed nuances of its own deeply critical of the socio-political context it is set in.

The social context of Islamophobia in British society is clearly shown by Shamsie at a number of junctures in the novel. Given the familial legacy of a terrorist father and a terrorist brother, it is no wonder to expect such a cumbersome and humiliating interrogation on Heathrow Airport, London awaiting Isma while she is leaving for America (Shamsie 3). Nevertheless the event of spitting on hijab wearing Aneeka as she reports to Eamonn (90), the cause of her immediate bathing as soon as she reaches his apartment, is purely an instance of racism and Islamophobia. Aneeka, talking to Eamonn about the achievements of British Muslims, observes "that among the things this country will let

you achieve if you're Muslim is torture, rendition, detention without trial, airport interrogation, [and] spies in your mosques..." (90-91). The language used in British newspaper stories, during Parvaiz Pasha's burial controversy, also confirms the Islamophobia trending in British society as Shamsie shows the British newspapers using the Islamophobic epithets for Aneeka and dead Parvaiz like: "Hojabi! Pervy Pasha's twin sister"; "Aneeka 'knickers' Pasha"; and "Muslim fanatic Parvaiz 'pervy' Pasha" (204).

Parvaiz Pasha, before leaving for Raqqa, Syria to join ISIS, holds his views in the similar direction as that of Aneeka's regarding the achievements of Muslims in British society, when he reiterates the white British stereotypes that all the beautiful Muslim women actually need protection from Muslim men who "need to be detained, harassed, [and] pressed against the ground with heel on [their] throats" (132). Farooq, the recruiter of warriors as well as man power for ISIS, fans Parvaiz' disgust for the British racist and Islamophobic society by convincing him that Britain has lost its multiculturalism by revising its welfare state plans on selective basis. According to him Britain was a great country once "[w]hen it understood that a welfare state was something you built up instead of tearing down, when it saw migrants as people to be welcomed, not turned away" (144). He believes that it is this failure of the multicultural British state, with its receding welfare benefits, that calls upon the creation of a Utopian Muslim welfare state. Farooq convinces Parvaiz that such a state which he calls "The Caliphate" (145) and "al-Dawla" (158) has come to existence where people like Parvaiz and himself can go and live with the true enactment of the guiding principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity (144). Fawaz A. Gerges in his book *ISIS: A History* (2016) records that ISIS is headed by Ibrahim Ibn Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri al Samarrai under nom de guerre: Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. ISIS, a self-proclaimed utopian Sunni Islamic state, wants to revive Islamic Caliphate to fight its enemies identified as Shia regimes like Iran and Syria as well as Europe, America, and Israel (Gerges 1-22). Parvaiz, too young and naïve to understand the intricacies and complexities of international politics and also unsatisfied with his life, his neighborhood, and everything else about Britain (Shamsie 123), is trapped into Farooq's descriptions of ISIS and the false utopian promises it makes.

Obsessive 'Westoxification' of Karamat Lone

Karamat Lone, son of a "seamstress mother" (60) and "a newspaper-kiosk vendor" (62), is a second generation Pakistani-British

who has risen to the stature of British Home Secretary, not solely basing on his acumen but also due to his qualities to integrate completely into British culture. Karamat is a complex character. Like Creon of *Antigone* Karamat's claim to the position of British Home Secretary is weak too. He is not white despite all his integrationist efforts and his position in politics is not backed by the ethnic and religious community of British Muslim diaspora he belongs to. Therefore it is natural for him to behave as a staunch believer in British nationhood and unwavering following of the state laws to justify his claim to British politics, British public office, and nationality as well. He is a mimic man with no ambivalence. His rich Irish-American wife Teresa O'Flynn; his elder son's Muslim name 'Ayman' disguised in Irish spellings: 'Eamonn'; and his daughter's English name: 'Emily', are the indicators of his Westernization. Due to his obsessive following of the Western culture, for which we will use the word 'Westoxification', as coined by Stierstorfer, in our further discussion, he is despised by his British Muslim voters, so much so that since they "voted him out in the elections", he contests elections from "a safe seat with largely white constituency" now (35). Being an alleged atheist with a strong stomach for costly wines he is labelled by the members of British Muslim community as a "[s]ellout, coconut, opportunist, traitor" (35) and Isma calls him with epithets like 'Mr. British Values', 'Mr. Strong on Security', and 'Mr. Striding Away from Muslimness' (52). He is so much enamored and obsessed with the white British culture and values that his concept of national identity is completely in line with the white British. He is equally Islamophobic as they are. Rather he is so much 'Westoxified' that he is more British than the white British themselves. And when it comes to dealing with the new phenomenon of a rising trend among the young Muslim British to join the terrorist organizations- their way of responding to the white Islamophobia post-9/11 and 7/7 bombings, Karamat Lone has to, as Aneeka observes, "prove he's one of them [white British], not one of us [British Muslims]" (34). As Karamat Lone had dealt with the issue of Adil Pasha, while he was an MP, so he does with the case of Parvaiz Pasha but this time more mercilessly as he is British Home Secretary now. Since his taking the charge of the office of the Home Secretary he has "revoked the citizenship of all dual nationals who have left Britain to join... enemies" (188).

Shamsie draws the caricature of Karamat Lone modelled on Theresa May: the former British Home Secretary (2010-2016) and now the British Premier since 2016. The anti-immigration and anti-terrorist laws introduced by her are given a mirror image through the laws made

by the fictive character of Karamat Lone. Shamsie, through her fictive imaginary, seems to make a political statement on these laws, timely enough, as they at times lack compassion and forgiveness. However she complicates the situation by imagining a Britain with a Home Secretary of Muslim background which, according to her fictive portrayal of Karamat Lone, is only possible and achievable when such a character is intoxicated with the West, so much so, that his true lineage and religious liaison goes into complete oblivion. Shamsie problematizes such a 'Westoxification' because it will not only be Islamophobic but also attract a more fundamentalist response, lethal enough, to further tear apart the multicultural fabric of British society as shown through the fictive desertion of the Muslim British youth like Farooq and Parvaiz Pasha to join the fundamentalists and terrorists.

Fundamentalist Roots, Terrorist Routes: A Case of Adil Pasha and Pervaiz Pasha

Shamsie's portrayal of Parvaiz Pasha as a 19 years old youth joining the terrorist state of ISIS as a member of its media wing is equally complex as that of Karamat Lone's. She converges in Parvaiz' character the socio-political context of British Islamophobic society, the family history of a jihadi father, and the psychological implications of emotional exchanges between siblings. Although there is less canvas given to the character of Adil Pasha and reasons for his becoming a jihadi, it can be assumed that his inability to find a permanent job, as Isma observes that "[h]e tried his hands at many things in his life- guitarist, salesman, gambler, con man, jihadi- but he was most consistent in the role of absentee father" (Shamsie 47), turned him into a drifter who could not tie himself to any single thing. Unlike Aneeka, who has won a scholarship for a University law program at LSE, Parvaiz is drifting like his father as he is not offered any scholarship and there are not enough funds in the family kitty to continue his studies and as for his career in music is concerned, Isma doesn't deem much coming out of it. The real blow comes for Parvaiz when Isma announces to put the family home on rent to pay the mortgage on it as she herself is leaving for America to join a fellowship program for PhD and Aneeka and Parvaiz can stay with Auntie Naseem at her house. Such a makeshift plan also endorsed by Aneeka who knows best that Parvaiz needs a separate room as a studio for practicing and making music which can be realized by taking Isma's room after she leaves, estranges Parvaiz from his twin Aneeka too. Aneeka: his partner in adventures and music and Parvaiz: a

custodian of Aneeka's dating secrets both have the links of the chain, pairing the twins, gone loose.

Farooq, a recruiter of warriors for the state of ISIS, is a son of a chicken hearted failure of a jihadi and for the atonement of his father's shortcomings he is searching for a perfect legacy of a jihadi father and son. Parvaiz with his father's jihadi history can be the perfect continuation of fundamentalist roots by following the terrorist routes. Farooq rekindles Parvaiz' slumbering ambers of frustration with a racist and Islamophobic state and brainwashes his musical and peace loving self. His images, of an Islamophobic England with its compromises upon its identity as welfare state, become a cinema screen for Parvaiz, playing in his mind, at loop, all the images of racism and 'Othering' that he has suffered throughout his life till now. Parvaiz, who has spent all his childhood and now his youth too in silence about his father, is pleased to know the alternative picture of his father as Abu Parvaiz. Parvaiz's fellowship in pain, given by Farooq to remind him of his father's pains while in detention in Bagram, helps him embrace his masculinity that he was missing in the company of women: his sisters Isma and Aneeka. Parvaiz is ready to claim his roots and tread upon the routes of his father under the nom de guerre: Mohammad bin Bagram (158). He leaves for Raqqa, the capital of the state of ISIS, to join its media wing under the headship of Abu Raees to assist film the beheadings and torturing of the enemies of the Caliphate, Al Dawla.

Shamsie, through her fictive portrait of Parvaiz, complicates the social situation of a jihadi's son by showing multiple motives at work in making him what he has become least knowing that the routes he has taken never lead back to home even if he wished to return. The fundamentalist and terrorist family history becomes an ever clinging Albatross that cannot be got rid of like Cain's mark. Parvaiz at the doorstep of British Consulate in Istanbul clearly knew that "he was the terrorist son of a terrorist father... He didn't know how to break out of these currents of history, how to shake free of the demons he had attached to his own heels" (171). Shamsie seems to make a political interjection as expressed through her mouthpiece of a retired Special Branch officer, quoted in the newspaper story titled: "How Many Parvaiz Pashas will it take for the Government to wake up?", who observes that "It's a cause of profound concern that the children of jihadis, many of them British born, are not closely watched by the state" (201). The children of the jihadis need to be dealt with compassion: not through

'Othering' surveillance but through an integrating Islamophiliac social sentiment to keep them tied to the warmth of home fire in the first place.

The Extremist Worlds and Love as Collateral Damage

The post-9/11 scenario has collapsed the concept of hybridity in postcolonial framework as third space and has reverted to the binaries of 'Us/Them; West/Islam; Terrorized/Terrorist' (Nayar 200). Between these extremes of the binary there is no intermediate third space marked by hybridity and ambivalence. Where the post-9/11 world has reinstated the binary of 'Us/Them' among the Westerners and Muslims, it has further complicated the plight of postcolonial mimic men. The mimic men too have no choice left of an intermediate third space rather they have adopted the 'Us' side of the binary by taking complete sides with its once upon a time masters from the Colonial times by relinquishing the third (interstitial) space and the other end of 'Them' is left to the terrorists (Muslims). The peace loving members of both the binaries like Eamonn and Aneeka (West/ Muslim), with their scope of complicating and questioning both the extremes of 'Us/Them: Terrorized/ Terrorist' binary, have no other fate left but to serve as the fodder to these extremes in this post-9/11 world. If there is any intermediate third space left between these binaries, any longer, then it is the space of a vacuum left for collateral damage of both the binaries as symbolically forwarded by Kamila Shamsie through representation of her fictive characters of Eamonn and Aneeka. Shamsie depicts successfully that how this post-9/11 complex world does not allow any of the binary ends to leave their space. Any dissident from his respective end of the binary like Parvaiz Pasha, after recognizing the paranoiac horror of extremism perching at each end of the 'Us/Them' binary, does not have any space to occupy. He has to be propelled to that intermediate black hole of collateral damage like Eamonn and Aneeka. And what is worst is that the fate of collateral damage is not granted to them by their enemies rather from their own end of the binary. Eamonn is forsaken by his Westernized father Karamat Lone and Parvaiz Pasha is decreed to be murdered by his own ISIS colleagues from Raqqa, Syria when he attempts to reach British Consulate in Istanbul in order to reclaim his British Passport and Identity.

Conclusion:

Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* is an example of the ever growing agency of Pakistani English fiction writers to participate and interject in the ongoing dialogues around Islamophobic representations of Pakistani-

British diasporic Muslims. By portraying both the trending streaks of obsessive ‘Westoxification’ and ‘Fundamentalism’ among the Pakistani-British diasporic Muslims, she complicates their position as, for her, it is more important to reveal the background Socio-political and psychological processes that make them adopt their respective stand points than to simply portray them as black and white representations of ‘Westoxification’ and ‘Fundamentalism’. It is “the mutuality of potential destruction, precarity, and harm” that both the extremes of ‘Westoxification’ and ‘Fundamentalism’ can cause to each other, as observed earlier, that needs to be highlighted by both fictional and extra-fictional texts. Such a newly acquired agency, on the part of Pakistani English fiction writers, to project alternative cultural imaginary through their creative fictions, in order to complicate the misleadingly single dimensional images of Pakistani-British diasporic Muslims, is masterfully exploited by Kamila Shamsie in *Home Fire*, through her compassionate snapshots of Karamat Lone and Parvaiz Pasha which can help reframe and reconfigure the default settings of the monolithic and homogenous imaginings of secularism into ‘Westoxification’ and conscientious observations of religious rituals into ‘Fundamentalism’ and terrorist intolerance. The fact of the matter is that both the currents of ‘Westoxification’ and ‘Fundamentalism’ among the British Muslim diasporic communities are far more complex than meets the eye and need a compassionate and open-hearted understanding by both the governmental offices and the British society to neutralize them and harness them with an equal sense of duty and responsibility towards nationhood. It is Islamophilia and not Islamophobia that can spread an integrationist message across all the British subjects.

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