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THE RELUCTANT ORIENTAL: MANIFESTING THE 18TH CENTURY EUROPE'S LATENT EGYPTIAN THROUGH CHANGEZ

Sidra Ahmad¹, Selina Aziz², Amer Akhtar³, Neelum Almas⁴

^{1 2 3 4} Department of English, Foundation University Islamabad (FUI), Pakistan

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Abstract

This paper analyses Mohsin Hamid's bestseller *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* in the light of Edward Said's theorization of Orientalism to assert that the occident's attitude of exclusion that the British exhibited towards the Egyptians is still prevalent in the White man's attitude towards the Muslims. Changez moulds himself in the Western construct only to be expunged from the circle and renounced as the other who is doomed to destruction. We also contend that Said's conceptualization of Orientalism based on what happened in Egypt is valid even now, more so after 9/11.

Decades ago Egypt was the scene of one of the most horrific intrusions when the British colonized Egypt as part of their great expansion. The most outstanding aspect of this invasion was that it was not just a physical conquest but it was a discursive event that formulated Egypt in such a way that not only justified the conquest, but made the conquest a natural demand of the situation. It was the discursiveness of the enterprise that allowed expansion to the concept of Orient which included all the heterogeneous entities from Egypt to the Far East. Said (1993) feels that the basis of the binary was established when the discourse cast the Europeans as the "knowers" and the Orientals as "the "subjects of knowledge". This basic and "bigger" division leads to "smaller" divisions and ultimately results in establishing one as the powerful as the other as the powerless.

In this article, we look at Mohsin Hamid's bestseller in the light of Said's concepts of latent and manifest orientalism with a view to showing that the latent binary of inferior oriental that was established in Egypt is still valid, nay a powerful descriptor of the divisions of the world only that it has now become manifest.

Edward Said launched the subject of postcolonialism with his signature work *Orientalism*. The very terms 'self', 'other', and 'stereotyping' are the heart and soul of postcolonialism. It is concerned with the formation of identity for the orient. Said (1993) in his book *Orientalism* focuses on the binary constructs. According to Said (1993), the Europeans have divided the world on unequal grounds and have divided themselves based on ours/theirs. They have done so to show their individuality. The Europeans call the east as the 'other' whereas the 'west' as 'us' which creates psychological marginalization in the people of the east which is the worst form of colonialism.

Ghosh (2013) in his article "I was not certain where I belonged": Integration and Alienation in Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* sheds light on the perplexity of Changez when he fails to understand his lover (Erica) and rejected by the American set up. Changez's confusion is evident when he is been caught between the two worlds and remains baffled to either assimilate or amalgamate in the American set up or distanced himself from the American roots. Ghosh (2013) says that from the very beginning of his life in the American culture, Changez did the utmost effort to assimilate into the American setup. Changez's ultimate desire to become part of the American system and for that matter, he repeatedly showed his Americanism to look prominent. As Changez says and Ghosh (2013) quoted, "At Princeton, I conducted myself in public like a young prince, generous and carefree" (p. 49). It is observed that Changez wants the same treatment as that of Americans when he desperately wanted to integrate into the American set up and that was before the attack.

Kiran (2013) in her article, "*Identity crisis as Reflected in Selected Works: The Reluctant Fundamentalist by Mohsin Hamid and Black Album by Hanif Kureishi*" states that the identity of Pakistanis is always in question. They are treated as 'foreigners' in the other land and even misinterpreted and mistaken in their own world after the attack of 9/11. The paradox of our times is that we have divided ourselves in sects and every sect has different religious beliefs and teachings based on the ideology. Different clans have different opinions related to the particular issue and sometimes conflict with others results in the brutal killing of the opposing side with the negative identity construction on the part of the conservatives. As Kiran pointed out that, "Salman Taseer was a Pakistani but he was imposed with identity as a blasphemous person" (Kiran, 2013, p. 35). It is an explicit message that people are not the choosers of their identity as they cannot choose and construct their identity but it's the society that designs it for others. They in turn are formed by assessment or based on assumptions.

Patil Vishnu and Nawale Arvind in their article "*Mohsin Hamid's The Reluctant Fundamentalist: A Pakistani Raisin in the Sun*" talk about the *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* as the narrative of every second person going to their dream world to fulfill their dreams. According to Patil and Nawale, the philosophy around which the novel tends to move is a chronicle of harsh events real hard to absorb or digest. As people are interacting with each other and because of awareness and exposure, the world is becoming a global village. This is only the outcome of technology. Due to modern technology, which has created fears and agitation in the people and as a result of which the weaker or the inferior groups have to suffer is nothing but a simulation, which helps to project such ideas. Patil and Nawale quoted Slovek Zizek in their work

and stated, “The clearest indication of this move is the shift in the use of the term ‘transparency’, modernist technology is ‘transparent’ in the sense of retaining the illusion of an insight ‘how the machine works;’” (p. 74).

Eads (2010) in her article, *‘Imagining America’* visualizes America from the point of view of Mohsin Hamid. According to Eads (2010), Hamid has led a life in the same way as his title character. Both the author and the character are similar in many ways and it is not wrong to say that Changez is Hamid’s imagination of himself. Eads (2010) quoted William Carlos Williams’s definition of imagination and argues that imagination is nothing but an image, which keeps on changing. It is not only a fantasy or a hallucination nor a phenomenon that leads or draws away from the truth but moves in the direction of truth. It is used as a means to represent relationships. Hamid’s novel is a mixture of deprivation, friendship, confusion, and damage. According to Eads (2010), *“The Reluctant Fundamentalist”* provides an insight into the lives of people in the present times and serves as fresh breathing for the people.

The literature available on 9/11 is massive. Many researchers have written bulky volumes related to 9/11 and it’s the aftermath. Some have also explored the fact that to survive in the other world, it is necessary to conceal the identity. Identities are usually stable but the versions of these writers illustrate the idea that the identities of Muslims are never permanent but keep on changing. The present research will focus on the idea that trauma in any form is trauma. The Muslims have to face unending trauma in many senses and with the rise of every second American President, this trauma is again taking momentum. The present work will talk about othering and stereotyping which have created boundaries between the people of both worlds.

The plot of the novel, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* on the surface level seems simple and the text appears to be systematic and organized in every form. The story revolves around a Pakistani-born boy named Changez who is inspired by America and idealizes America to the extent that he wanted to go to America and live the American dream. America became his ultimate fantasy and destiny but when he went to America, he found out that things are opposite; they are entirely different from what was expected and from reality. As Peter Barry pointed out in the book *Beginning theory* that, “Reality is the unquestioned norm” (Barry, 2002, p. 127). He remained skeptical throughout and was the constant source of suspicion. Changez sometimes had to face a lot of embarrassment at the hands of the Americans and when too much of the American and the anti-American feelings gets harder to absorb; Changez was forced to move back to his homeland. On the deeper level, the story is not simple rather intricate if one feels, it has a lot of substance to think and re-think especially in the context of orient or Arabs.

The reading of the text of *“The Reluctant Fundamentalist”* takes us to an alarming situation where we can see a Pakistani/orient Changez in a dominating role. The text opens with Changez sitting in Anarkali with an American. The opening sentences inform us that the novel seems to be breaking away the typical postcolonial traditions. As in the postcolonial novels, it is the norm that the ruling class enjoys the advantage of speaking and others are bound to be silent but in this novel, we could see a Pakistani/ orient Changez who is raising his voice and giving vent to his feelings in front of the American which is surprising in itself. Changez in the novel represents the orient, which according to the occident is colored, naive, and is in a weak position whereas the American represents the white man, which symbolizes the Eurocentric

world and is the harbinger of tyranny. The whites are foregrounded, can maintain their hegemony over the world, whereas the orient is helpless and powerless. They are always found in miseries, troubles, suppressed, and always have to face humiliations at the hands of the white man.

The specialty of the novel lies exactly where the tables are turned and circumstances seem favorable for Changez or the orient /other that's why he is speaking before an American and doing a form of catharsis about the treatment he has received at the hands of the Americans. There are other characters in the novel as well but Changez is speaking most of the time which means that the story revolves around him, he is the central character of the novel, and other characters are indirectly involved and have a role to play in Changez's life. It seems that he is the actual affectee of the attitude of the occident so he is utilizing the forum and talking all the time and breaking the stereotypes that are attached with the very word Arabs or Muslims. Changez is the silent other who have no authority to challenge nor talk back. It is surprising to see the 'silent other' getting a voice. The role of an American is also shocking where he remains mute throughout and it seems that he is giving space to the orient, which is something not normal in the occidental world.

It is also true that we can easily recognize the Americans because of their looks and the dominating roles played by them. Changez too recognized the American with the help of his bearings. As Changez says to the American, "It was your bearing that allowed me to identify you" (Hamid, 2007, p. 2). The detached, aloof, and rigid nature of the American makes him distant and different from the rest of the world. The postcolonial literature is filled with the idea of domination over the rest of the world on the part of the colonizer. The American is read in the role of the colonizer and Changez as the colonized. As dominance is in the roots of Americans, so we can easily feel the reaction of an American just from his expressions. On one hand, he is not speaking which is an example of his arrogant and rude nature, that they cannot accept anybody or their ideas easily and on the other hand, his gestures represent that he feels displeasure and disgust. He is not satisfied with the remarks made by the orient /Changez. As Edward Said writes in *Orientalism*, "America has dominated the orient" (Said, 1993, p. 4).

America is given the status of 'melting pot' where people from a different country can come and assimilate in the pot with no discrimination and prejudice for people of other cultures. It is the story of America in the olden times but in the novel we could see something similar but with different outcomes. America is given the image of a melting pot with the impression that it welcomes all the people from all corners of the world. It tries to exercise its power by giving the message to the people coming to America that she can accept people from everywhere. There is some attraction or appeal in the American society that people from all nook and corners look forward to America for fulfilling their dreams, pursuit of happiness, and for better prospects and opportunities with the view that it will provide equal chances and better living for everyone. America is a 'dreamland' for many outsiders and many other cultures. Changez too seemed to be attracted to America and was living an 'American dream' and to make his dream come true he went to America to study at Princeton University and feel happy for that achievement. As Mohsin Hamid writes and Hamid explains, "This is a dream come true" (Hamid, 2007, p. 3).

Changez from the beginning had to make an extra effort to adjust to American society. He has to struggle hard to get selected in 'Underwood Samson' which is a valuation firm. It is typical of the occident /Americans that they exert their superiority in every way. The orientals have to struggle and travel a long way to survive in the occidental world. The life of orient is not that easy in the foreign world, they are selected, tested, grilled, roasted, approved, disapproved, and finally sucked out. From the very beginning of the novel, we could experience the occidental hegemony over the orientals, as Changez has gone to America so he has to tolerate too much of the European-ness. He was attacked through European doctrines and dogmas. As Said writes in *Orientalism*; "Europe was always in a position of strength" (Said 1993, p. 40). Except for Changez, there were no hard and fast rules for the Americans, which are the step towards racism /othering. The occident has different standards for the natives and different for the orient. The occident has many chances and opportunities available to them whereas the orientals have to face marginalization at the hands of the occident but still they are extracted and spitted out.

For the Americans attraction and impression are everything. The occident finds attraction in the orient and colonizes them. They always go after the persona and worship the idea of 'public persona.' Changez was interviewed by a serious-looking occident called Jim. As this occident wants the best for themselves so Changez was selected on the account of being bright and best. It is true that the occident finds the orient as something exotic, fascinating, and alarming to them, in the same way to Jim, Changez was a fantasy, and his brilliance, talent, and intelligence were the sources of attraction for Jim. He immediately selected Changez for the job, which in a way means that he colonized Changez for America's best interest and for good. The American system is based on money and profit and they give more importance to work rather than humans and so for that matter for them the system is more important. They are just like emotion-less and insensitive robots that only work to make their system flourish. As in the interview, Jim asked Changez and Hamid writes to "Sell yourself" (Hamid, 2007, p. 7). This brings us to the idea that for occident the orient is just like a tool and for Jim, Changez is a tool or a commodity to be sold out at a very good price, which is a reflection of American imperialism. It seems that the orient is in the grip of imperialism and that too for the interest of the occident and the interest is not related to the benefits of the people but the Government. These Americans have strict rules and opposite thinking patterns. As the American system is based on, profit/loss, or we may call it professionalism. They cannot accept any mistake at any instant because they believe in being the best and top. As Sherman says to the new recruiters talking about their rankings, "You will be out the door" (Hamid, 2007, p. 39). It is the indication that America can reject anyone at any time which means that the people especially the orientals have no guarantee of their future in America. They cannot afford to damage their economy and mistake at any instant might be dangerous both for the masters/ slaves, rulers/ ruled. As they go by the rule of "Focus on Fundamentals" (Hamid, 2007, p. 112).

From the very outset, we could feel the disparity between America and Pakistan, which can never fade away but kept on increasing. The person who took the job interview of Changez made every effort to register that he is hungry and an outsider. He made every effort to humiliate Changez by making him inferior and by telling him

that you are here because of us and you cannot do anything at your own expense. He tries to give the message that without the accident, you are nothing. It is because of us that you will be recognized and you have no potential in you, rather we are providing you a ground to grow, compete, and be recognized in the world. It is a direct message for the orient that it is not an a bed of roses to assimilate into American culture and set up. The American (Jim) tries to realize Changez that he is low and backward that he could not do anything at his own expense, it is America, which is providing chances, and opportunities to him to work with them and even your parents do not have enough money to fulfill your dreams. It is only because of 'us' that you are rationalizing your dreams and in other words, America must be credited for helping you in realizing your dreams and bringing you to your dreamland.

Listening, such comments from the one who is in power is heartbreaking and heart-sickening but Changez could not do anything except to remain silent as Jim is the appointing authority so he has to be as submissive as possible to him which he does and he is not in a position obviously to raise the voice. As Said writes in *Orientalism*, "The orient was always in the position both of outsider and of an incorporated weak partner for the west" (Said, 1993, p. 208). Changez, share the same sort of relationship with 'Erica' (his girlfriend), as he shares with America. As America has never been able to understand Changez and never gave space and equal chances to Changez to involve in the American society and to contribute in it and to break the stereotypes that the occident has attached with the orient, in the same way, 'Erica' to is similar to 'America' in every aspect. Like America, Erica too can capture people's attention. Changez and Erica were never able to build a strong bond between themselves because of the culture and ethnicity and by the end, she rejected Changez in the same way as "America" disowned Changez and expelled him out of America. The renunciation indicates America's policy of excluding the other countries from America which is equivalent to destroying the phenomenon of the melting pot and staying in its own compartment.

America too has experienced 'colonial times' but maybe they have forgotten their past and pouring out their frustrations on the orient. It is in the psyche of a person that we actually try to find out flaws in others neglecting our own. The same sort of episode is experienced by Changez when he met Erica's father. He felt a sort of discrimination and experienced a sort of ridiculing and mocking attitude by her father, which shows that already a negative image has been inculcated in the minds of the occident for the orient. The attitudes of the Americans show that only the occident deserves all the opportunities, and shame has been written in the fate of the orient and the occident seems to be possessing all the positive traits and the orient is the true embodiment of the negativity. As Hamid writes; "You people have some serious problems with fundamentalism" (Hamid, 2007, p. 63).

Changez went to America to transform his life and for better prospects but the actual reality dawned upon him slowly and gradually. He, later on, realized that he is the odd one out in the American system. We could easily see that there are certain cracks in the American system that needs to be filled and fixed and are given the impression while reading the text that the relations between the orient and the occident are just temporary and not long-lasting. They are crippled and can be broken at any point because they were unable to develop an understanding with each other. The

foundations of the relations formed between Jim, Changez, and America were weak; they were not stable rather fractured in many senses. Even when Changez went to Manila, the Filipinos treated him differently. The Americans were given 'officer class' treatment and Changez was treated on different grounds and on unequal footings. Those Filipinos too have double standards, for the same race the criterion is different and for others the standards are different. As Hamid explains Changez's demand, "I wanted my share of respect" (Hamid, 2007, p. 74).

It was the time before the actual tensions and rivalries sprang out which proves the very idea that both the orient and the occident never enjoy healthy relations with each other and Changez had to face shame later on. He had to face the discriminatory attitude at the hands of a driver of a jeepney, who passed such a loathful glare towards Changez which he doesn't know why? At that point, Changez realized that the Americans will never accommodate and mingle with the Muslims and they have to face rejection at every level because the orient is treated on separate and unequal grounds. There was a tinge of dislike, bitterness, and hatred for the orient running in the hearts of the occident. As Said writes in *Orientalism* "The truth about the distinctive differences between races, civilizations, and language was (or pretended) to be radical and ineradicable" (Said, 1993, p. 233). Changez worked in close connection with the Europeans and was part of European machinery but was looked at with contempt, disdain by the Europeans. These events made Changez think that he is not a part of the European society, and has failed to incorporate with them, and was made to believe that he does not belong to Europe.

Changez tried to build friendly relationships with the occident and wanted to be respected, liked, and accepted by them but all his efforts were in vain or never proved fruitful. There is a problem with the occident of the American society that they have proclaimed their superiority on its own. The people think that America is so open and has some magical power in it that anybody can incorporate in that culture at any time but the dilemma is that the Americans are so biased that the society is divided into fractions on the base of color, caste, and race. According to Edward Said, there is a dichotomy on unequal grounds. They have divided themselves based on ours/theirs which shows that they are opposite of one another and presents such a contrastive view for each other that they cannot homogenize/blend. The Europeans think that, as the orients are uncivilized, lazy, uncultured, crude, and irrational and cannot represent themselves so they need representation in society, for that matter they find occident to be more suitable to represent and dominate them in the world. As Said writes in *Orientalism* that "the desirability of occidental dominance over the orients" (Said, 1993, p. 225).

The very notion of dominance becomes more apparent after the 9/11 event. The big event took away thousands of lives. Changez's response was sort of perplexing at that moment and he actually smiled. The falling of the 'Twin Towers' marks the falling of Changez's American dream. He smiled not at the loss of lives of people but on the idea that Hamid expresses that "Someone had so visibly brought America to her knees" (Hamid, 2007, p. 83). It is a clear cut indication that Changez is drifting off from his American-ness. The world trade center carries a lot of significance and it is considered to be the hub of America. It stands for the pride of America. The entire activities, (political, social, and economic) take place from this central point and carries symbolic

value. The world trade center symbolizes the 'superiority' of America that they are the most powerful of all. It is a symbol of New York's confidence in itself. The world Trade center represents the 'activities' and 'humdrum' of life while its destruction is equivalent to the destruction of the costly machinery of America's fall. The world trade center also symbolizes colonizer and colonized which are important and holds a paramount position in imperial rule and without them, the authority is not possible.

The attack shattered the whole nation. Everybody seems to be affected directly or indirectly. The occident became victims. It represents hope, perseverance, and backbone for America. The destruction of the Twin towers brings fear and emptiness. The Americans vow to fight against the evil restoring the tower back in its previous position with determination. The attack on the Twin tower means not only the attack on America but on every American and the dichotomies actually start to play their role from here. The attack makes the Americans full of rage and they are seen burning with revenge. It is the media that played a pivotal role in making, shaping, and reshaping images and presents such images to the world which compel the world to believe that the destruction was done by the Muslims/Arabs. The images which they showed to the world resemble more to Muslims so they labeled the Muslims as assassins and it becomes extremely difficult to be a Muslim after the attack. As Said writes in *Orientalism* "Asia represented, then, the unpleasant likelihood of a sudden eruption that would destroy our world" (Said, 1993, p. 251).

Religion comes into question after the attack. Before 9/11 things were not as complicated as they appear after 9/11. When Changez was leaving from Manila, he was stopped at the airport and was thoroughly checked, he was suspected, suspicioned, searched, and assumed to be a terrorist because of not belonging to the same race and origin. The occident felt threatened by Changez, previously Changez proved productive, worth-while, and fruitful for the American society because of his performance and intelligence but after the attack, the same Changez becomes intimidating and risk for the society. There are many instances of discrimination that can be found in the text after the attack and Changez became the prey and an easy target for the Americans. As Changez says, "I was aware of being under suspicion" (Hamid, 2007, p. 85). The whites are privileged and respected in American society. The reality is not visible from the outside. What seems beautiful, glamorous, and graceful is not what actually it is from inside. The people from other cultures especially the Muslims and the Arabs have to struggle hard to survive in American society. The logo of just being Muslim curbs you and restrains you to make progress while living in a foreign land and culture. The very word Muslim /Arab became disturbing and uncomfortable for the Americans and it is because of the lack of knowledge of the religion of the Muslims that they started linking Muslims with terrorists without any solid proofs.

Muslims have big challenges waiting for them. It gets difficult to cope in such an environment. The Muslims are side-lined in terms of jobs and basic facilities. They have to face a lot of constraints to achieve their desired goals. They are seen as commodities and are used as tools at the hands of the 'powerful' masters. As Changez was used by the Americans and was looked at with scorn too. Edward Said writes in *Orientalism*, "The orient is watched" (Said, 1993, p. 103). These orients are generalized too much and are stereotyped to the extent that they cannot even defend themselves. They are suppressed, oppressed, and even deprived of the right to speak,

their voice and identity have been snatched and they became voiceless. Different labels have been attached to them and these labels became a permanent part of their personality. The Muslims had to go a long way and pass through a tough time to climb the corporate and social ladder. Mohsin Hamid is challenging the stereotypes that are attached to the Muslims; his task is to fight against the stereotypes. Art and literature have become a weapon for him to express his ideas about the stereotypes related to them. It is only a skin color controversy but the white skin tone does not allow the occident to be cruel towards the orient just because the orient is born on different soil.

All the series of events after 9/11 that promote tensions, discrimination, and racism for Muslims make Changez rethink his American dream. He thought of himself as a stranger to the American world. The Americans appear and acted as unknown or unfamiliar to Changez despite living with them for many years and it seems as if he is the foreign body adopted by the occidental culture. He feels he does not belong to the American world or an 'outsider' that has entered some no-go area and whose doors will never open for him. As Mohsin Hamid writes "I had grown up on its threshold as its door was being shut" (Hamid, 2007, p. 81). There are not only cultural differences but communication gaps are also there which does not allow the people of two cultures to unite rather there is a vacuum created which emphasizes the orientals as 'culturally different people'. The situation is closer to the fact that man is not ready to tolerate and accept differences.

The world trade center was a political event but its destruction was taken at a personal level. It has become a part of their ego. The world trade center represents the icon for America or the attack on iconic buildings of America. By attacking the world trade center, the destructors have tried to give the message that these buildings are vulnerable and open to attack and can be the source of the target at any moment. After the heavy destruction, the Americans were full of wrath and disgust. The occident tried to exert their power to the world with the belief that nobody can shatter them and cannot think of eliminating them. For the occident, the destruction of the towers represents the destruction of their pride which they cannot afford and those who are planning to shake the foundation of the occidental world will have to bear severe consequences. The whites started bringing their imperial rule by imposing their culture, custom, and language. The full show of power is exhibited with extreme arrogance and ego with the message that we can stand again with full power.

Abuse of power, evil, and imperialism can be observed at all times where the non-whites are bound to suffer and they had to undergo pain and miseries which are a gift of imperialism. The text echoes with anger, fury, and the game of power. The occident became possessive and gave the message to the world that their values cannot be shattered. As DeLillo writes, in *"The Falling man"* "Since that day in September, all life had become public" (DeLillo, 2007, p. 182). Changez's journey to America was the journey towards the realization of his dreams, for ultimate fantasy and unlimited chances but the reality was otherwise. The perception of America is that of a fairyland but living in the occidental world is nothing more than a nightmare. The grounds on which American relationships are constituted are really shaky and can be broken at any instant because of the lack of trust between the two countries. Formerly it is the exploration trip but now it is a step towards ignorance and negligence. Not only Changez started getting isolated and detached from America. but "Erica" is not ready to

build a relationship with Changez. She cannot forget Chris and always imagines him in her memory and in the end dissociates herself from Changez and is seen lost in her own world. As Changez says, "I would observe that she was utterly detached, lost in a world of her own" (Hamid, 2007, p. 98).

As every action reacts so Changez's disappointment towards West leads to the crumbling of his American dream. The continuous debate between a Muslim, Arab/ and finally labeling them as a terrorist because of the image fed in the minds of the general public inculcating fear, horror, suspicion, creating uneasiness, and panic in the people. The stereotype comes to light and it gets harder for Changez to live in the American culture. Mohsin Hamid is bringing to light the stereotypes so that readers should come to know the reality himself and trying disposing of them. There are big boundaries and that too is formed by the wrong portrayal of the Muslims which have marred the impressions of the Arabs in the whole world. The orient is linked with the idea of terrorism and images are projected in the entire world to give the 'silent' message to the world that the Arabs are fundamentalists and terrorists which is totally based on misconceptions. Heroic activities are linked with the whites while villainous; crooked-ness is associated with the non-whites which is racial stereotyping, in such unfriendly, cold, and hostile circumstances it gets harder for Changez to survive in America where he is tagged as a 'Third World' citizen and where just being Muslims costs you a lot. The tension has risen to the extent that instead of getting a resolve, it is damaging not only the people but also the societies. As Changez tried to clarify the image of the Muslims by saying that "We were not the crazed destitute radicals you see on your television channels" (Hamid, 2007, p. 116).

It's a wrong idea to stereotype the Muslims/Arabs without knowing them. Half of the tension is due to the fact that Muslims are not read and studied well. They do have a marvelous and incredible past which the occident will never highlight. The Muslims ruled over the subcontinent for a longer period of time in the 19th century. They have well-learned, read, and studied scholars with a magnificent culture and people come to learn from them. The people took inspiration from them and call the Muslims/Arabs from other countries to educate them. The culture of the orient can be compared to any progressing country. It was the time when the occident was illiterate. As Hamid boasted; "And we did those things when your country was still a collection of thirteen small colonies, gnawing away at the edge of the continent" (Hamid, 2007, p. 116).

Hamid's protagonist Changez is tempted by the grandeur and glory of America but soon he came to know that it is nothing but just pomp and show so after the meeting with Juan Bautista, he planned to move back. Changez got shattered and deteriorated after the exposition of reality. The more he got to know about America, the more depress, empty and hollow he feels. The American dream melts down immediately like ice and he disconnected and distanced himself from the American roots. As a protest, and to express his frustrations he grew up the beard which has become an open challenge for him. As terrorists are linked with a beard so Changez had to undergo a long interrogation and was rejected based on the beard, actually the beard helps him to make him foreign and the "other".

From the very beginning of the novel, we could see that the American who is sitting next to Changez and listening to his side of the story remains mute throughout.

The mute or silent nature of the American reveals that the Americans are rude and proud. They believed themselves to be superior and others as the second rate. It is their rigidity that would not allow them to listen to the other person and that's what the American is doing. The American seems to be least bothered and hardly affected by the story of Changez. The detachment of the American shows the lack of emotions of America towards others. The stereotypical attitude of the American is judged by the fact that the American chose the seat near the wall and refused to remove the jacket. It seems that the American is afraid of the Muslim (Changez). He has preconceived notions about the Muslims that they are terrorists and was afraid to see Changez with a beard. Hamid's Changez has to experience a sense of inferiority at the hands of Americans and had to listen and tolerate the negative image that is embedded in the minds of the Americans. Whatever the Muslims do to make their position clear, they will remain foreign and will be othered.

Changez off and again mentioning of 'Your country', "Your country" to the American listener is the indicator that America is so authoritative that it tries to exert its superiority in every way and cannot accept people from other cultures so easily. A lot of experiences in America dawned upon Changez that he does not belong to the state rather he has to put every effort to be accepted by the Americans. He was used and exploited by the Americans everywhere but was not given that due respect which he deserved. He was othered and when by the end as a protest he grew up the beard, he was stereotyped labeled as a fanatic, terrorist, extremist, and had to face the suspicious looks of the people.

Beard has become the point of conflict between the orient and the occident. It has different connotations for different religions. For the orient, it is a symbol of Muslimness and for the occident, the same beard represents a threat, fear, anger, and terror. According to the occident, the bearded men are sluggish, dirty, backward, and conservative while non-bearded men are modern and liberals, in short, they are westerns or occident. Even the American who is listening to him seems to doubt him, he deliberately took the seat in the hotel so close to the wall so that he could observe and report the activities of Changez. He was wearing a leather jacket and did not remove that in such a hot weather because he could not trust him. It is nothing but trust deficit and rejection of the orient because of their looks. More resemblance you have the more accountable you are less resemblance and more acceptability. It is all because the Muslims are misrepresented all over the world and these stereotypes created phobia for the non-whites in the minds of the occident, which is enforcing the Americans to do so. Despite the efforts of Changez it seems very difficult to unite the non-whites and clear their hearts for the orient. It also unfolds the very phenomenon that the occident is too resilient that it is too hard to soften their minds and still they are not willing to accept the fact and consistent in calling Muslim terrorists. It is not security but racism. A Muslim has to shed his Muslimness to be accepted by the occidental community. The same goes for the orient, the oft, and targeting the orient, and holding them responsible for every tragedy can be dangerous. If the process continues then nobody will go to America for the realization of their dreams, which is a loss for both cultures, actually, it is a game of power that compels the occident to exercise its superiority. America being the superpower takes too much interest and interferes in the affairs of others. It is all because of their authoritative nature that they have become the planners

and deciders for others and orients are bound to suffer at their hands which is dangerous for America too. If America continues to do so then they will lose their value and scope.

One of the salient qualities of America is that they always look forward and never look back which is a secret of their success, but if they keep on exerting their hegemony in other people's matters then instead of going forward, they will be seen going in the reverse direction. As imperialism is perceived as a dark, strange, and dirty game in Europe so it has gloomy effects and is believed to be destructive for the non-whites. The occident always wants to rule over the colonized or conquered and take maximum benefits from them. The people like Changez and many more fall prey to the expectations of the occident and their condition is just like that of a puppet in the hands of the colonized. As the Orientals are too fed up with being continuously 'sidelined' and declared as other by the center so now the orients want the occident to stop stereotyping them and want to get rid of the interference of the occident.

Religion is said to be somebody's private matter as it is a sensitive issue. There is no need to make comparisons based on religion and to feel threatened. Like in the novel, Changez did not utter a single word related to religion while he is conversing with the American but the racial and cultural differences between the people of two cultures allow the American to feel threatened and to combine religion in everything resulting in the negative stereotypes associated with the Muslims especially the Arabs. The traditional approach and conservative nature make the orient different entities, which has no place in the center.

The Americans think of the interests and benefits of the country first and people are their secondary priority and this very idea is creating fear and distrust in the minds of the people which is dangerous for the occidental world too, as it is creating instability in the country. The domination on the part of occident and stereotyping the orient will increase the crime rate, loss in the business, and economy. If America wants to dominate the world then it must work on the idea of multiculturalism and start providing opportunities and rights to all the people belonging to any culture as it used to do in the olden times for their better future and interest. The time has come to revise the concept of self and others and to get rid of the concept of unequal and separate to be recognized in the world and to regain the status of multiculturalism again. Media must play a positive role in this context and instead of creating melodramatic situations; it must invest their energies in a positive direction.

The image of night and darkness is used to show that there is no chance of amalgamation and unity, which means that the reunion is not possible. Friendships and friendly relations are made on equal grounds. As long as the occident were the masters, Changez and all other people like him cannot even think of becoming friends and start their relationship with each other. It seems that their inclusion is not possible because the very soil expels/ evacuates the air of separateness. The boundaries seem obscure and blur to start any relation. As Changez says, "It is not always possible to restore one's boundaries after they have been blurred and made permeable by a relationship" (Hamid, 2007, p. 197).

5. Conclusion

It is after reading the texts of the novel, we come to know that binaries and stereotyping have a major role to play in both the novels. There are barriers between the people of both countries, which can never be overlooked. The Muslims are judged on the grounds

of being 'alien' and culturally alien. Changez has to bear verbal abuse as people because of his oriental looks call him a 'fucking Arab'. The occidental view is now reinforced by the visual and narrative depiction of the Orientals as treacherous, unreliable, greedy and violent among other similarly bad things on the mainstream media and the social media. Thus Orientalism is cannot be relegated to the relics of the past but it may be said that what was constructed as Egypt is now the entire Muslim world.

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