

**POST 9/11 AMERICAN DREAMS AND IDENTITY: NAVIGATING  
ALIENATION AND CULTURAL DICHOTOMY IN THE *RELUCTANT  
FUNDAMENTALIST***

***Muhammad Boota Aasi***

*Assistant Professor of English, Govt. Graduate College, Civil Lines, Sheikhpura  
Sundas Khan*

*Lecturer in English, Division of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Education,  
Lahore*

***Asma Kanwal***

*Graduate Student, Division of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Education,  
Lahore*

**Abstract**

*In the wake of 9/11, the notion of the American Dream, once a beacon of hope and opportunity, begins to crumble for those who feel alienated by their heritage and background. This paper examines how the societal upheaval resulted in a redefinition of identity, not solely for Changez but for many who found themselves navigating a world rife with suspicion and cultural dichotomy. The analysis engages with internal conflict, societal expectations, and the intricate relationship between Eastern and Western perspectives. As we explore these dimensions, it becomes evident that the psychological ramifications of living as an outsider in post-9/11 America manifest in both conscious and unconscious ways, providing a rich terrain for understanding the nuanced evolution of identity in the face of adversity. Through this exploration, the paper aims to contribute to the broader discourse on identity formation and the enduring quest for acceptance in a world marked by division and misunderstanding.*

**Key Words:** Identity Issues, 9/11, American Dreams, Trauma, Otherness, Psychoanalytic

**Introduction**

In the wake of the September 11 attacks, the American Dream—a once universally appealing ideal—has been critically reexamined, particularly for those who find themselves marginalised due to their heritage. Scholars have noted how the post-9/11 landscape has fostered a culture of suspicion, reshaping the identities of individuals perceived as "other" (Anderson, 2015). This paper focuses on the experiences of Changez, the protagonist in Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, to explore the intricate relationship between identity, cultural dichotomies, and societal expectations in a climate of fear and alienation.

Changez struggles with his identity. Changez, a middle-class Pakistani citizen in his twenties, comes to America on a scholarship to Princeton. He describes coming to Princeton as everything now being possible. He considers himself a shining star, clever and eloquent student, "I knew in my senior year that I was something special" (Hamid 2007: 5). He conducts himself in public as a prince, well dressed, polished, generous and carefree with a sophisticated accent. In a job interview, he says, "Most people were taken in by my public persona" (Hamid 12). At the same time, he holds down three on-campus jobs at locations not frequently visited by his fellow students. He describes this as something that makes him feel ashamed. Arriving at Princeton, Changez describes his life as having the lead in a movie. But in reality, his life is not so glamorous he has to work hard to keep up his façade resulting in him feeling like an outsider trying to fit in among the other students, many of whom come from wealthy families.

Moving to New York to begin work at the valuation firm Underwood Samson, Changez is sure that his professional life provides him an opportunity to maintain his social and financial life in America: “Underwood Samson has the potential to transform my life [...] making my concerns about money and status things of the distant past” (Hamid 2007: 14). Changez immediately feels at home, “I was, in four and a half years, never an American; I was immediately a New Yorker” (Hamid 37). He is split between his ambivalence towards the American culture and his Pakistani heritage because he is very much attached to his Pakistani home. Waterman writes that Changez’s sense of belonging has always been based on his association with others (130). In New York he meets more people that he can relate to, he hears his native language daily and even smells native “Pakistani cooking” at different street corners (Hamid 36-37).

Changez's personal life also changes when he has a relationship with a Native American girl named Erica. He meets Erica on a post-graduation trip to Greece. She becomes interested in him because he is not like the others in the travelling group. Erica says to him “I’ve never met someone our age as polite as you.....Not boring polite. I like that. It’s unusual.” (Hamid 28). His fellow post-graduates also see him as the other, describing him as an exotic acquaintance. Changez himself reflects on the differences between Eastern and Western values when it comes to money, respect for elders and how one presents oneself to others (Hamid 23-24). Changez sees himself as different but not necessarily in a negative way. He attracted Erica and is a strong believer in his cultural set of values. He spends several hours deciding what to wear when meeting Erica's parents for the first time, giving much thought to the impression he wants to make. Should Changez visit them as an American or as a man from Pakistan? He again feels split between his two identities, ending up wearing a ‘white kurta’ that represents traditional Pakistani clothes over a pair of jeans i.e. Western clothing (Hamid 55). Nevertheless, the attitude of Erica's father when meeting Changez for the first time reinforces his feeling of otherness. The father brings up topics such as Pakistani political instability, Islamic fundamentalism, and other religious aspects making it clear that Changez is not one of them (Hamid 82). To fit in at Samson Underwood, Changez works hard, but he also starts to behave more like his American colleagues and adapts the same mannerisms and speech. He believes that he needs to do this to succeed in business. This is a good example of him using mimicry. Changez admits that at first, he was “a lover of America” (Hamid 2007: 1) He feels happy and accepted there despite his non-American identity.

### Literature Review

The impact of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on identity formation, particularly among individuals perceived as “other,” is a rich area of inquiry in contemporary literary and cultural studies. Mohsin Hamid’s *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* serves as a pivotal text that encapsulates these themes, prompting robust discussions about the psychological and sociopolitical dynamics affecting marginalized identities. One significant aspect of the literature explores the concept of identity crisis in the wake of societal trauma. According to *After the Terror: 9/11 and the Cultural Politics of Fear*, Anderson (2015) discusses how the aftermath of 9/11 fostered a pervasive culture of fear that reshaped interactions and identities, particularly for marginalized groups. This aligns with the experiences of Changez, whose journey reflects the internal conflicts stemming from societal suspicion and external labelling (Hoffman, 2019).

Psychoanalytic theory has been instrumental in understanding these identity struggles. As highlighted by Banjeree (2020), psychoanalytic frameworks can elucidate how collective trauma experienced by a community impacts individuals’ subconscious self-perception. Changez’s

identity oscillates between his cultural heritage and the pressures of assimilation in a hostile environment, showcasing a broader narrative of immigrant experiences post-9/11 (Sayeed, 2021). Moreover, critical race theory provides insights into how racial and cultural identities are constructed and challenged in this context. Naber (2018) emphasizes that the stereotyping of Muslims and individuals of Middle Eastern descent in America post-9/11 has led to heightened scrutiny of identity that exacerbates feelings of alienation and dislocation. This theme resonates in Changez's depiction of his experiences at Princeton and in the workplace, where he grapples with his dual identity amid rising Islamophobia (Jung, 2020). Furthermore, the interplay between personal and collective identity is highlighted in the work of Al Hassan (2022), who posits that narratives like Hamid's offer crucial insights into how personal histories intersect with broader sociopolitical narratives. This intersectional analysis underscores the complexities of identity formation amidst global conflicts and cultural misunderstandings, illustrating how individual experiences cannot be separated from the collective context in which they unfold.

The discourse surrounding identity crises in the aftermath of 9/11, as portrayed in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, draws from various theoretical frameworks, including psychoanalysis and critical race theory. These perspectives enrich our understanding of how societal trauma shapes personal narratives and highlight the ongoing challenges faced by individuals navigating the complexities of belonging in a transformed cultural landscape. While the current literature emphasizes racial and cultural identities, there is a need for deeper exploration of how other aspects of identity—such as gender, class, and sexuality—interact with post-9/11 experiences. Research could focus on how these intersections complicate or exacerbate feelings of alienation and identity crises among individuals perceived as “other.”

### Methodology

Cathy Caruth's psychoanalytical theory of trauma, particularly her work in *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996), provides a compelling framework for analyzing identity formation and alienation in post-9/11 America. Caruth argues that trauma is not merely an event that happened in the past but an experience that remains unassimilated and continues to shape identity in unconscious ways. This theory is particularly relevant to the experiences of individuals like Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (Hamid, 2007), who navigate a world of cultural dissonance and societal suspicion in the aftermath of 9/11. Caruth's ideas parallel the works of Dominick LaCapra (2001) and Shoshana Felman (1992), who similarly examine how trauma disrupts narrative continuity and identity formation, making it difficult for individuals to fully process or integrate their experiences into a coherent self-concept.

A key element of Caruth's theory is the idea that trauma is unassimilated at the moment of occurrence and only becomes comprehensible later through involuntary repetitions (Caruth, 1996). Unlike ordinary memories, traumatic experiences do not settle neatly into the past but instead return in fragmented and haunting ways. This is evident in Changez's evolving identity, as his sense of self is gradually disrupted by his experiences in America. Initially embracing the American Dream, he later finds himself alienated and othered, a process that reflects how trauma is not fully understood in the present but reveals itself through retrospective realization. LaCapra (2001) expands on this idea by distinguishing between structural and historical trauma, arguing that the latter, which Changez experiences, is rooted in specific sociopolitical events that disrupt identity formation and create a sense of loss.

Caruth extends Freud's concept of repetition compulsion, suggesting that individuals unconsciously reenact aspects of their trauma without realizing it (Freud, 1920; Caruth, 1996). This can be seen in Changez's gradual shift from assimilation to resistance, as he unconsciously repeats his traumatic experience of rejection. His growing disenchantment with American ideals and his eventual return to Pakistan can be understood as manifestations of unresolved trauma, where the self continues to grapple with contradictions imposed by external forces. Felman and Laub (1992) emphasize that trauma survivors often struggle to narrate their experiences because trauma resists linguistic representation, an idea reflected in Changez's ambiguous storytelling, where he recounts his journey in a nonlinear and introspective manner.

Another crucial aspect of Caruth's theory is the disruption of linear temporality in trauma. Traumatic events are not processed in a straightforward chronological manner; instead, they resurface in delayed, disjointed ways (Caruth, 1996). In Changez's case, his post-9/11 identity crisis does not unfold immediately but is gradually internalized through his experiences with racism, surveillance, and exclusion. His realization that he is viewed as an outsider in America, despite his initial success, illustrates Caruth's argument that trauma exists beyond the moment of crisis and continues to shape identity long after the event itself. This notion of trauma's delayed impact is also explored in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987), where Sethe's past continually intrudes upon her present, demonstrating how unresolved trauma disrupts the continuity of selfhood.

Caruth also emphasizes the role of narrative in trauma recovery, arguing that trauma must be articulated through storytelling to be processed (Caruth, 1996). Changez's retrospective narration in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* serves as an attempt to construct meaning out of his fragmented experience, mirroring Caruth's assertion that narrative is a necessary tool for confronting trauma. However, the novel's ambiguous ending raises the question of whether full reconciliation is possible, suggesting that trauma might remain unresolved despite efforts to understand and articulate it. In contrast, Art Spiegelman's *Maus* (1986) demonstrates how the act of retelling traumatic events across generations can serve as both a burden and a form of healing, illustrating how different forms of trauma narration shape identity reconstruction.

Beyond the individual, Caruth's work also explores the intersection of personal and collective trauma. Post-9/11 America witnessed widespread Islamophobia and heightened surveillance of Muslim communities, turning entire identities into sites of collective trauma (Alsultany, 2012). Changez's alienation is not just a personal experience but part of a larger societal upheaval, where people of certain backgrounds were subjected to suspicion and exclusion. This dual layer of trauma—both personal and collective—reinforces Caruth's claim that trauma is deeply embedded in historical and cultural contexts, affecting both the individual psyche and broader societal structures. Edward Said's (1978) concept of Orientalism further complements this idea, arguing that Western narratives often construct the East as an antagonistic "Other," a framework that shapes Changez's post-9/11 marginalization and struggles for belonging.

Ultimately, Caruth's psychoanalytical framework provides a nuanced understanding of how trauma disrupts identity and shapes an individual's evolving sense of self. Through the lens of her theory, Changez's story can be seen as a testament to the lingering effects of trauma in a world marked by cultural and ideological division. His journey highlights how trauma is not a singular event but an ongoing experience that continues to manifest in both conscious and unconscious ways. By examining these psychological ramifications alongside works like *Beloved*,



Maus, and theories by LaCapra, Felman, and Said, we gain deeper insight into the complex nature of identity formation in a post-9/11 landscape, reinforcing Caruth's argument that trauma remains unclaimed, unresolved, and ever-present in shaping the self.

### **Discussion**

#### **American Dreams and Identity**

Changez's attempts to behave as an American culminate when he visits Manila on a business trip. Changez sees how the Manila businessmen look at his American colleague and also wants that kind of respect; "I did something in Manila I had never done before: I attempted to act and speak, as much as my dignity would permit, more like an American" (Hamid 74). Riding a cab during his visit to Manila, Changez notices a man driving a jeepney and feels that the man looks at him with great hostility. Changez stares back at him, which is very impolite in Pakistani culture. Changez cannot understand why the man acted like that towards him (Hamid 76). According to Bischof, this is called projection (63), meaning that Changez is projecting his resentful feelings against the Asian driver by thinking that it is the driver who is resentful towards him. By doing this, his negative feeling stays in his unconscious. He is struggling with his identity: is he Pakistani or is he American? And it is hard to admit that he has a hostile feeling against his "own kind". The event in Manila shows that Changez is torn into Eastern and Western identity and he wants to claim (Olsson 7). When he puts his Pakistani identity aside, he expresses feeling uncomfortable. Olsson writes that "the pervading impression of Changez playing different roles,.... makes the reader feel as if his outer shell, but not his actual identity could be identified" (7). For the first time, Changez sees the foreignness in his colleagues and from this point on he begins his alienation from America. Changez plays roles to fit in that is, he takes on different personal identities and is essentially going through an identity crisis. He states: "I was not certain where I belonged – in New York, in Lahore, in both, in neither" (Hamid 168). Identity is a feeling of being one with oneself, and neither of the characters seems to have that feeling. He is unhomed not only in America but also in themselves. Changez struggles to fit into the adoptive society. Having success does not ensure he will get accepted. He is still being othered.

#### **Post 9/11 Identity**

Trauma can be a trigger to start questioning oneself and it can also disrupt one's sense of identity. Life goals may change when traumatic events take place, and values and beliefs about the world may be shattered (Berman 1-2). The situation for people with a Middle Eastern appearance was now more than before the subject of othering. Bhabha writes in *The Location of Culture*: an important feature of colonial discourse is its dependence on the concept of 'fixity' in the ideological construction of otherness" (94). After 9/11 Changez feels more like outsiders, showing signs of being "unhomed". During the business trip to Manila, Changez hears about the attack on the Twin Towers in New York. At first, he has a hard time believing it but realizing it is happening he smiles and feels pleased. He cannot understand the feeling of satisfaction over America's pain. "And then I smiled. Yes, despicable as it may sound, my initial reaction was to be remarkably pleased" (Hamid 2007: 72). Changez is not indifferent to the suffering of others; however, he notices the symbolism of it all: "someone had so visibly brought America to her knees" (Hamid 2007:73). Meeting his colleagues that same evening, Changez plays the role of being as shocked as they are. It is not until realizing that Erica (Changez's girlfriend) could be hurt that he no longer needs to pretend, he becomes just as worried as the others.

However, at the airport in Manila to take a flight back to America, Changez is subject to special screening, before being let on to the plane to America. Armed guards escort him to a separate room where he is forced to take off his clothes. He feels humiliated. Before the terror attack, his outer appearance did not give him any negative exclusion or made him experience othering to the same extent (10-11). Entering the aircraft as the last person, the passengers look at him with suspicion. Arriving in America, he joins the queue for foreigners and is asked for his passport by a woman with “a mastery of English inferior to mine” (Hamid 86). “What is the purpose of your trip to the United States? She asked me. I live here, I replied. That is not what I asked you, sir, she said. What is the purpose of your trip to the United States?” (Hamid 86). He is profiled and sent to a room for further inspection. When realizing his colleagues have already left the airport, Changez feels humiliated and very much alone (Hamid 86). His sense of belonging has been transformed overnight (Waterman 130), a major turning point for Changez's identity. Haoloi writes in her article that Changez is subjected to discrimination because of his ethnicity and he realizes that he has never fully given up his Pakistani identity (303).

Changez encounters more hostility in his adoptive country and starts to reflect on what he does not like about America. He reminds himself that he always has resented the way that America had presented itself to the world and that money was the only source through which America ‘drilled its power’ (Hamid 177). An incident in which Changez reacts in a way that surprises him is when watching TV and sees American troops invading Afghanistan. Changez realizes that he identifies himself more with the people of Afghanistan, a country that neighbours Pakistan, than with the Americans. He gets so upset that he trembles and has to drink whiskey before falling asleep. Changez connects more with his Eastern identity. Later that year, the Indian army mobilizes and Changez is worried about his family's safety in Pakistan and becomes irritated when realizing that America would not ‘assist their ally Pakistan in a possible conflict’ (Hamid 114). Reflecting on this he says,

I was no longer capable of so thorough a self-deception. I did, however, tell myself that I had overreacted, that there was nothing I could do and that all these world events were playing out in a state of no relevance to my personal life. But I remained aware of the embers glowing within me, and the day I found it difficult to concentrate on the pursuit- at which I was normally so capable- of fundamentals (Hamid 100).

The instability in the world influences his sense of self. He has thought about leaving America, but he has not asked himself why and for what. Once again Changez doubts who he is and where he belongs.

Certainly, I wanted to believe; at least I wanted not to disbelieve with such an intensity that I prevented myself as much as possible from making the obvious connection between the crumbling of the world around me and the impending destruction of my American dream (Hamid 106).

A turning point in Changez's life, brings him closer to his Pakistani identity: “As for myself, I was clearly on the threshold of great change, only the final catalyst was now required, and in my case, that catalyst took the form of a lunch” (Hamid 170). That lunch is in Venezuela with Juan-Bautista, the chief of a firm he is sent to evaluate. Bautista tells him the story of the Janissaries, a person who is kidnapped and made to fight against her own culture (Hamid 172). Changez begins to think about his own identity and how he is living his life.

There really could be no doubt: I was a modern-day janissary, a servant of the American empire at a time when it was invading a country with a kinship to mine and was perhaps even colluding to ensure that my own country faced the threat of war (Hamid 173).

His new insights into his identity result in him neglecting his work, and in the end, he quits the firm and leaves America to move back to Lahore, Pakistan. Changez later reflects on his meeting with Bautista, "Thank you Juan-Bautista, I thought as I lay myself down in my bed, for helping me to push back the veil behind which all this had been concealed" (Hamid 178).

### **Beard and Identity**

The beard plays a vital role in Changez's identity. Olsson states that after 9/11 Changez's appearance becomes a sign of otherness and that his different outer appearance defines him (10). He grows his beard while visiting his family in Pakistan, both his father and brother wear beards. When it is time for him to travel back to America, his mother asks him to shave, because she feels that the Americans would react negatively towards him because of the beard. Well aware of the difficulties the beard could cause him, he decides to keep it. He expresses uncertainty for a reason for keeping it, but it seems like it is a step in actively creating his identity and reconnecting with his heritage. Olsson writes that people always classify each other according to characteristics that will separate others from themselves (10). In Changez's case, with the beard, he looks more "foreign," and it strengthens his sense of Pakistani identity. Another example of this is when his boss at Underwood Samson says, "Listen, kid," he said," some people around here think you're looking kind of shabby. The beard and all" (Hamid 156). Changez recalls, "It was, perhaps, a form of protest on my part, a symbol of my identity, or perhaps I ought to remind myself of the reality I had just left behind, I do not now recall my precise motivation. I know only that I did not wish to blend in with the army of clean-shaven youngsters who were my coworkers, and that inside me, for multiple reasons, I was deeply angry" (Hamid 148). His renewed contact with his suppressed identity takes a visible form in the beard. Because of this he experiences whispers and looks at work and is now defined by his colleagues as the 'Other'.

In Muslim countries, beards are worn for many different reasons, such as if a man wants to look like Prophet Mohammed or if he wants to show masculinity or wisdom and authority. It is not necessarily an expression of resistance to the Western world or a sign of religious fundamentalism (Olsson 13). Olsson states that; "Facial hair appears to have symbolic quality, as it is often taken as an outward identifying feature for terrorists" (Olsson 10). The terror attack of 9/11 changed the image of the Muslim world for many people into fundamentalists and terrorists and beards became immediately suspect.

### **Psychological Aspects and Defense: Identification, Repression and Denial**

When Changez comes to Princeton, he describes feeling like a movie star and that life is glorious, but in reality, that is not true. He has to work three different jobs to earn money to be able to afford his student life and send money back to his parents and he thinks this is something shameful (Hamid 12). Identification with a film star in this situation is a defence mechanism. This mechanism protects Changez from being emotionally hurt and realizing his real situation. His life is not as easy as in a film. Another example of identification is when Changez takes the role of his girlfriend's dead boyfriend and lets her call him his name. Changez is taking the role so he can make love to her and this probably is also a way to feel more 'American', or that he is chasing

some part of the American Dream, embodied by Erica. He says: “I cannot, of course, claim that I was possessed, but at the same time I did not seem to be myself” (Hamid 120). By identifying with the dead boyfriend, Changez does not feel hurt because he has rejected intimacy when he was himself. He shows his split self by saying: “Perhaps by taking on the persona of another, I had diminished myself in my own eyes” (Hamid 121).

The first example of a defense mechanism is repression, which according to Bischof is a fundamental mechanism because it starts very early in life (61). When Changez hears about the attack on the World Trade Centre and realizes that it has happened, he smiles and feels pleased (Hamid 84). He cannot understand what he feels. If someone had asked him before 9/11 what he thought about such an event, he would probably have condemned it, but now when shocked, he cannot hold these forbidden feelings repressed. Under ordinary circumstances, our defences keep us unaware of unpleasant feelings (Tyson 18). Trying so hard to identify as American that he never before consciously reflected on what he did not like about America.

Another example of the defence mechanism was a slow transformation of Changez’s identity and reevaluating America. When he visits Pakistan, he understands that he has denied all doubts about his American dream (Hamid 106). He has been so keen on adapting to America that he has denied all negative thoughts about the country. Moreover, Changez meets more hostility in his everyday life in America (Hamid 177). All his negative thoughts and emotions about America have stayed in his unconscious. When he was living the American dream, this kind of feeling would have made it difficult to adjust to American society, but when he no longer feels welcome, it becomes essential to who he is. According to Tyson, this defence is called denial (15).

### Conclusion

The analysis shows that Changez tried hard to fit into the American culture, wanting success and acceptance. If the attacks on the World Trade Center had not occurred, his life and identity might have moved in another direction. Changez, who came to America on a scholarship before 9/11, seeks to fulfil the American dream. By adopting mannerisms and speech from his colleagues, he takes on another identity he believes is the right identity to become successful. He uses identification as a defence, to protect himself from painful feelings. Even so, he never feels at home. His move to New York shows that he wants to have his Pakistani roots close. Choosing to wear a kurta over jeans when meeting Erica’s father for the first time, also amplifies his ambivalence between wanting to fit in and being true to his heritage.

Changez also expresses ambivalent thoughts and feelings regarding the attack which in Changez causes him to reflect more deeply on life and identity. The negative thoughts towards America had not entered his conscious mind before the attack. He faces other forms of othering because of their Middle-Eastern appearance. As a consequence of his identity search, Changez grows a beard, wanting to show that he has changed, eventually leaving America and finding his identity within the Pakistani culture, that he before had left behind when moving to America.

### Works Cited

- AlHassan, M. (2022). *Identity and Belonging in the Post-9/11 Narrative: A Study of Mohsin Hamid’s The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. *Journal of Postcolonial Studies*.
- Alsultany, E. (2012). *Arabs and Muslims in the media: Race and representation after 9/11*. New York University Press.
- Anderson, J. (2015). *After the Terror: 9/11 and the Cultural Politics of Fear*. Routledge.
- Awan, A. Ghafoor, Andleeb, S., & Yasin, F. *Psychoanalysis and Transformation of Heroes*.



- Banerjee, P. (2020). *Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Trauma and Identity: A Case Study of Post-9/11 Literature*. *Psychoanalytic Review*.
- Berman, L. S. (2016). *Identity and Trauma*. *Journal of Traumatic Stress Disorders & Treatment*, 5(2), 1-4.
- Bhabha, H. K. (2004). *The Location of Culture*. Routledge Classics.
- Bischof, L. J. (1968). *Interpreting Personality Theories*. Harper & Row Publishers.
- Caruth, C. (1996). *Unclaimed experience: Trauma, narrative, and history*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Felman, S., & Laub, D. (1992). *Testimony: Crises of witnessing in literature, psychoanalysis, and history*. Routledge.
- Freud, S. (1920). *Beyond the pleasure principle* (J. Strachey, Trans.). Norton.
- Hamid, M. (2007). *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. Harcourt.
- Hoffman, K. (2019). *Fear and Othering: The Impact of 9/11 on American Identity*. *Journal of American Studies*.
- Jung, D. (2020). *Cultural Dissonance in Mohsin Hamid's The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. *Asian American Literary Review*.
- LaCapra, D. (2001). *Writing history, writing trauma*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Morrison, T. (1987). *Beloved*. Alfred A. Knopf.
- Naber, N. (2018). *Arab Americans and the Politics of Race: Race, Globalization, and Immigrant Identity in Contemporary America*. *Social Justice*.
- Olson, G. (2011). *Identity and Identification in Mohsin Hamid's The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. Justus Liebig University Giessen.
- Said, E. W. (1978). *Orientalism*. Pantheon Books.
- Sayed, S. (2021). *Assimilation and Alienation: Navigating Dual Identities in The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. *Journal of Comparative Literature*.
- Spiegelman, A. (1986). *Maus: A survivor's tale*. Pantheon Books.
- Tyson, L. (2006). *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Waterman, D. "Focus on the Fundamentals": *Personal and Political Identity in Mohsin Hamid's The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. ISSN 2107-6537.