Globalisation and the Negotiation of Identity in South Asian Diasporic Fiction in Britain

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ABSTRACT

This thesis responds to gaps in the theorization of South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain and makes a new contribution to the emergent field of Anglophone literature. Given the growing prominence of literature written by South Asian diasporic writers in Britain, theorising the challenges that it represents to traditional categories of identity and literature has become a pressing concern. Working from the premise that as the history of British colonialism recedes and a new phase of global integration intensifies, the critical tools of postcolonialism become less useful in reading South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain, this thesis responds to the need for a critical framework that is able to address the relationships between identities and contemporary globality. It examines the politics of representation that are involved in positioning and categorising South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain within such a world, and asks questions of who and what is represented, how and to whom, in a selection of such texts.

A secondary aim of this thesis is to address how South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain might extend and qualify theoretical explanations of globalisation. Here narrative analysis is seen as crucial to understanding theoretical explanations of globalisation because all such theory employs a variety of often contradictory narrative forms to make their claims. This thesis asks what role does South Asian diasporic fiction play in constructing narratives of globalisation? And how does literary analysis help us understand how "stories" of globalisation are told?

The majority of this study is involved with fleshing out these questions through detailed textual analysis that focuses on the responses of South Asian diasporic texts in light of key theoretical debates of the effects of globalisation upon class, national, Muslim and gender identities. Testing and extending the utility of concepts from both Marxist and liberal explanations of globalisation in this way, the thesis argues for an integrated theoretical approach to a set of texts that operate at the intersection between Britain's colonial past and the complexity of contemporary globality, as well as across local, national and transnational literary contexts.

CERTIFICATION

I, Bidhan Chandra Roy, declare that this thesis, submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, in the department of English and Comparative Literature, Goldsmiths College, University of London, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. This document has not been submitted for qualification at any other academic institution.

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Bidhan Roy

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Introduction: Framing South Asian Diasporic Fiction in 'Britain's New Global Context.'

> There are specialized niche markets within the "global" that contribute to fads and fashions (to wit, the current popularity of Indian English-language novelists and Irish playwrights), sorting writers into subcategories such as "international" (Milan Kundera, Julio Cortázar, Samuel Beckett, Ferdinand Pessoa, Octavio Paz, Orhan Pamuk, Danilo Kiš); "postcolonial" (Aimé Césaire, Albert Memmi, Anita Desai, Patrick Chamoiseau, Mariama Bâ); and "multiculturalism," "native," or "minority" (Toni Morrison, Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Sherman Alexie, Jessica Hagedorn, Gloria Anzaldúa, Haruki Murakami, Amitav Ghosh, Colm Tóibín). These labels, though they can help launch or spotlight world-class writers—pulling them out of ethnic area studies ghettos on the bookstore shelves—also cling like barnacles to their reception and afford constrictive stereotypes of identity. – Emily Apter.[1]

Introduction

The globalisation of the culture industry in recent years has, as Emily Apter notes, produced new literary marketplaces and a demand for Anglophone writers of South Asian descent as variations of '"global lit."'[2] These markets have interfaced with a new series of academic networks in English speaking countries through courses in Postcolonial, World and, most recently, Anglophone literatures and have been shaped by the social-political changes wrought by a series of migrations to Britain, as well as a broader series of structural changes associated with the contested term "globalisation." [3] Taken together, these shifts have produced what Morley and Robins have described as 'Britain's new global context' that necessitates new ways of thinking about the relations between identities, cultures and territories, and raises a number of questions of how we frame and read South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain.[4] Does the assumption of South Asian diasporic writers "writing back" to a British centre remain relevant in an age of globalisation? What relationships exist between the processes of global restructuring, identities and South Asian diasporic fiction? To what extent is a nationally oriented view of sovereignty appropriate for categorising South Asian diasporic cultural production? Is South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain part of an emergent category of '"global lit"' that

Apter identifies? And if so is such literature best characterised as a globalised British literature or a literature of globalisation?

Partial responses to these questions have been offered by reading South Asian diasporic fiction through postcolonial critical frameworks. These theoretical frameworks, as well as postcolonialism in general, have been invaluable in foregrounding the links between cultural forms, identities and geopolitics. Yet as Ania Loomba remarks, the 'disparate cultural and sociological economic practices which define our contemporary "globality"' are often overlooked in postcolonialism's celebration of 'hybridity or polyphony or magic realism.'[5] Loomba goes on to note that 'postcolonial critics sometimes forget the links between the recasting of third world cultures and the spread of consumer capitalism.'[6] An important reason for this oversight is postcolonialism's inadequacy at theorizing 'contemporary 'globality'' beyond its conception as an intensified process of 'neoimperialism': the idea that 'nations who may have gained their independence... are still subject to domination by European or US capitalism and culture.' [7] Recent theorists of globalisation challenge the theoretical and empirical validity of conceiving of globalisation in this way. For example, John Tomlinson exposes how the idea of cultural imperialism locates power in a specific national space, reasserting the legitimacy of national boundaries and national cultures, both of which have been widely contested in recent years, [8] while several Marxist theorists, despite stressing the historical continuity of global capitalism, argue that contemporary multinational capitalism demands new ways of thinking about how global networks of power operate.[9] Given these theoretical challenges, this thesis responds to the need for a critical framework for reading South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain that is able to address the complexities of 'contemporary globality.'

A secondary aim of this thesis to address how South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain might extend and qualify theoretical explanations of globalisation. The texts considered in this thesis address many of the concerns of globalisation including; the multidimensionality of globalisation (cultural, political, and economic); its historical context (from European colonialism to the present); the uneven experiences of globalisation around the world; the erosion and re-invention of traditional ways of life; the emergence of transnational and postnational identities; as well as the spread of

(Western) capitalism, modernity and liberalism. How the texts in this thesis respond to such thematic concerns through narrative is of the utmost importance. Narrative analysis broadens an understanding of theoretical explanations of globalisation because all employ a variety of often contradictory narrative forms to make their claims: from Francis Fukayama's 'End of History', to Samuel Huntington's 'Class of Civilisations,' to Arjun Appadurai's world of chaotic flows to Frederick Jameson's 'logic of late capitalism.' This is not to suggest that globalisation is simply a textual phenomenon and to ignore its very real effects around the world, but rather to ask what role does South Asian diasporic fiction play in constructing narratives of globalisation? And how does literary analysis help us understand how "stories" of globalisation are told?

Theoretical Frameworks

In recent years literary studies has undergone a move toward globalised and diversified perspectives as Apter identifies in the epigraph to this chapter. Postcolonial studies have played a vital role in this regard as has been mentioned, as well as various theoretical frameworks associated with postmodernism, cultural studies and British multiculturalism. The critical tools that these overlapping discourses have yielded provide important ways of framing South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain and have both contributed to and drawn from theories of globalisation. Given the breadth of this range of discourses, one of the difficulties in undertaking a study that employs globalisation theory to read literary texts is the sheer volume of theoretical work available and the unwieldy interdisciplinary nature of the field. Therefore, before addressing the specific implications of globalisation theory for South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain and vice versa, it is necessary to spend some time discussing what is meant by the term globalisation.

To be sure, the extensive body of research within the field of globalisation, as well as its ubiquitous usage within public discourse, makes defining globalisation a daunting task. This difficulty is compounded if we consider that globalisation research cuts across economic, political, and cultural fields of inquiry, each of which stresses the importance of their respective fields. Indeed, many of the complexities and contradictions

that face conceptualizing globalisation have led some scholars, such as Hirst and Thompson, to question whether globalisation really represents a new structural dispensation or is simply a new buzzword that lacks quantifiable evidence.[10] Furthermore, even for theorists who argue that globalisation does represent a structurally new global dispensation, fierce debate remains over the how and when of globalisation's inception, as well the effects of the globalisation process itself. Nevertheless, despite these conflicts and the sheer volume of commentators that have responded to them, it remains possible to identify two broadly defined paradigms that render the discussion of globalisation more manageable within the context of this thesis. The first is a Marxist explanation that conceives of globalisation as the process of unifying the world into a singular global economy; the second is a "liberal" explanation that views globalisation as a de-centred, multidimensional process.

Marxist attempts to theorise globalisation have been greatly influenced by Immanuel Wallerstein's *The Modern World System* that first appeared in 1974.[11] Wallerstein's model of the world system emphases both the economic dimension and *longue durée* of globalisation, and understands contemporary globalisation within the historical context of European capitalist expansion. Thus, Wallerstein writes:

> The world in which we are now living, the modern world-system, had its origins in the sixteenth century. This world-system was then located in only part of the globe, primarily in parts of Europe and the Americas. It expanded over time to cover the whole globe. It is and has always been a *world-economy*. It is and has always been a *capitalist* world-economy.[12]

According to Wallerstein, the 'world-economy' is characterised by a complex global division of labour, rather than by a series of relatively autonomous state economies interacting with each other through international trade.[13] However, in recent years the 'world-economy' has entered into a period of crisis brought about by the nexus of the 'world revolution of 1968,' and 'the long-existing structural trends which were beginning to reach their asymptotes.'[14] Wallerstein argues that two distinct solutions have emerged in response to this crisis. On the one hand, the economic and ideological discourses of '"neoliberalism"' [15] first advanced during the 1980's by Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan represents a new strategy by core countries to reassert old hierarchies through the

hegemonic idea of free trade.[16] On the other hand, a global leftist movement symbolised by the World Social Forum (WSF) in Porto Alegre,[17] aims to dismantle the hierarchal configuration of the world system. These two very different and conflicting responses to the recent crisis in the world system mean that contemporary globalisation should be understood as a dialectical process: one that Wallerstein conceives of as a 'struggle between the spirit of Davos and the spirit of Porto Alegre.'[18]

There are a number of important political and cultural implications for ideas of identity engaged by South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain that emerge from Wallerstein's dialectical understanding of contemporary globalisation. On a political level, because the nation-state is integral to the capitalist 'world-economy,' multinational capitalism does not herald its obsolescence as some theorists claim. [19] Rather, while nation states may not be able to fully control the flow of capital across their borders, the state apparatuses of core nations nonetheless remain crucial to the global capitalist economy. [20] Consequently, neoliberal globalisation simply represents a new way that core countries intervene in the affairs of weaker states after decolonisation in order to maintain a world-system of unequal exchange. Significantly, this system of unequal exchange is not only upheld through direct political and military intervention, but also through culture and ideas. As Wallerstein remarks, while the use of force has been essential to the expansion of the modern world system, 'the powerful have always needed to gain some degree of legitimacy for the advantages and privileges that have come with dominance.'[21] Thus, culture and ideas are important because they have historically provided the moral justification of domination and the legitimisation of power and continue to do so today - a project that Wallerstein terms 'European universalism.'[22] Cultural globalisation is important then, because it represents a key battle ground in which the ideas of neoliberal globalisation and a leftist 'movement of movements' contest the future trajectory of the world.

Frederick Jameson's *Postmodernism Or The Cultural Logic Of Late Capitalism* takes up this relationship between culture and globalisation in more detail. Like Wallerstein, Jameson views capitalism to have moved into a new phase in recent years that, following the work of Ernest Mandel, he terms a period of 'multinational capital.'[23] Within this period of capitalism a new 'cultural logic' has emerged, in which postmodern

culture itself has come to play an progressively central role in capitalist society because of the increased importance of advertising and the media to everyday life. For Jameson, the cultural logic of postmodernism is characterised by depthlessness and an undermining of material historical representation. These two aspects of globalised postmodern culture, as Best and Kellner point out, lead to a condition of spatial disorientation in the contemporary world, because 'global multinational culture' is decentred and cannot be visualized, a culture in which one cannot position oneself.'[24] For Jameson, the de-centred aesthetic of postmodern culture is unavailing politically because it prevents class mobilisation and obfuscates networks of power in a world of multinational capitalism. By theorising the aesthetics of postmodern culture and multinational capitalism, what Jameson views as the cultural domination of postmodernism suggests a more complex process of cultural homogenisation than previous Marxist critics such as Herbert Schiller posit. Hence, to speak of globalisation as a process of homogenisation, from Jameson's perspective, is more precisely to speak of the universalisation of the 'logic' that upholds multinational capitalism, rather than the convergence of the world into a 'homogenized North Atlantic cultural slop,' as Schiller contends. [25]

Both Jameson and Schiller's explanations of cultural globalisation have important implications not only for understanding issues of class, but also the representation of national, Muslim and gender identities in this thesis. Thus, Timothy Brennan argues that the ostensible cosmopolitan trend in "global" culture does not in fact represent the erosion of national identities, but rather the universalisation of an American model of national identity. Aníbal Quijano contends that globalisation reinforces Western conceptions of gender around the world in order to maintain the unequal distribution of power in the world system. While Ziauddin Sardar draws upon selected aspects of Marxist theory to claim that "global" culture represents a form of 'epistemological imperialism' that denies Muslims representation and erodes traditional Islamic societies and cultures.[26] A key line of enquiry explored in all four chapters then, is whether or not the texts in question, challenge or reinforce the various processes of cultural imperialism that Marxist theorists argue globalisation represents.

The second major paradigm of globalisation to be outlined, in contrast to Marxist accounts, does not view economics as the prime mover in the globalisation process.

Rather for "liberal" theorists, globalisation remains far too complex, de-centred and multi-dimensional to be accounted for by economic factors. One of the most prominent theorists to advance this decentred model of globalisation is Arjun Appadurai in his seminal work *Modernity at Large*.[27] According to Appadurai, globalisation represents a rupture from earlier periods in history brought about by the nexus of an emergent global electronic media and mass migration. The result of this nexus is a world in which the importance of territory has receded and the imagination now plays a central role in shaping the world's economic, political and cultural affairs. The relentless fluidity of this world means that we cannot view globalisation as the dialectical process that Wallerstein posits, but must employ new more complex paradigms such as 'chaos theory' to conceptualise it.[28] Therefore, theoretical explanations of globalisation must be conceived through 'fractal metaphors' of cultural forms that 'overlap' in highly complex ways. [29] This means that theorists of globalisation

> need to ask not how these complex, overlapping, fractal shapes constitute a simple, stable (even if large-scale) system, but to ask what its dynamics are: Why do ethnic riots occur when and where they do? Why do some states wither at greater rates in some places and times than in others? Why do some countries flout conventions of international dept repayment with so much less apparent worry than others? [30]

Such questions demand that globalisation be understood as a process of disjunctive flows or 'scapes,' rather than as a singular system and have important implications for how globalisation is conceived within the fields of economics, politics and culture. [31]

In terms of economics, Appadurai's explanation of globalisation means that traditional economic models are unable to come to terms with the new complexities of the global economy.[32] The central problem with these earlier economic models, as Appadurai sees it, is that they cannot theorise how the global economy is now comprised of a series of economic, political and cultural flows. Thus, Appadurai speaks of *financescapes* in which capital now moves 'through national turnstiles at blinding speed,' and of *technoscapes* which are 'driven by increasingly complex relationships among money flows, political possibilities, and the availability of both un- and highly skilled labour.'[33] These extraordinarily complex and multifarious relationships that now drive

the global economy represent an economic reality so different to Marx's time that they render Marxist economic models obsolete.

Moreover, the fluid, ephemeral, world that Appadurai posits means that 'the nation-state, as a complex modern political form is on its last legs.'[34] As the importance of traditional political categories such as the nation-state recede, a diverse range of identities materialize, fuelled by global media networks that enable the 'imagination' to function as 'a staging ground for action, and not only for escape.' [35] In such a 'postnational political world,' a range of non-state actors concerned with 'the environment, women's issues, and human rights,' as well as the politicization of religions such as 'global Hinduism,' vie for individual political allegiances.[36] This conception of identity politics in an age of globalisation has important implications for assessing the political potential that the identities examined in this thesis represent. It indicates that globalisation has led to the diminishing political relevance of the nation-state, as well as traditional Marxist class categories, because while the transnational movements that Appadurai identifies may seek to intervene in issues that are relevant to both, their membership and political objectives transgress such categories.[37] Conversely, it also indicates the growing political significance of Muslim and gender identities. Thus, Oliver Roy and Bobby Sayyid argue that Islam as a global political identity has emerged in recent years, in part, because globalisation promotes identification with a global Muslim community. While Saskia Sassen finds global cities rich in possibilities for transnational feminist movements because they enable new global political alliances to be forged.[38]

According to Appadurai, the emergence of these sorts of political movements signals a fundamentally new role that culture plays in the negotiation of global politics; or more precisely, that the distinction between the traditional boundaries of culture, politics and economics have been eroded. The centrality of the imagination to globalisation means that culture mediates in a complex crucible of global flows in which it both shapes, and is shaped by, political and economic forces. Thus culture is not determined by specific economic or political agendas as Marxist critics have argued, but rather is at the very heart of how political agendas are conceived in the contemporary world. Appadurai puts it this way:

> The image, the imagined, the imaginary – these are all terms that direct us to something critical and new in global cultural processes – the imagination as a social practice. No longer mere fantasy (opium for the masses, whose real work is elsewhere), no longer simple escape (from a world defined principally by more concrete purposes and structures), no longer elite pastime (thus not relevant to the lives of ordinary people), and no longer mere contemplation (irrelevant for new forms of desire and subjectivity), the imagination has become an organized field of social practices, and a form of negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields of possibility. Thus the unleashing of the imagination links the play of pastiche (in some settings) to the terror and coercion of states and their competitors. The imagination is now central to all forms of agency, is itself a social fact, and is the key component of the new global order.[39]

Unlike theories of cultural imperialism then, which imply passivity on the part of the media consumer, Appadurai argues that global flows of culture motivate political action and are central to how political alliances are formed today. In light of such claims, this thesis asks: what role might South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain play in shaping 'globally defined fields of possibility?' To what extent do these texts signify group identities to represent the political potential that Appadurai posits? And are differences evident in the effectiveness of class, national, Muslim and gender identities in engendering transnational political alliances?

This brief review of globalisation theory reveals globalisation to be a contested concept that has multiple theoretical and historical meanings. Much of the confusion surrounding debates about globalisation within public discourse arise from a lack of specificity in how the term is employed. For example, the anti-globalisation movement is itself a highly globalised movement that relies on the Internet and other global media networks to advance its cause. What the movement is against is not actually *globalisation* (it does not want the world to no longer be unified through communication networks, for example) but rather recent practices of global capitalism. In order to avoid this sort of confusion, this thesis will make the distinction between three different definitions of globalisation. First, in its broadest usage, the term *globalisation* will refer to the multidimensional processes of increasing global inter-connectedness since the late 1960's producing a world of 'complex connectivity,' to use Tomlinson's phrase.[40] Second, the term *neoliberal globalisation* will be used to address the more narrowly defined economic and ideological project first advanced by Margret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan

during the 1980's. Third, the *world system* will refer to a much older history of global capitalism and the process of incorporating the world into a singular and unequal economy that dates back to onset of modernity and European colonial expansion.

The Significance of Globalisation Theory for Reading South Asian Diasporic Fiction in Britain

Having outlined some of the salient aspects of the debate over conceptualising globalisation, I now want to examine the implications of globalisation for reading South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain. A review of the literary criticism that has drawn upon globalisation theory reveals two principal ways that it can illuminate the texts considered in this thesis. First it facilitates a better understanding of recent shifts in the global literary market, which have enabled the emergence of South Asian diasporic fiction as a sub-genre. And second, it is useful for analysing how cultural identities have changed in the contemporary period, highlighting new relationships between power, identities and cultures that differ from postcolonial approaches. In this respect, globalisation theory offers a new understanding of the texts in question and their role in debates about the politics of representation and identity. In outlining these issues my aim is not to provide an exhaustive overview of criticism, but rather to highlight the major debates in this area as they first relate to "liberal" and then Marxist explanations of globalisation. In addition, I will also draw attention to how South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain might engage with these debates.

The last thirty years have witnessed a sea-change in the publishing industry brought about by the economic reforms of neoliberal globalisation. For "liberal" critics, these changes are largely seen in positive light, due to their effects on the kinds of novels that the publishing industry now produces in Britain. An early proponent of this view was Bill Buford who, as one of the founding members of Granta, became an influential voice in British publishing from the late 1970's onwards. For Buford, writing in 1980, the erosion of the traditional British publishing industry is anticipated as a way of re-invigorating a homogeneous and archaic industry. Of this Buford writes:

> The current crisis in publishing is revealing just how anachronistic publishing and bookselling are and just how much this society is trying to sustain its creative artists and their achievements on a system regularly incapable of performing the task it is called on to perform. Thirty years ago the official historian of the Longman publishing house proudly announced that nothing significant had changed in publishing since 1842. His remarks today acquire a terrible pertinence: Those who have controlled the business during the last 107 years have provided no new answers. The interesting thing is that in themselves and in their policies, they have provided the old answers over and over again. The interesting thing, now, is they continue to do so: the book, in more than one sense is a handmade art in an economy no longer able to accommodate it.[41]

From Buford's vantage point, the decline of the British publishing industry by the 1970s was a result of middle class provincialism that both limited the ideas that novels addressed and the audiences that they were aimed at, resulting in a censorship that was 'not political but economic.'[42] Buford's ideas of publishing reform are congruent with the broader discourses of neoliberal globalisation that were emerging contemporaneously and which sought to revitalise Britain's economy from being 'the sick man of Europe' through modernisation and free market policies.[43] Like Margaret Thatcher's assessment of the British economy, Buford calls for a similar deregulation of British publishing in order to undermine the 'old [British] hierarchies and authorities,' and enable a plurality of new ideas, narratives, voices and, just as importantly, audiences to materialise.[44] Globalisation wrought the changes that Buford called for in an extremely short period of time. Thus by the mid 1980's, as John Feather points out in *A History of British Publishing*, the 'closed and introspective world of British publishing,' which had up until 1980 been almost entirely British owned, gave way to a new publishing industry run by multinational companies.[45]

In more recent years, Roger Bromley's *Narratives For A New Belonging* substantiates Buford's view that changes in the traditional British publishing industry have ushered in a 'new era of creative pros.' [46] For Bromley, however, this is not only true in the case of Britain but throughout the Anglophone world where diasporic writers have given voice to 'postnational' forms of culture and identities.'[47] Such fiction is seen by Bromley as a 'liberal, multicultural space' that plays a crucial role in articulating 'new senses of (un) belonging,' re-drawing borders and re-mapping identities.[48] Bromley argues that the 'double sense of identity' implicit to diasporic narratives undermines

traditional territorially-bounded models of cultural identity, which 'may be rendered existentially and analytically redundant' in our contemporary world. [49] This conception of diasporic fiction means that its narrative forms, use of language, and juxtaposition of several cultures, make it a crucial cultural space for imagining identities that speak to the sort of globalised world in which Appadurai argues we now live.[50]

Like Buford, Bromley believes the diasporic imagination revitalises literature by re-invigorating the English language, as well as traditional narrative forms, through processes of cultural translation. Yet Bromley's assessment of diasporic fiction goes beyond Buford's claims by arguing that diasporic fiction represents a more profound shift than simply the revitalisation of the English novel: not the globalisation of English fiction, but rather a fiction of globalisation, a 'world literature' as Bromley claims.[51] Within this formulation, the texts considered in this thesis exemplify a new literary category that signals the inadequacy of postcolonial models of "writing back" to a British centre, and of "cultural imperialism." Consequently, what are now needed are new theoretical frameworks to effectively read diasporic narratives that operate at 'a cultural border zone, always in motion, not frozen for inspection.'[52] Thus, we must go beyond the practices of traditional literary studies and (certain) postcolonial theory, which are 'historically framed and culturally bounded.' [53] Toward this objective, Appadurai's paradigm of globalisation might be seen as an important model for reading diasporic fiction that enables a better understanding of the new relationships between geography, identities and culture that such fiction represents. Reading diasporic fiction in this way requires thinking about culture and identities less as a property of groups or territories and more as a heuristic device for talking about the shifting boundaries of difference within the 'third scenario' that Bromley argues 'world literature' represents. [54]

In contrast to Bromley's conception of 'world literature,' two recent accounts by Pascale Casanova and Franco Moretti draw upon world systems theory to posit a very different account of 'world literature.' Pascale Casanova's, *The World Republic of Letters,* offers a useful analysis of the contemporary global literary market, contextualized within the historical frame of the world system. Casanova argues that to think of literature from a global perspective is not to think of a 'world literature,' but of 'an international literary space, or else the world republic of letters.'[55] Such a 'literary

universe' is relatively independent from 'the everyday day political world and its divisions, whose boundaries and operational ways are not reducible to those of ordinary political space.' [56] Nevertheless, the literary realm is far from the liberal space that Bromley conceives and is rather a system with a global centre (first Paris, and later, London and New York) that exerts 'literary domination' over the rest of the world.

In recent years this 'literary universe' has been transformed by the deregulation of national markets, as well as by a series of mergers and acquisitions of smaller companies by multinational corporations, resulting in the centralisation of a global publishing industry. [57] Further, expanded markets have increased book profit margins from 4% in traditional national markets to 12-15% globally, leading publishers to produce '"World fiction"' that is 'based on tested aesthetic formulas and designed to appeal to the widest possible readership.'[58] Within this formulation, writers such as Salman Rushdie and Vikram Seth are argued to satisfy the demands of a globalised literary marketplace whose tastes, in contrast to the provincialism of traditional British audiences, are metropolitan and 'cosmopolitan' as Timothy Brennan has demonstrated elsewhere.[59] Consequently, far from representing the voices of the margins that Buford and Bromley envision South Asian diasporic writers in Britain to represent, Casanova positions them at the centre of an Anglo-American 'literary universe.' This positioning brings into question certain postcolonial approaches to the texts considered in this thesis, such as the various models of 'hybridity' that have been widely employed in reading them.[60] As numerous Marxist commentators have pointed out, when framed in the context of the multinational publishing industry, multiethnic, 'hybrid' identities might be read as complicit with contemporary American-led globalisation, rather than as an effective strategy for challenging British colonial power (and its possible continued influences) as certain critics have claimed.[61]

While Moretti shares Casanova's view of literature as a world system that is both singular and unequal, his emphasis is upon the relationship between world political power and narrative form. Moretti argues that the novel represents a global incorporation of literary forms that is bound to the incorporation of the world into a singular capitalist economy as conceived by Wallerstein. Moretti writes:

> I will borrow this initial hypothesis from the world-system school of economic history, for which international capitalism is a system that is simultaneously *one* and *unequal:* with a core, and a periphery (and a semi-periphery) that are bound together in a relationship of growing inequality. One, and unequal: *one* literature (Weltliteratur, as in Goethe and Marx), or, perhaps better, one world literary system (of inter-related literatures); but a system which is different from what Goethe and Marx had hoped for, because it's profoundly *unequal*. [62]

If 'the literature around us now is unmistakably a planetary system,' then the process of cultural exchange that produces this global system is one in which peripheral cultures are 'intersected and altered by another culture' through a process of cultural domination.

Analysis of the process of literary incorporation helps us understand the uneven distribution of global power, because 'forms are the abstracts of social relationships; so, formal analysis is in its own modest way an analysis of power.' [63] Thus the unequal distribution of power in the world system should not be seen as external to literary production - as a context in which literature is to be read - but rather a system of power that is 'embedded well into its form.'[64] From Moretti's perspective then, the literary innovations that Buford and Bromley argue South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain to represent must be understood as *following* the great social changes wrought by the spread of global modernity and the incorporation of the world into a singular capitalist system. This does not mean that these narratives simply 'reflect' the recent social transformations of the period in which they were written, but that they attempt to '*resolve* the problems set by history,' to reduce the tensions that globalisation brings and, in due course, to 'make power relations more acceptable.'[65]

Beyond differences in view and emphasis, both "liberal" and Marxist theories show that the relationship between globalisation and literature calls for a rethinking of how literature is framed and studied: both their conceptions of 'world literature' demand a shift of categories. For "liberal" critics this means thinking of diasporic fiction as a new genre of 'world culture' that has emerged in recent years. For Marxists, however, it means identifying how shifts in literary form follow social transformations within the world system. The former emphasises the newness of diasporic cultural production, the latter its historical connection to European literary traditions and structures of power. In both instances, how we categorise the writings considered in this thesis is politically

significant because, as Stephen Heath argues, the taxonomy of new types of literature questions the 'ideological bases of existing genre assumptions.' [66] What then does it mean to categorise the writings considered in this thesis as South Asian diasporic fiction, 'world literature,' or 'Anglophone literature' in an age of globalisation? What does the relationship of these narratives to traditional genres tell us about their continuities as well as discontinuities with the past? Whose identities are being represented in these narratives, how are they being represented and for whom? Whether these narratives represent examples of the 're-invigorated English novel' as Buford suggests, Bromley's 'third space' of 'world culture,' or Moretti's one and unequal literary 'world system' signal very different ways that these writings go against what Heath calls, 'the grain of ready – legitimate – identities.' [67] Consequently, studying how these narratives challenge, re-inscribe and re-articulate traditional literary genres becomes one way of exploring the exigencies that globalisation places on traditional categories of identity and culture, and the politics of representation that is implicit to this process.

The Implications of South Asian Diasporic Fiction in Britain for Supplementing Globalisation Theory

If globalisation theory is an important framework in which to read the texts considered in this thesis, then these texts also offer an important perspective from which to broaden and supplement existing discussions of globalisation in the social sciences. Specifically they do so in their representation of identities which, as Manuel Castells remarks, play a vital role in the globalisation process. Of this Castells writes:

> Identities are so important, and ultimately so powerful in this ever-changing world power structure, because they build interests, values and projects around experience, and refuse to dissolve by establishing specific connection between nature, history, geography and culture. Identities anchor power in some areas of social structure, and build from there their resistance or their offensives.[68]

Identities interface then, between the distant forces of global re-structuring, local spaces and individual subjectivity. They expose how localities are not passive spaces that are

uniformly transformed by global restructuring, but rather spaces that play an active role in promoting and resisting various aspects of global power. Literature furthers an understanding of these processes through its attention to the affective realm, which partly determines (political) action and conceptions of identity. In this way literature offers a useful supplement to the social sciences in which, as Judith Cherni points out, an unambiguous 'notion of identity as a social concept is still illusive.'[69] The relationships and gaps between the social and subjective aspects of identity formation that render defining identity within the social sciences problematic are the focus of the novels examined in this chapter. These aspects of identity are filled with consciousness, hopes and failures, desires and ambitions, as well as the negotiations of a moral, philosophical, religious nature that are often contradictory, inflected, and spill beyond neatly defined categories. At this level of analysis, literature offers a valuable perspective on the relationship between globalisation and identity by representing the complexities of how identities are lived and experienced.

Literary representations of identity have different implications for the two theoretical paradigms of globalisation outlined in this thesis, and the specific roles that each argue identities play in the globalisation process. For Marxist critics, identities have always been a central aspect of the world-system because of their function in incorporating the world into a singular global economy. Thus, Wallerstein argues that the categories of race, nation and ethnicity have been integral to the project of European global expansion and creating and maintaining a global division of labour.[70] Because racial, ethnic (and gender) identities are bound to the structures of global capitalism, neoliberal globalisation inevitably reinforces a hierarchy of identities in order to devalorise segments of the global labour force. Therefore, as Samir Amin provocatively puts it: 'racism is the inevitable outcome' of the 'immanent logic of capital accumulation' and thus 'globalization consists of organizing apartheid on a global scale.' [71]

Further, multinational capitalism not only reinforces identity hierarchies, but also obfuscates the relationship between identities and global power structures. Jameson in particular has articulated this point in some detail by arguing that multinational capitalism relentlessly appropriates 'group identities' within the logic of the market, thereby undermining any political potential that they may represent.[72] The effect of this has been

to transform identity politics into a battle of representation, imbuing 'groups' with 'the gratification of psychic identity,' while delinking the representation of identity from material social experiences.[73] In response to this, both Jameson[74] and Wallerstein[75] call for a new coalition politics that maps group identities to global structures of power in order to give them political purchase in a world of multinational capitalism. The texts considered in this thesis provide a useful perspective from which to examine the challenges that face such theoretical conceptions of cross-cultural, transnational class alliances. In particular, they supplement Wallerstein and Jameson's work by exploring the emotional aspects of identities and the strong attachment that many members of the South Asian diaspora in Britain hold to group identities other than class, such as religious and cultural traditions. What then are the relative merits and shortcomings of class, compared to national, Muslim and gender identities for building alliances and motivating action in an age of globalisation? And to what extent does class usurp, conflict, or connect the categories of identity examined in this thesis?

"Liberal" theorists posit a different relationship between globalisation and identities, and indicate another way that literature may broaden understanding of the globalisation process. Particularly important from this perspective, are the ways in which globalisation demands rethinking the relationship between identities and territories.[76] This is not only because of the proliferation of transnational group identities that Appadurai identifies, but also because of the subtle everyday ways that globalisation transforms how identities are now produced within local contexts. For instance, John Tomlinson argues that globalisation brings innumerable cultural influences to people's everyday experiences – from global cuisine, to Hollywood movies, to international fashion trends and environmental concerns – that force a rethinking of the relationship between locality and identity. In such instances, globalisation should not be seen as conflicting or destroying local cultural identities, but rather as part of the increasing complexity that now constitutes localities.

The ways in which the fiction examined in this thesis elucidates such relationships between culture, identity and globalisation are twofold. On the broadest and most obvious level, South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain comprises one small part of the globalised culture industry. In this respect, novels along with films, advertising billboards and

fashion trends offer what Tomlinson calls 'narratives (however ideologically suspect) of how life may be lived, references to shared notions of identity, appeals to self-image, pictures of "ideal" human relations, versions of human fulfilment, happiness and so on.'[77] In a general sense then, fiction is part of a much broader body of cultural production that provides individuals with '"existentially significant" meaning.'[78] At this level of analysis, South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain is no different from numerous mundane cultural experiences: it simply represents one way that individuals make meaning of their lives and the world by contributing to their 'ongoing life narratives.' [79]

However fiction not only offers 'narratives of how life may be lived,' but also investigates why these choices are made and what their costs and attractions are. Thus, the texts considered in this thesis explore why some people's lives are shaped by different aspects globalisation more than others, what choices are available to them, what most affects these choices and why? In so doing, the texts examined in this thesis bring into view the uneven effects of globalisation upon a range of characters from different cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds. They ask questions such as why Islam is so appealing to second and third generation British born Muslims? Does global popular culture affect identities differently to more traditional forms of culture? How do diasporic subjects create a sense of belonging and attachment to localities in a globalised world? Do some identities and forms of culture provide more emotionally satisfying 'life narratives' than others? And what is the role of the individual, the family, the social, and the global in these processes? These issues are not insignificant, because as Tomlinson argues, culture and identities mark 'out a symbolic terrain of meaning-construction as the arena for political interventions,'[80] and for Wallerstein shape 'our choices about the directions in which we want the world to go.'[81] To better understand identities through literary representations then, is to go some way toward understanding how group alliances are formed in an age of globalisation and what possibilities for shaping the trajectory of the world this suggests.

Chapter Outlines

The fictional texts selected for discussion in this thesis are novels with the exception of Hanif Kureishi's screenplay *My Beautiful Laundrette*. I have focused on the novel because, as has been previously outlined, it represents a literary form that has a number of key relationships with the globalisation process. The inclusion of Kureishi's screenplay, *My Beautiful Laundrette,* is because of its important influence upon South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain that both foreshadows and contextualises the concerns of numerous subsequent novels. Additionally, I have tried to balance the inclusion of well known South Asian diasporic writers such as Kureishi and Rushdie, published by large multinational companies, with less well known voices from much smaller presses, such as Farhana Sheikh. I have also aimed to strike a balance of male and female writers from diverse South Asian backgrounds; from those born and raised in England such as Meera Syal, to those born in South Asia, such as Manzu Islam and those born elsewhere, such as V.S. Naipaul.

The aim of including this range of fiction is not an attempt to represent the entirety of contemporary South Asian literary production in Britain, but rather to offer exemplary examples that reflect the diversity of its literary output. The South Asian diaspora in Britain is not understood, therefore, as a homogenous, friction free community, but rather as a grouping to be questioned and critically explored. Thus, in assessing the effects of globalisation upon the negotiation of identities in these narratives I do not seek to emphasise commonalities at the expense of difference. Nevertheless, despite acknowledging the diversity of the backgrounds of the authors that comprise the sub-genre, as well as the differences in style, theme and ideological outlook of their writing, this grouping of texts is particularly useful for studying the effects of globalisation upon identities. It represents a set of texts that operate at the intersection between Britain's colonial past and contemporary globality, as well as across local, national and transnational literary contexts. With this in mind, this thesis adopts 'South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain' as a nexus that illuminates the continuities and discontinuities of historical global integration, while keeping the category itself under question.

Chapter 1 explores V.S. Naipaul's *Magic Seeds*, Hari Kunzru's *Transmission*, and Manzu Islam's *Burrow* as imaginative spaces that conceive of economic inequality within a transnational framework, encompassing South Asia, America, Britain and Western Europe. Testing and extending the utility of both Marxist and liberal explanations of the effects of globalisation upon class identities, the chapter investigates how a transnational perspective of economic inequality affects traditional conceptions of class identities. It asks to what extent does the increasing complexity and "out-thereness" of the global economy lead to the fracturing of stable class categories, the waning of class-consciousness and the diminishing emotional power of class to shape identity? Conversely, what possibilities does globalisation represent for the articulation of class identities that extend beyond the national divisions which have traditionally defined the praxis of class politics (if not its theorisation as conceived by Marx)?

Chapter 2 moves on to examine the debate of the effects of globalisation upon traditional national identities in Salman Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, Hanif Kureishi's *My Beautiful Laundrette,* and Ravinda Randhawa's *The Coral Strand.* Reading the three literary texts in light of Marxist and liberal explanations of the effects of globalisation upon national identities, the chapter investigates how diaspora and globalisation transform traditionally conceived relationships between culture, territory and identity. Do such transformations lead to a new postnational space of identity formation as liberal theorists of globalisation claim? Or do they lead to the re-inscription of national identities bearing the imprint of Americanisation as Marxist theorists argue? What tensions exist between national identities and deterritorialised identities? And are such tensions able to be reconciled in these narratives? In addressing these questions, the chapter pays particular attention to whether national identities remain meaningful to the everyday lives of the protagonists in these texts and provide satisfying narratives that connect them to their lived environments and a sense of "being at home."

Chapter 3 is concerned with the effects of globalisation upon Muslim identity as represented in Salman Rushdie's, *The Satanic Verses*, Hanif Kureishi's *The Black Album* and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*. The chapter begins by scaffolding discussion of the novels within two theoretical explanations of effects of globalisation on Muslim identity. The first is grounded in a centre-periphery model of globalisation, and argues that

globalisation is a process through which the West subordinates Muslim societies. The second regards globalisation as a de-centred process that partly strengthens and rearticulates, rather than erodes, Muslim identities. Reading the novels in light of these theories, I am particularly interested in a central theme that the novels raise: why Islam continues to be attractive to diasporic subjectivity outside of traditional, territorially based Islamic societies. In addressing this issue, the chapter asks how Muslim identities are produced amongst members of the South Asian diaspora born outside of traditional Islamic societies? Why does a desire to identify with Islam persist in an increasingly secular British society amongst second and third generation British-Asians? And in particular, what is the role of globalisation in facilitating and/or undermining these processes?

Chapter 4 discusses the effects of globalisation upon traditional gender identities in Farhana Sheikh's *The Red Box*, Meera Syal's *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* and Nadeem Aslam's *Maps For Lost Lovers*. My purpose here is to explore how tensions between Western and traditional South Asian conceptions of gender are contested within the globalisation process. Do these tensions lead to the reification of traditional South Asian gender identities? Do they result in the global hegemony of western gender norms? Or do they usher in new gender possibilities framed within a discourse of human rights? In exploring these questions gender emerges as a contested identity that is inflected by a broader set of concerns connected to American hegemony in the contemporary world (both real and perceived), the history of British colonialism, and issues of class and racial subordination.

Finally, the thesis concludes with a discussion of the implication of the study's findings for postcolonial studies and globalisation theory. Here, I attempt to outline the relative merits of globalisation theory over postcolonial theory for reading South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain. In so doing, I suggest ways that postcolonial studies might need rethinking in an age of globalisation and offer possible future directions in light of such concerns. I then go on to consider what "stories" of globalisation these literary texts tell and their usefulness as a supplement to theories of globalisation in the social sciences. Specifically, I show that literature's attention to how identities are produced in the affective realm provides a constructive perspective from which to examine the

globalisation process. I argue that literature is particularly valuable for exploring the emotional and psychological aspects of identity that are often overlooked in globalisation theory, and which expose the effects of globalisation upon identities to be uneven, contradictory and subject to a range of inflections and complications.

Chapter 1

Imagining a World of Inequality: Class Identities in V.S. Naipaul's *Magic Seeds*, Manzu Islam's *Burrow* and Hari Kunzru's *Transmission*.

> For nearly forty years we have raised to prominence the idea of class struggle as the immediate driving force of history, and particularly the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat as the great lever of modern social revolution. – Karl Marx [82]

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the representation of class identities in South Asian diasporic fiction. My aim is to investigate the ways in which South Asian cultural production conceives of class from a global perspective. Toward this objective, I examine three South Asian diasporic novels as imaginative spaces that encompass the periphery of South Asia and the core of Britain, America, and Europe. I propose that the representations of South Asian subjectivity that emerge from these texts extend a view of class identities beyond national boundaries, which as Wallerstein notes, have traditionally defined the praxis of class politics.

More specifically, this chapter compares the work of V.S. Naipaul, Hari Kunzru, and Manzu Islam. It concentrates on how their respective novels, *Magic Seeds*, *Transmission* and *Burrow*, all attempt to come to terms with a complex world that is at once integrated within a global economy and fractured by economic inequality. In so doing, it examines an important theme that these writers raise: namely, how South Asian diasporic subjectivity apprehends a world that has 'become more phantasmagoric than it had ever been,' to use the words of Naipaul's protagonist and what the implications of this are for traditional class identities. [83] The major research questions this chapter asks are: To what extent do experiences of such a world support arguments that claim traditional class identities have been eroded by globalisation? And what possibilities does globalisation represent for the articulation of transnational class identities? To contextualise these questions, I begin by looking at two theoretical explanations of the relationship between class and globalisation in the social sciences. Both propose

important ways of thinking about class identities in the age of globalisation, but from radically differing perspectives. The first paradigm, exemplified by the work of Arjun Appadurai, argues that the chaotic, de-centred nature of globalisation has eroded class identities and the power of class to motivate and organise political action. The second, grounded in Marxist theory, argues that a dialectical struggle between economic neoliberalism and the global left over class identities is evident today – a struggle that according to Immanuel Wallerstein and Frederick Jameson will determine the future trajectory of the world system.

Two Theoretical Explanations of the Effects of Globalisation on Class Identities

Central to Marx's comment that serves as the epigraph to this chapter is a conceptualisation of class in terms of the ownership of property. With the ownership of property comes the right to use resources for personal profit, thereby forcing economic dependence upon those who have no such resources. According to Marx, classes are relatively stable categories from which class-consciousness emerges in recognition of the common interests that a particular class shares. Therefore, because class forms the basis of political organisation and struggle, class identity remains crucial to achieving Marx's vision of a classless society. Put simply, there can be no class struggle without some sense of class identity that enables such a struggle to be conceived in these terms.[84] Nevertheless, despite agreeing on the importance of class-consciousness, the concept of the working-class remains a contested term within Marxist theory. As Hardt and Negri note:

> The concept of the working class has come to be used as an exclusive concept, not only distinguishing the workers from the owners who do not need to work to support themselves, but also separating the working class from other who work. In its most narrow usage the concept is employed to refer only to industrial workers, separating them from workers in agriculture , services, and other sectors; at its most broad, working class refers to all waged workers, separating them from the poor, unpaid domestic labourers, and all others who do not receive a wage.[85]

This chapter employs the broadest definition of the working-class outlined above, which it uses to include a range of workers from rural peasants in South Asia to postindustrial workers in America.

From the perspective of Immanuel Wallerstein, the concept of the working-class is complicated further because class must be understood in conjunction with 'people-based' identities (race, nation and ethnicity) due to an inherent contradiction in the world-system. [86] Therefore on the broadest conceptual level, classes are an objective category, emerging from relations to a global mode of production. However, these objective class categories are complicated by the presence of state political boundaries and the position of individual states within the global economy. For example, Wallerstein notes how the establishment of welfare states in core countries such as Britain are built upon the exploitation of labour abroad. This implies that the working classes in Britain, from a world systems perspective, comprise part of the world's bourgeoisie because they benefit from the surplus created by labour in peripheral states. In addition, core states contain a disproportionate number of the world's bourgeoisie, while peripheral states are comprised of a disproportionate number of semi-proletarian workers and peasants - the most impoverished status of all global citizens. Thus,

> on the one hand, class is defined as relationship to the means of production, and hence in position to the economic system which is a *world*-economy. On the other hand a class is a real actor only to the extent that it becomes class conscious, which means to the extent that it is organized as a *political* actor. But political actors are located primarily in particular nation *states*. Class is not one or the other. It is both.[87]

Class identities then are objectively conceived in relation to global production, but because the nation-state is the primary political actor within the world system, class has historically been conceived of in national terms.

Class identities are further complicated because race, nation and ethnicity have developed as three distinct categories that establish the hierarchal division of labour in the world system. Wallerstein explains this global division of labour in the following way:

> the concept of "race" is related to the axial division of labour in the world economy, the core-periphery antinomy. The concept of "nation" is related to the political superstructure of this historical system, the sovereign states that form and derive from the interstate system. The concept of "ethnic group" is related to the creation of household structures that permit the maintenance of large components of non-waged labour in the accumulation of capital. [88]

This configuration of the world-system has led group identities ('the races, the nations, the ethnic groups') to 'correlate so heavily, albeit imperfectly, with "objective class."'[89] This is not to suggest that group identities should simply be seen as some kind of political red herring to class politics. Rather, they should be understood as a 'historical product of the capitalist world-economy through which the antagonistic forces struggle with each other.'[90] Thus, class identities remain bound to other group identities because of the dispensation of the world-system, which has produced political struggles along these lines of division. While Wallerstein's position here at first appears similar to the work of Paul Gilroy that will be discussed next, what distinguishes the former is an insistence that these various group identities all retain an objective position within the world economy and, therefore, must ultimately be regarded as expressions of global class strata. [91]

Consonant with this argument, Wallerstein maintains that the world system has reached a state of crisis in recent years around which a battle for class identity is taking place.[92] Frederic Jameson's *Postmodernism Or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* is particularly useful in articulating the implications of this struggle, between multinational capitalism and the global left for contemporary cultural production. Toward this objective, Jameson argues that the rise of pluralised identity politics conceals the structural dynamics in which political intervention is grounded. [93] For Jameson, non-class based group identities have no implicit relationship to economic structures because they position themselves in relation to other groups, with the result that 'the lively social struggles of the current period are largely dispersed and anarchic.'[94] However, it is unavailing to unhinge class from other forms of political identities, because non-class group identities are unable to offer narratives that might lead to meaningful political intervention. Thus rather than provide resistance to multinational capitalism, plural group identities sit comfortably within neoliberalism's worldview and are, therefore, more likely to be appropriated by global capitalism than provide resistance to it.[95]

Jameson goes on to argue that vast changes in the global economy have had significant effects upon classes, which demand a significant rethinking of their meaning and extension. Nevertheless, despite such destabilisation Jameson writes:

> How classes could be expected to disappear, save in the unique special-case scenario of socialism, has never been clear to me; but the global restructuration of production and the introduction of radically new technologies – that have far flung workers in archaic factories out of work, displaced new kinds of industry to unexpected parts of the world, and recruited workforces different from the traditional ones in a variety of features, from gender to skill to nationality – explain why so many people are willing to think so, at least for a time.[96]

In particular, recent changes to the global economy have not 'allowed classes to form in any stable way, let alone acquire a genuine class consciousness.'[97] The problem here, as Jameson sees it, is that class formations and identities materialize slowly and are produced by 'transformations in the mode of production'.[98] Therefore, because transformations in the new global economy have taken place so rapidly and resulted in such complex reconfigurations of production traditional ways of identifying with class have been undermined.

Despite such challenges, both Jameson and Wallerstein argue that globalisation also enables the articulation of what Wallerstein calls a global 'movement of movements'.[99] The aim of such a political identity is to conceive of disparate political struggles as part of a unified global working class movement. This sense of a plural, yet united global class identity remains precisely what Jameson calls for when he speaks of 'class consciousness of a new hitherto undreamed of kind.'[100] Central to this identity, for Jameson, is a need for '"cognitive mapping" of a new and global type' in order for the working classes to position themselves within the structural complexity of the global economy and organise politically.[101] Such an identity holds the promise to synthesise the contradictory nature of traditional class identities in the world-system, enabling class to function as a totalizing framework around which a coalition of working-class identity responds to the disjunctive impulse of neoliberal globalisation.[102]

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In contrast to Marxist accounts of the effects of globalisation upon class identities, Arjun Appadurai and Paul Gilroy argue globalisation has brought Marx's conception of class into question. For Gilroy, recent transformations in the global economy force us to reconsider how we think of class: or as Gilroy puts it, how 'new types of class relations are being shaped and produced in the novel economic conditions we inhabit.'[103] Similarly, Arjun Appadurai argues that these new economic conditions demand a rethinking of the class categories that Marx had developed in the nineteenth century because today the global economy is inexorably chaotic and disorganized. Indeed, for Appadurai even 'the most complex and flexible theories of global development that have come out of the Marxist tradition' have failed to come to terms with what Lash and Urry have called 'disorganized capitalism.'[104] Consequently, both Appadurai and Gilroy argue that the complex nature of the new global economy precludes the direct relationships between production and identity that Marx posited.

Appadurai and Gilroy cite a number of reasons for globalisation's destabilising influence on class identities. The first of these is expressed in Appadurai's call for a rethinking of the 'relationship between production and consumption in today's global economy.'[105] Appadurai argues that Marx's idea of commodity fetishism has now been replaced by two 'mutually supportive descendents: production fetishism and consumer fetishism.[106] Production fetishism suggests that fixation upon local sites of production overlooks 'the globally dispersed forces that actually drive the production processes today.'[107] Consequently, in today's global economy workers are not only alienated because they sell their labour to earn a living and, therefore as Marx has argued, do not own the end product of their labour. But also because the power behind the production process is no longer located within a specific locality (either the actual site of production or in the extended sense of a nation-state), but within a complex series of transnational flows. The effect of such a deterritorialised economy is to intensify a Marxist sense of social alienation, because production is now subject to a 'complicated spatial dynamic that is increasingly global.'[108]

Appadurai goes on to argue that globalisation further undermines the stability of traditional class identities because it has produced an increasingly mobile global labour-force. Thus,

> more persons and groups deal with the realities of having to move, or the fantasies of wanting to move. What is more, both these realities as well as these fantasies now function on larger scales, as men and women from villages in India think not just of moving to Poona or Madras, but of moving to Dubai and Houston, and refugees from Sri Lanka find themselves in South India as well as in Canada, just as the Hmong are driven to London as well as to Philadelphia. And as international capital shifts its needs, as production and technology generate different needs, as nation-states shift their policies on refugee populations, these moving groups can never afford to let their imaginations rest too long, even if they wished to.[109]

The sheer scale of such mass migration disturbs class identities in host countries because it produces a labour force that is not only increasingly transient, but also ethnically and culturally diverse. Such a globally mobile labour force fractures traditionally homogenous conceptions of working class identity in countries such as Britain and also makes it difficult for new class identities to stabilise. In addition, traditional conceptions of class are disturbed in the migrant worker's country of origin after he or she returns from working abroad. For instance, Appadurai argues that 'professional transients' such as the large number of Indians who work in the Gulf States have transformed Indian cities like Bombay. Not only do these returning workers shift the consumption patterns of the city by establishing new transnational routes of commodities, but they also unsettle South Asian class identities because of the higher incomes they earn abroad.

Furthermore, Appadurai finds that the increased mobility of labour produces a proliferation of political identities that are less likely to be concerned with the class struggle as traditional Marxists understand it. South Asian diasporic subjectivity is central to this claim, as it provides Appadurai with the evidence that diaspora leads to conceiving of politics in terms of ethnic identities, rather than class. For instance, Appadurai stresses the emergence of deterritorialized political identities in which diasporic populations vie for political control of their home states whilst living outside of them. In the case of India, Appadurai argues that 'the cultural reproduction for Hindus abroad has become

tied to the politics of Hindu fundamentalism at home.'[110] Such political identities signal the increasing transnational nature of politics, but are not meaningful in terms of class struggle. Rather they represent political identities that are motivated by a search for cultural purity in response to diaspora. The conjunction of the growing politicisation of ethnic identity, as well as the concealment of the relationship between labour and the control of economic production, means that working class identity has now given way to a far more nebulous sense of economic inequality. This leads Appadurai to speak of 'Sikh cabdrivers in Chicago' as, 'less enfranchised migrants', rather than as members of the working class.[111] For such diasporic workers, Appadurai suggests that fixation upon their countries of origin precludes a sense of class solidarity amongst ethnically diverse diasporic labour forces. Therefore, we find the Sikh cab driver's 'counterparts from Haiti, Pakistan, and Iran' all participate in the 'global flow of audiocassettes, especially devoted to popular and devotional music and speeches', in order to retain links with their respective homelands. What gets lost in these workers' fixation upon their countries of origin is the possibility of class-consciousness emerging to unite them in recognition of their common economic position.

Class consciousness is further undermined by what Appadurai calls 'consumer fetishism' that refers to the increasingly sophisticated role the media plays in the global economy. This creates vast global networks of consumer images 'so subtle that the consumer is consistently helped to believe that he or she is an actor, where in fact he or she is at best a chooser.'[112] Put simply, the penetration of marketing and global brands to the farthest reaches of the world has led to the increasing importance of consumption to identity. And this shift toward a consumer-based model of identity, predicated upon questions of status and prestige, destabilises traditional class identities as envisioned by Marx. This is because relatively stable divisions of class, defined through a direct relationship to production, give way to more arbitrary and unstable set of demarcations grounded in consumer taste that do not necessarily hold a direct connection to economic production.

For Paul Gilroy, by contrast, the relationship between globalisation, ethnicity and class is seen differently from a British perspective. In *There Ain't No Black in The Union Jack*, Gilroy explains that it is not that class is no longer important to group identities, as

Appadurai's work often implies, but that the analytical framework of class needs to be rethought in a globalised, plural society. Gilroy argues that class has become so heterogeneous in contemporary British society that attempting to frame it simply as the contradiction between capital and labour overlooks the complexities of how political alliances and mobilisation now take place. Gilroy puts it this way:

> Wallerstein (1979) has argued forcefully that "class analysis loses its power of explanation whenever it moves towards formal models and away from dialectical dynamics." To reconstruct class so that it is adequate to the task I have outlined involves turning away from being a polarised concept and towards becoming a multi-modal one. The emphasis found in traditional Marxist writing about "race" must therefore be inverted: "race" can no longer be reduced to an effect of the economic antagonism arising from production, and class must be understood in terms qualified by the vitality of struggles articulated through "race."[113]

For Gilroy, then, social movements and identities that emerge in response to oppression 'include class but are not reducible to it.'[114] In particular, it would be a mistake to view the 'race riots' that occurred in Britain during the 1980's as simply a function of Britain's shrinking industrial core. Rather they reflect a more complex set of conditions that include poverty, but also racial subordination. Hence, the diverse political movements that emerged in response to these conditions cannot simply be conflated with traditional labour and union movements of the period, such as the miners' strike, which were direct responses to changes in production.

While class in both Gilroy and Wallerstein's work is shaped by the influence of group identities then, neither addresses how this influence affects an individual's propensity to identify with class. One question this leaves unanswered is the extent to which class is able to provide narratives that are compelling to individual subjectivity on an emotional and existential level. Put simply, is class an identity that is still relevant to people's lives in an age of globalisation? This is a particularly pressing question given the complexity of the global economy that both theoretical paradigms identify and one that the novels considered in this chapter are well positioned to address. In particular, the South Asian protagonists of these novels represent identities that destabilise the boundaries of nation, race, and ethnicity, which have historically produced the division of

labour within the world system. This raises a number of questions of how class identities might be conceived from a global perspective. Can recognition of global economic inequality lead to the re-mapping of class identity that Wallerstein and Jameson envision? Can South Asian diasporic subjectivity transgress the group identities that have historically concealed identification with "objective" class strata in the world system? And therefore, are these texts able to imagine transnational forms of class solidarity? Or do they signal the waning narrative power of class to shape identity?

The Two Worlds of V. S. Naipaul's *Magic Seeds*

Magic Seeds is the sequel to *Half a Life,* two novels that introduce the life of Willie Chandan. Together, the two novels are epic in scope, spanning three generations of Willie's family and encompassing a global canvas from India to Africa to Europe. *Magic Seeds* itself focuses on the migratory experiences of Willie from the 1950's until the present that encompasses three continents. Given this chapter's focus upon class identities, an important implication of migration for Willie is the complex relationship to class identities this results in. Such complexity includes the Brahmin heritage of his father and untouchable mother in India, as well as sojourns amongst impoverished migrant communities and the upper classes in Britain, metropolitan intellectuals in Berlin, Marxist revolutionaries in India, and the bourgeoisie in colonial Africa. [115] What emerges from Willie's experiences is a representation of South Asian diasporic subjectivity that is able to recognise that globalisation has done little to diminish the economic disparities between the periphery and the core. At the same time however, the two characters that shape Willie's life most significantly, Sarojini and Roger, bring to light two very different problems that the novel finds in identifying this inequality with class. In the first instance, Sarojini's character reveals the difficulties that face imagining a global Marxist class-consciousness from the perspective of South Asian diasporic subjectivity. In the second instance, Roger's character highlights how traditional class identities are culturally embedded within British society, and how these conceptions of class have become increasingly delinked from meaningful measures of class in the global economy.

Sarojini's character is central to putting Marxist class identities into a personal register in *Magic Seeds*. The book opens in West Berlin with Sarojini admonishing Willie for the aimless and selfish life he has led and her encouragement of him to join Marxist guerrillas in India. Sarojini's various Marxist accounts of Third World history and politics lead Willie to reflect upon the profound material differences between his experiences in metropolitan centres, such as West Berlin, and those in India and Africa. Influenced by Sarojini, Willie comes to conceptualise this schism in the following way:

> And he saw, what he felt now he had always understood deep down but had never accepted, that there were the two worlds Sarojini spoke about. One world was ordered, settled, its wars fought. In this world without war or real danger people had been simplified. They looked at their television and found their community; they ate and drank and approved things; and they counted their money. In the other world people were more frantic. They were desperate to enter the simpler, ordered world. But while they stayed outside a hundred loyalties, the residue of old history tied them down; a hundred wars filled them with hate and dissipated their energies. In the free and easy air of West Berlin everything looked easy. But not far away there was an artificial border, and beyond that border there was constriction, and another kind of person. [116]

As this passage indicates, for Willie class is conceived, on the broadest level, as a division between two worlds. The inhabitants of one are able to enjoy the profits of global production and the benefits of modernity it has enabled, while those that inhabit 'the other world' are not.[117] In this respect, Willie fits Timothy Weiss' characterisation of several of Naipaul's protagonists, who often 'negotiate the differences and inequalities between one world – local, often marginalized – and another – globalizing, dominated by European and American economics and cultural models.'[118] *Magic Seeds* brings these two worlds into sharp relief through Willie's decision to leave the 'easy air' of West Berlin and join Marxist revolutionaries in rural India in response to Sarojini's reproaches for his 'colonial and 'caste psychosis,' and propensity 'to hide' rather than act.[119] The transition from lounging in the 'warm and steamy and civilised' [120] cafes and sauntering by the 'Patrick Hellmann shop to look at the Armani clothes,'[121] to the "other world" of India is abrupt. This rupture - this moving between worlds - induces 'something like a panic' in Willie, and creates a strong impression upon the reader of the vast economic disparity between India and West Berlin. [122] In contrast to the 'bustle and luxury of West

Berlin,' Willie finds the airport in India to be shabby and backward, the entry point to a space outside the affluent, ordered world he has just left.[123]

> The carpentry was not what Willie expected in an airport building. It was not so much above the carpentry of the rough beach-side weekend restaurants Willie had known in Africa (where roughness would have been part of the style and atmosphere). The concrete walls were white washed in a rough and ready way, with paint splashed beyond concrete on glass and wood; and for may inches above the terrazzo floor the walls were grimy from broom and dirty washing water. A blue plastic bucket and a short dirty broom made of the ribs of coconut branches stood against the wall; not far away a small, dark, squatting woman in a camouflage of dark clothes moved slowly on her haunches, cleaning, giving the floor a suggestion of thinly spread grime. [124]

The disparity between Willie's impressions of the two airports signals that Willie is not simply travelling between two counties, but between two economically unequal worlds. In this respect, India appears to Willie as a second-class version of Europe, characterised by a desire to enter the world of global modernity but lacking the economic resources to achieve the standards of West Berlin from which he has just come.

Yet if the airport in India is metonymic of the pointed economic disparity between Naipaul's' "two worlds," then as Willie travels further into rural India this disparity becomes even more acute. Significantly, as Willie's journey progresses, his impression of economic inequality shifts from its recognition in buildings and environments to the way in which poverty is inscribed into the bodies of the rural poor, an effect of 'centuries of slavery and abuse and bad food.' [125] For Willie class is corporally inscribed in these villagers because it has shaped their lives directly through the food they eat and the shelter they inhabit. This view is corroborated by Willie's Marxist contact in India, Joseph, who describes one such villager in the following way:

> She comes from a village. One of those villages I've been telling you about, where people ran barefooted before and after a horse of the foreign lord and no one was allowed to cover his thighs in the presence of the lord. She is fifteen or sixteen. No one knows. She doesn't know. Her village is full of people like her, very small, very thin. Cricket people, matchstick people. Their minds have gone after centuries of malnourishment. [126]

Naipaul represents these remote rural villages then, not as the impoverished second-class versions of western modernity that Willie identifies in his first port of call in India, but rather the vestiges of a pre-modern world: a world that has 'been living like this for centuries' [127] and that represents the furthest point of Naipaul's 'other world' from the metropolitan West.[128] This social and economic chasm between rural India and the metropolitan West is reflected in the structure of the novel. Hence, the scenes of rural India occupy the middle of the novel and represent the furthest narrative distance from the scenes of West Berlin with which the novel opens, and those of metropolitan London with which it concludes.

Nevertheless, despite Willie's recognition of these two unequal economic worlds, his experience amongst Marxist revolutionaries suggests a number of reasons why this awareness does not translate into the global class-consciousness that Sarojini posits in West Berlin. The first of these reasons reflects Naipaul's general distrust of Marxist class politics that has been widely commented on in his fiction. For instance, Bruce King notes that in *Half A Life* 'those who talk progressive politics' such as the 'Richard, the Marxist publisher,' are shown to be 'morally corrupt.'[129] A similar questioning of the motives of those who espouse Marxist politics is also evident in *Magic Seeds*. In particular, Sarojini and her German lover Wolf are shown to be hypocritical by advocating revolutionary Marxist politics while living comfortable metropolitan lives in West Berlin.

Beyond this familiar Naipaulian distrust of leftist politics, *Magic Seeds* also addresses the issue of class identity and Marxist politics in the age of globalisation more directly. In this respect, it is notable that Sarojini and Wolf produce political films that document the struggles of various Marxist revolutionaries in the Third World. For Sarojini, these films represent expressions of solidarity amongst geographically dispersed Marxist movements and, therefore, help foster awareness that they are 'parts of the same regenerative process in our world.'[130] Willie notes that within such a 'world view,' Sarojini was 'able to absorb everything: political murders in Guatemala, Islamic revolution in Iran, caste riots in India.'[131] Consequently Sarojini and Wolf perceive their film productions to contribute toward the potential that Wallerstein and others find in global communications networks enabling a global 'movement of movements.'[132] Yet such globalised narratives of global class-consciousness and revolutionary politics are

muddied in *Magic Seeds* by Willie's experiences amongst Marxist revolutionaries in India. Here Willie finds the reality of local peasant life to have no connection to the class politics that Sarojini and Wolf champion in West Berlin. Rather, Willie finds class in rural India to be locally constructed, entrenched through centuries of oppression and not an abstract global construct discussed in cafes and documentary films.

For Willie, the schism between these two different conceptions of class identity provides an impenetrable barrier between the revolutionaries he has joined and the peasants they are ostensibly fighting for. Naipaul repeatedly draws attention to ways in which these differences in class identity preclude the sorts of solidarity that Sarojini and Wolf advocate in their films. Thus, from Willie's perspective, the efforts of the revolutionaries to identify with the rural poor through a Marxist conception of class identity belie a fundamental misunderstanding between the two groups. One way we see this disjuncture is through the farcical attempts of the revolutionaries to disguise themselves as peasants. For instance, Willie characterises one disguised revolutionary as a 'mock-peasant' and likens him to 'an actor growing into his part.'[133] Despite the comic aspect to Naipaul's description of the 'mock-peasant,' it is an image that brings to light the novel's broader argument: a disavowal of metropolitan Marxist politics because of its propensity to impose a construct of class on the rural poor in the name of global solidarity. Ramchandra, one of the Marxist revolutionaries, explains to Willie the failings of this top down approach to social transformation in the following way:

> 'These villagers can make you want to cry. Most of them don't have land, and for three years at least we've been trying to get them to take over these six hundred acres. We've held any of number of meetings with them. We've told them about the wickedness of the rule of the old days. They agree with all that, but when we tell them that it is up to them now to plough and take over these acres, they say, 'It's not our land." We will talk for two hours and they will appear to agree with you, but then at the end they will say again, "It's not our land."' [134]

Ramchandra's representation of Marxist class politics as an outside force here reflects the limits that Naipaul finds globalisation to hold for shaping class identities in rural areas of the Third World. In this respect, despite global communication networks increasing awareness of the plight of the rural poor through, for example, the sorts of independent

films that Sarojini and Wolf make, and despite global networks of funding forming the foundation of how 'revolutions are made,' the novel shows that such global interventions are largely unable to bring about the changes that Marxist intellectuals like Sarojini and Wolf in West Berlin envisage.[135] This is because the long history of local class, caste and ethnic identities in rural India not only makes the rural poor resistant to change, but also means that Marxist movements claiming to liberate them are simply perceived as a new power to submit to. Consequently, while Sarojini and Wolf in West Berlin may claim to speak from a position of global class solidarity, their activism does not undermine global inequality but, on the contrary, represents another way in which the unequal power between the West and the Third World is experienced.

Naipaul's disavowal of the theoretical approaches to class that Sarojini represents, because of their failure to account for local dimensions of identity, is evident in the form of *Magic Seeds*. Despite the global scope of the novel, the narrative relies on dialogue and face-to-face exchanges to tell its story. Specifically, it is comprised of a series of compacted histories of the various people Willie meets in his life that often incorporate stories within stories. Naipaul's response to the sweeping global scope of the novel, on the level of form, is to shrink from the vastness of his subject. Consequently, the narrative of *Magic Seeds* never allows itself to offer a bird's eye view of the world as Sarojini and Wolf's Marxist world-views in West Berlin do. Instead, the novel foregrounds the individual localised dimensions of class identity through a narrative technique that is at odds with the sorts of totalising narratives of class that Sarojini espouses.

For example, speaking of a Marxist revolutionary in India that she and Wolf document, Sarojini comments:

> I was dazzled by the brilliance and simplicity of his analysis. He proclaimed the death of the Lin-Piao line. Instead, he announced the Mass Line. Revolution was to come from below, from the village, from the people. There was no place in this movement for middle-class masqueraders. And – would you believe it? – out of the ruins of that earlier, false revolution he has already set going a true revolution.[136]

Yet, when Willie eventually joins the Marxists in India – albeit a different faction to the one Sarojini has described here – he finds Sarojini's theoretical conception of class

politics simply gives way to a series of personal stories. Consequently, as Willie comes to befriend various men in the movement, the recounting of their personal histories speaks of fractured class backgrounds and various motives for joining the movement. In this way the novel suggests that, to use Ramchandra's words, 'it is little things that drive people more than we sometimes imagine.'[137] And because of this, the novel finds that class identities are not produced through the sweeping narratives of Sarojini, but through the small ways in which Ramchandra experiences the 'shame' of poverty [138] and that Bhoj Narayan reflects upon the truncation of his 'ambition.'[139] From this perspective, the totalising frameworks of class that Wallerstein and Jameson advocate do not appear to account for the reasons why individuals are motivated to political action. Naipaul shows these reasons always come from personal experiences of injustice and, therefore, remain heterogeneous. Consequently, although characters such as Ramchandra, Bhoj Narayan and Willie may ostensibly advocate the Marxist conception of class identity that Sarojini espouses in West Berlin, it is really their individual disenchantment with life that motivates them. And for this reason, the possibilities that global communication networks hold to articulate a global Marxist identity and thereby motivate political action, are brought into question in the novel.[140]

The second challenge that *Magic Seeds* charts in translating a general sense of global economic inequality into a new globalised class-consciousness is represented through Roger's character that provides the counterpoint to Sarojini's Marxist views. In contrast to Sarojini, Roger is both nationalistic and culturally conservative, and his views of class make numerous references and literary allusions to Victorian Britain. From Roger's perspective, the effect of globalisation upon class identities in Britain is ambivalent. On one hand, unlike Victorian Britain, Roger argues that the traditional British working class no longer knows their place, in large part because their identities are now shaped by images of global popular culture. Roger laments the effects of this shift by commenting that 'their accents are changing. They are trying to be like the people in the television soaps, and now they've lost touch with what they really might be.' [141] On the other hand, Roger argues that despite the uncertainty of what 'they have metamorphosed into. One thing we can be sure of is that we have not lost them, that they are still in varying ways with us, in culture and attitudes of dependence.'[142] Both aspects

of Roger's views of class identity in Britain have important implications for this chapter's discussion of globalisation and class identity.

In the first instance, Roger's claim that the 'servant class has vanished' in Britain is principally supported by his recognition that globalisation has led to much 'servant' and manual labour in Britain now being performed by a migrant workforce. For example, when Roger takes his working-class mistress, Marian, to an expensive hotel he observes that the staff were comprised of migrant workers that 'through some kind of network, had penetrated to our market town, meeting some local need beyond that of simple labour.' [143] In this way, Roger identifies the presence of a new subordinate class of foreign labour to carry out the tasks traditionally performed by the white working class in Britain.[144] Marian is pleased with the presence of this new migrant workforce because they provide her welcome relief from jobs that she perceives to be beneath her. Consequently, her character appears more likely to exploit rather than identify with this new migrant workforce through a shared sense of class.

Furthermore, *Magic Seeds* shows that Marian and Sarojini's ability to live off state benefits is a direct result of European wealth within the world system. According to Roger, this means the British 'poor' now lead comfortable lives, which he describes in the following way.[145]

> Council estates are blocks of flats or houses built by a municipality for the poor of the parish, as they used to be called. Only, the people there are not poor now. Women there have three or four children by three or four men and they are all living on benefits. Sixty pounds a week a child, and that's just the beginning. You can't call that the dole. So they call them benefits. Women see themselves as money-making machines. It's like Dickens's England. Nothing's changed except that there's a lot of money about, and the Artful Dodger is doing very well indeed, though everything is expensive and everyone's hopelessly in debt and wants the benefits increased. People there need one or two holidays a year. Not Blackpool or Minehead, or Mallorca now, but in the Maldives or Florida or the bad-sex spots of Mexico. They need hours in the sky.[146]

Although Roger's conservatism and general disparaging views of the British working class temper any conclusions that can be drawn from these remarks, they do point to an important issue with respect to the novel's representation of class. Specifically, they indicate that in contrast to the rural poor of India, the British "poor" lead relatively

privileged lives because of Britain's position within the global economy. Similarly, Willie observes the comfortable life that Sarojini is able to lead in West Berlin is due to 'a subsidy from some West German government agency.'[147] In both instances, the benefits that the unemployed citizens of the West enjoy, when compared to the poor of India, bring to light the global dimension of class. Consequently if, as Roger argues, the British 'servant class' has disappeared, then the novel shows that this should not be taken to mean class itself has disappeared. [148] Rather, *Magic Seeds* indicates that any erosion of the traditional British 'servant class' is directly dependent upon a new migrant labour force replacing them and, more obliquely, at the expense of many in the Third World.

In other words, what Naipaul demonstrates is that class strata in Britain continue to exist – there is still a 'servant class' that performs low wage manual labour, such as hotel work. However, although the basic division of labour may not have changed significantly since Victorian Britain, *Magic Seeds* shows how the identity of those who fill this class stratum has. Today it is no longer the white working class or earlier postcolonial migrants that are identified with the lowest class of labour in Britain. Rather it is a new migrant labour force from peripheral nations, such as the 'Colombians' that Roger observes 'through some kind of network, had penetrated our market town.' [149] In light of Willie's earlier comments in West Berlin, these new migrants appear as examples of those 'desperate to enter the simpler, ordered world' of rich core countries such as Britain. And their presence in Britain illustrates how the global division of labour that Wallerstein identifies in the world system has now become inscribed in microcosm within the British class system.

In this respect, despite Edward Said's wide ranging criticism of Naipaul, *Magic Seeds* can be read as response to class along the lines of the 'contrapuntal global analysis' advocated in *Culture and Imperialism*.[150] In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said argues that 'contrapuntal' literary analysis addresses the global aspects of British literature, traditionally overlooked in nationally focused readings. This approach to literary analysis means that 'Dickens and Thackeray as London authors are read also as writers whose historical experience is informed by the colonial enterprises of India and Australia of which they were so aware.'[151] In light of Said's work, it is notable that Roger's views of British class identities are constructed through a nationally focused reading of Dickens.

the 1950s. While factories and industry are important symbols of working class identity in these earlier narratives, such symbols are absent in *Magic Seeds*. Instead, traditional white working class communities are shown to be transformed by the effects of globalisation that Appadurai outlines and, in particular, by 'consumer fetishism.'[156] For instance, class for Marian is defined principally in terms of shopping rather than working and, as a result, she is excited by the flat Roger buys her in London because it enables her 'to be near the shops instead of having to travel up to them.' [157] Marian's idea of empowerment is, therefore, defined in terms of increasing her ability to consume and is not concerned with a desire to escape the sorts of factory jobs that Alan Sillitoe describes in *Saturday Night And Sunday Morning*.[158] Consequently, Marian's penchant for shopping, along with the desire for exotic holidays that Roger identifies amongst the white working class, suggests little evidence of class-consciousness emerging.

Such fracturing of traditional class identities in Britain, in conjunction with Willie's experience of Third World Marxism, leads him to re-evaluate the view of the 'two worlds' that he posited at the opening of the novel. He therefore concludes in London:

> "There has been a great churning in the world. This is not the London I lived in thirty years ago." He felt a great relief. He thought, "The world is now being shaken by forces much bigger than I could have imagined. Ten years ago in Berlin my sister Sarojini made me almost ill with stories of poverty and injustice at home. She sent me to join the guerrillas. Now I don't have to join anybody."[159]

Willie's comments here do not suggest that the economic disparity between the two worlds he identified in West Berlin has in any way been eroded. However, they do indicate the impossibility of conceptualising, or identifying with this global inequality through a Marxist framework. Willie's awareness of this impossibility leads him to a final refutation of Sarojini's Marxist views of class, which he decides are fundamentally unable to come to terms with the complex world he inhabits. So vast are the forces of globalisation that, in keeping with the narrative form of the novel previously discussed, Willie shrinks from this vastness and from global theories of economic inequality into the individual self to 'only celebrate what I am.' [160]

Nevertheless, despite the important challenges to global Marxist politics that Willie's character highlights, his comments here should not be accepted uncritically. To do so would be to endorse his character as an objective truth seeker similar to Bruce King's endorsement of Naipaul as a writer that 'does not choose sides,' but 'observes what happens.'[161] Therefore, it is important to point out that Willie's embrace of individualism with which the novel ends is coupled with his entry into the network of multinational capitalism. This trajectory of Willie's character, in light of Marxist accounts of globalisation, suggests that Willie does not represent a narrator that simply 'observes what happens,' but one that reinforces the hegemony of neoliberal globalisation. In this reading, Willie's embrace of individualism, his disavowal of Marxism and his foreclosing of alternatives to multinational capitalism, reinforces the hegemonic narrative of globalisation that Wallerstein identifies in American-led globalisation: namely, 'that there is no alternative' to multinational capitalism.[162]

'The whole situation was very old economy:' Hari Kunzru's *Transmission*

The division of the world into two economic realities that defines class on the broadest level in *Magic Seeds* is also evident in *Transmission*. Unlike *Magic Seeds*, however, *Transmission* is not structured around the experiences of a single South Asian protagonist whose experiences contrast the rural Third World to the metropolitan West. Rather, *Transmission* interweaves three stories, which detail Arjun Mehta's migration from New Delhi to Silicon Valley, Guy Swift's Internet entrepreneurialism in London, and the life of Bollywood actress Leela Zahir in Mumbai. These three stories are fatally connected through the global Internet boom of the 1990's. The view of the world that emerges from this interconnectivity is one that is deeply, but unequally integrated economically. And one that, to paraphrase Willie, is being driven by forces much bigger than individual subjectivity can imagine. Yet, while *Magic Seeds* details the difficulties that face mapping economic inequality to a global Marxist conception of class, *Transmission* focuses upon how postindustrialisation transforms class identities in Britain and South Asia. One response to this "new economy" is associated with Guy Swift's character in London and provides a detailed examination of the erosive effects on

traditional class identities that Appadurai's work charts. The second centres upon the migratory experiences of Arjun Mehta and highlights the unequal experience of this "new economy" and its effects upon class identities from a South Asian perspective.

Guy's character in *Transmission* is emblematic of the hyperbolic discourse that surrounded the Internet boom of the 1990's. For Guy conventional business strategies and fiscal responsibility are dismissed as being 'very old economy.'[163] In the "new economy" what mattered was image and branding, or what Guy calls 'Total Brand Mutability.'[164] Thus, it is not the production of tangible goods that is now important, but rather the seamless integration of culture and commerce that gives the 'brand' value. Within such a dematerialized economy it becomes very difficult to identify exactly who controls the means of production and, at times, what is in fact being produced. Nevertheless, despite the ephemeral nature of this new economy of signs, Guy's identification with it is so complete that he 'felt it was physically connected to him,' and that he had 'personal relationship' with its 'future.' [165] From Guy's perspective, it is precisely this deep connection and understanding of the postindustrial economy that distinguishes him from 'the trivial temporality of the unpersonalized masses of the earth.' [166] Thus, in contrast to the 'package tourists' and 'mall shoppers,' Guy believes that 'as the CEO of a world-class agency, he should have a world-class pad.' [167] Kunzru describes this 'pad' in the following way:

> And so the white leather table with the cut-out airport city code motif, the vicuna ottoman, the Danish ergonomic salad servers and disposable cardboard fruit bowl, the nest of matte-black powder-lacquered steel cubes by the conversation pit, the cable-suspended Vuitton-print-polyvinyl vanity unit on which he had mounted the plasma screen and electrostatic-speaker array, the knitted ornamental pods on the bedroom ceiling and the low-rise smuggled-teak patio furniture on the balcony; all of it was personalized, individual, signature. It was all – every sandblasted bathroom faucet of it – him.[168]

The detail with which Kunzru describes this interior is crucial (the Danish ergonomic salad servers) and gives a wonderfully satirical rendering of how central consumption is to the identity of Guy, not to say his self. Indeed Guy is a character that remains, until the end of the novel, almost completely devoid of internal life or self-reflection, whose

identity is produced only through deliberation upon the objects he owns and the lifestyle he leads.[169]

In one respect, Guy's obsession with 'world class status' and propensity to regard himself as above the masses might be seen as the harbinger of a new global class identity. The attention to finer points of global designer brands in Guy's apartment puts class into the global register - a 'world-class' status. Reading this obsession with world-class status as the portent of a new global class identity is supported elsewhere in the novel by Kunzru's description of another mover and shaker. Like Guy, the identity of one Indian IT entrepreneur in New Delhi is rendered through a similar set of global designer brands, implying that he too desires to be identified as part of the same select group as Guy.

> From his gelled hair to his slightly burnished penny loafers, every particularity of his appearance carried a set of aspirational associations, some explicit (the branding of his tennis shirt, his belt buckle, the side arms of the UV sun goggles perched on his head), some implicit (the heft of his Swiss watch, the Swissness of that watch), and some no more than hints, wafts of mediated yearning written in the scent of his scuffing lotion, the warp and weft of his Khaki slacks.[170]

On the surface, the parallel between Guy's identity in London and this IT entrepreneur in New Delhi suggests a convergence of national class identities into a global elite class. Yet a more detailed reading of Guy's character yields little evidence to signal he desires to connect with such an identity. It is not that Guy rejects class because of egalitarian ideals, but that his individualism and solipsism prevents him from associating with any collective identity, including class. And in this respect, Guy represents a considerable shift from his father's generation. For Guy's father, class identity is constructed around a sense of 'people like us', grounded in 'breeding or something equally dogs-and-horses sounding'.[171] The hierarchy that emerges from this is a collective one: 'We are better than other people. We don't lose.'[172] Yet, while Guy agrees with his father's dictum he simply is unable to translate his sense of superiority into a collective identity. Consequently, Kunzru wryly comments that 'Guy's "we" was different from his father's, though it would be hard to specify who other than himself was included.'[173]

Guy's subjectivity then is too individualistic to identify with the abstract global elite that he later theorises – the '*We*' that 'were on top because we were better adapted to

the environment of the global city.' (Kunzru's italics) [174] For Paul Taylor this makes Guy 'a character who, cosmocratically flying over communities of the dispossessed, is like the flaneur, he is in but not of society.'[175] And the sheer depthlessness of Guy's character strips him of the emotional qualities necessary to identify with others, upon which class identity must at some point depend. Consequently, Guy at once erodes the traditional upper class identity of his father and, at the same time, does not represent the bourgeois counterpoint to Sarojini's global proletariat in *Magic Seeds*. Rather, as Taylor has pointed out, he symbolizes a powerful example of the 'uber- postmodern person' that Eagleton finds particularly egregious, because of the 'centreless, hedonistic, self-inventing, ceaselessly adaptive' qualities he represents.[176]

However, it is not only that Guy's postmodern subjectivity resists class identification, but also that the position he occupies in the new global economy obfuscates traditional class strata. In this respect, despite Guy's identification with 'world class pads,' which impresses upon the reader his membership amongst a new global bourgeoisie, the novel ultimately shows this not to be the case. Consequently, although Guy professes to 'manipulate the flows of money and information' and at first appears in control of economic production, the novel reveals Guy to be nothing more than a highly paid worker, or, as Jameson prefers, a 'Yuppie.'[177] Indeed, in this chaotic new economy even Yves, the ostensibly powerful venture capitalist who funds Guy's company, has little control over production and confides to Guy:

> "You want to know a secret? I need this deal to work as bad as you. This fucking market is so down, I can't tell you. All these technology companies we funded? They turned to shit. Every one. And if we don't make some money soon I'm going to be fucked too." [178]

The whims of the market and the relentless flux of capital alluded to here by Yves signal how traditional class strata have become increasingly slippery. In this new postindustrial economy the high salaries and conspicuous consumption of "yuppies," such as Guy and Yves, certainly make them appear as a new ruling class. Yet, as Jameson has pointed out, 'yuppies' should not be regarded as a new ruling class, despite the dominance of their 'cultural practices and values' within late capitalism.[179] Thus, although Guy's wealth and supreme arrogance are reminiscent of Dickens numerous vilified bourgeois characters, he

is not, in a Marxist sense, their contemporary counterpart.[180] Rather, the economic instability of the global economy shrouds Marx's view of the class struggle, because the relationship between class identity and the control of production becomes confused.

One important question that arises from *Transmission's* representation of this new economy is what does it now mean to be a worker? And more importantly, who now identifies themselves as such? On the one hand as Hardt and Negri note, 'at its most broad, working class refers to all waged workers.'[181] Within this definition, Marian and Jo in *Magic Seeds*, as well as Arjun and Guy in *Transmission* might all be considered part of the working-class. However, new highly paid, postindustrial workers such as Guy have little in common with the traditional British working class in terms of the work they perform, their lifestyles and incomes. More importantly still, no British characters in either text show any desire to identify themselves as workers. An important reason for this is because, in a Marxist understanding, identification as a worker must at some point involve recognition of one's relationship to economic production. After all, as the epigraph to this chapter indicates, the class struggle as envisioned by Marx is a struggle between the workers and the bourgeoisie over the control of production. Yet as has been previously discussed, both Marian in *Magic Seeds* and Guy in *Transmission* ground their identities in consumer culture and show little interest in who controls the means of production in a global economy.

In contrast to Marx's vision of class then, these novels signal that global networks of consumer images have diminished an understanding of economic production in contemporary British society. For example, Guy's character in *Transmission* exemplifies the belief that a high income and the ability to buy designer brands make him an actor in the global economy. But by identifying so completely with consumer culture and overlooking the control of production, Guy not only overstates his own economic power, but also fails to recognise how those who produce the designer brands he consumes shape his perceived individuality. Similarly, while the white working class in *Magic Seeds* may not be able to afford Guy's consumption patterns, defining economic inequality in these terms as Marian does, overlooks the economic structures in which Marxist working class identity is grounded. Therefore, while the importance of consumption to Marian and Guy certainly produces status identities, these identities do not connect to economic structures

in a way Marxist critics argue lead to meaningful political intervention. Instead, both high earning "yuppies" like Guy, as well as social climbing members of the traditional working class like Marian are more interested in satisfying their appetites to consume than they are concerned with the class struggle.

Guy and Marian then, show that for those who identify deeply with consumer culture there is little chance of a Marxist class-consciousness emerging amongst either the white working class or new postindustrial workforce in Britain. From a British perspective, a high standard of living, coupled with the shift of much industrial production overseas means that class has become increasingly removed from mundane experience. Or to put it another way, class has become an abstracted identity that no longer carries an immediacy to people's everyday lives. In light of this, a significant challenge to identifying with the sort of global proletariat that Jameson and Wallestein call for is the ability of class to capture the public's imagination. Thus, while identification with consumer culture is shown to appeal to a range of characters in *Transmission* and *Magic Seeds,* there is no Marxist counterpoint to this in the British cultural imagination. In short, the theories of class identity that Wallerstein and Jameson posit simply do not appear to have the seductive power to shape identity that consumer culture does.

Nevertheless, if in this way consumer culture is shown to erode class-consciousness in Britain, then South Asian diasporic subjectivity highlights how such erosion is experienced unevenly around the world. Like Willie in *Magic Seeds*, Arjun's experiences of the new global economy extend the novel's representation of class to a global horizon. Importantly, reading *Transmission* in light of globalisation theory helps clarify the relationship between Arjun and Guy's characters in the novel. In particular, it highlights a structural logic to the narrative that Amardeep Singh finds missing in his review of *Transmission*. For Singh, Kunzru is unsure what do with the novel's protagonist after his migration to America and, therefore, he argues that Kunzru turns to Guy's character as an easy target for satire. Singh writes:

> When in doubt, make fun of corrupt corporate stooges. When you're not sure what to do with your protagonist, what do you do? Kill him off or make him go crazy, and shift the burden of narration to someone else. Kunzru opts for the latter. As a result, the Mehta plot begins to dry up, and the

> novelist is forced to shift his attention to Guy Swift, a fast-talking British executive, whose marketing company is on the rocks. Here Kunzru's target is easier, and he readily satirizes the rich (and ripe) world of Corporate-speak through Guy, who is very concerned about his bank account, as well as Guy's girlfriend Gabriella Caro, who appears not to be concerned with much at all.[182]

While Singh is right in pointing out that there is 'not much material for comedy' in detailing Arjun's exploitation, his comments overlook how the interconnected narratives of Arjun and Guy provides a rich representation of the new global economy. [183] More specifically, the interconnection of Guy and Arjun's narratives reflects the extent to which the new global economy is now integrated. At the same time, it also shows how these characters' different experiences of an integrated economy reveal its asymmetrical nature and its uneven effects upon class identities.

From Arjun's perspective, the new global economy does not appear to be chaotic and decentred but rather a Western - and in particular, American led - process. One way we see this is through the influence of American cultural markers upon the middle and upper classes of India, who seek to align their identities with the perceived centre of the global economy. For instance, Kunzru shows the inscription of American influence upon the landscape of India. Here India's middle and upper class communities are distinguished from the rest of India through American-style suburbs and housing developments, replete with 'shopping malls, multiplexes, temples and stadia'.[184] In this way, the Americanisation of space within South Asia symbolises one way of connecting Indian class identities to the core of global production.

For Arjun's family in India, identification with American-led neoliberal globalisation signals the diminished importance of the Indian state to defining middle class status. Of this shift Kunzru writes:

> The leap from government service (whose values had been so eroded over the years) to the private sector had paid off. The Mehtas were no longer the family of a small-town administrator but modern people, participating in the great Indian boom. The apartment was proof. It stood for The World, with which his son appeared to be disastrously out of touch.[185]

Consequently, when the hitherto introverted computer geekiness of Arjun finally translates into a computer programmer position in America, the very mention of the word

leads his father respond ecstatically: 'But now Amrika! God be praised!'[186] For Mr. Mehta, Arjun's entry into the American economy is not only significant for its financial consequences but, even more importantly, for its implications for the family's class status within India. It represents a final cementing of the Mehta's position within the global economy, the community of 'modern people', 'the World'.[187] In this sense then, American led neoliberal globalisation does not erode traditional class Indian class identities but reconfigures them in congruence with American cultural symbols.

The most significant differences between Arjun and Guy's experiences of the new global economy, however, are not revealed by Arjun's procurement of a programming position in America but by his eventual dismissal from this position. The firing of Arjun from his computer-programming job in America enables Kunzru to show how national citizenship remains significant to gaining highly paid work in the Western core of the postindustrial economy. Therefore, while Guy may find the global economy to be comprised of 'flows of money and information' in London, the fate of Arjun shows such fluidity is not the case with respect to labour from South Asia.[188] The contrast between Arjun's experiences of the new global economy, as an Indian citizen, and Guy's as a British citizen, represents a more subtle representation of economic inequality than the 'two worlds' that Willie posits in *Magic Seeds*. In *Transmission,* the divide between these two worlds is not as sharply pronounced as that between the rural poor of India and the metropolitan West. Instead, economic inequality is reflected in the lack of labour opportunities that Arjun is afforded compared to his counterparts in the West. This difference in economic opportunity is both actual and reproduced in the differences in attitude toward the workplace between Arjun and his American co-workers. For instance, unlike Arjun, his American co-workers at the Virugenix Corporation exhibit a profound indifference to money and status as the following passage indicates:

> The youngest Ghostbuster was twenty-one-year-old Clay. A native of Marin county, he was an object of special wonder for Arjun, who had yet to come to terms with the Virugenix corporate culture. While he tended to wear his blue blazer to work, Clay slouched about the office in shorts and Birkenstock sandals, his blonde dreadlocks tied up in a strange hairy pineapple on top of his head, like a Hindu mendicant.[189]

Arjun's dismissal from Virugenix lays bare the extent to which Clay's laissez faire attitude described here is predicated upon his status as an American citizen and, therefore, his access to the highly paid American labour market. While Clay remains unaware of such privilege, Arjun's insecurity and seemingly uptight attitude toward work is a result of being acutely conscious of a different economic reality outside of the Virugenix Corporation. In this way, a global sense of economic inequality is expressed through the anxiety that Arjun feels with respect to his status in the core of global postindustrial production. It is an anxiety that reflects the division of the two worlds that Willie identifies in *Magic Seeds* – an anxiety of 'those desperate to enter the simpler, ordered world' of the West. [190]

Like *Magic Seeds*, however, *Transmission* shows that while Arjun's South Asian subjectivity may provide recognition of the global division of labour that Wallerstein identifies in the world system, translation of this sense of inequality into a cogent global class identity is another matter altogether. The most important reason for this in the novel is simply because of Arjun's lack of political will. Therefore, unlike Bhoj Narayan in *Magic Seeds*, Arjun's unfulfilled ambitions do not motivate him to identify with class politics as a response to his disenfranchisement. In large part, Kunzru suggests this lack of motivation to be bound to an absence of tangible symbols with which Arjun is able to locate himself in the global economy. This sense of disorientation is reflected in the turgid corporate language that surrounds Arjun's dismissal from Virugenix:

> "Mr. Mehta, as I understand it there are no indicators of short-term recovery. It's a sector-wide trend. This is what our public relations team has been trying to underline to investors. It's not just Virugenix, it's across the board. And Mr. Mehta, that's the take home for you too. You shouldn't see this as a sign of personal failure. You're a valuable individual with a lot to offer. It's just Virugenix can no longer offer you a context for self-development."[191]

Kunzru is adept here at capturing the opacity of the relations and structures of the global economy through language that leaves Arjun confused and later alienated from the corporate world for which he had held such hope. What Arjun is unable to fully come to terms with in the passages that surround his redundancy is that his dismissal is not the decision of his boss, or his company, but the distant forces of the global economy. It is, in

the emailed words of Darryl, the head of Virugenix, 'NOBODY'S FAULT.'[192] Such dematerialised email exchanges between Arjun and his employer erode the sort of direct relationships between owner and worker that we see in earlier fictional accounts of industrial Britain, as well as Naipaul and Islam's representations of South Asia. For Arjun, there is simply no one to protest to, no tangible symbol to resist and no way to situate his own individual place within this world of 'sector wide trends' hidden behind unfathomable public relations rhetoric.[193]

Consequently, Arjun's response to losing his job is as confused as the language that surrounds his dismissal. In a naïve attempt to get his job back, he therefore unleashes a computer virus in the hope that his ability to solve it will ensure his re-employment. Although the virus does not achieve the desired objective, it does spread throughout the world leading to a barrage of competing political groups using it to publicise their own ideological agendas. Of this Kunzru writes:

> In the first few days of the outbreak, various groups and individuals claimed responsibility. Maoist revolutionaries in Chiapas sent a fax to a Mexico City newspaper announcing that Leela was the latest step in their campaign to cripple the infrastructure of global capitalism. A Lithuanian hacking group called the Red Hand Gang revealed that they had concocted it to demonstrate the superiority to their rivals...[194]

The global implications of Arjun's computer virus described here certainly signify the power with which the disaffected worker can strike a blow to the integrated contemporary global economy. At the same time however, they highlight a second problem that faces the sort of global class solidarity that Sarojini advocates in *Magic Seeds*. Here, despite the almost instantaneous global platform that Arjun unwittingly achieves through the virus, Kunzru does not show this act as a point around which a sense of global solidarity might be forged. Rather, the computer virus simultaneously symbolises the extent to which the world has converged and the ways in which shared global events are seized upon to further very different political ends. Consequently, while 'Maoist revolutionaries in Chiapas' may claim the virus as a means to foster global class-consciousness, other political movements use it to publicise different ideological agendas. In such a world, the idea that class may somehow function as a unifying framework, as

Jameson and Wallerstein argue, appears unlikely. Rather, the range of competing political interests that emerge in response to the computer virus show the heterogeneity of identities that globalisation enables.

As with *Magic Seeds*, therefore, South Asian diasporic subjectivity in *Transmission* reveals the hierarchical structures of the world system and, at the same time, highlights the challenges that face translating this recognition into global class solidarity. However, unlike Willie in *Magic Seeds*, Arjun's character does not come to refute Marxism in favour of multinational capitalism and, therefore, to identify with one side of the dialectical struggle that Wallerstein posits in the current world system. Rather, *Transmission* ends with Arjun criminalised and pursued by the US authorities before his eventual disappearance without trace 'into legend.'[195] Thus, 'one day he is spotted at an antiglobalization rally in Paris and the next coming onto the pitch in a hockey match in rural Gujarat.'[196]By stepping into 'legend' in this way, Arjun can only be subsequently represented in the narrative through rumoured sightings, conspiracy theories, and Internet speculation.

If then, as Amardeep Singh comments, Arjun is a figure that questions many Indian computer programmer's dreams 'of working in Silicon Valley' - the American dream writ on a global scale - what are we to make of this ending to the novel?[197] To be sure, by shifting Arjun's character into the realm of rumoured sightings, Kunzru erases Arjun's subjectivity from the narrative: Arjun ceases to be a fully defined character and instead becomes a myth, a 'legend.' On the one hand, this erasure of Arjun's subjectivity certainly does not represent the endorsement of neoliberal globalisation that Willie offers in *Magic Seeds*. Unlike Willie, therefore, Arjun does not end *Transmission* by becoming part of the network of multinational capitalism. Rather, Kunzru clearly shows global capitalism to have failed Arjun and to have not delivered the dreams of upward mobility it promised to many South Asian postindustrial workers. On the other hand, Kunzru does not turn to Marxist class identities as a means by which Arjun can respond to this disenfranchisement. Consequently, Arjun can only be represented through rumours, theories and hearsay, none of which are able to represent his subjectivity and the new type of South Asian migrant worker he stands for in the global economy. In other words, Arjun comes to represent the invisibility of a new class of highly skilled South Asian

worker in the postindustrial global economy for whom new formulations of class identity have yet to be imagined or realised.

The Underground of the Global City: Manzu Islam's *Burrow*.

Transmission is a novel that details the destabilisation of identity in a new type of postindustrial South Asian worker in which its protagonist does not look to the past as a means of making sense of the complex world he inhabits. *Burrow*, by way of contrast, is very much concerned with the recovery of the past through the use of memory and the personal retelling of history. This project of recuperation centres upon the South Asian protagonist of the novel, Tapan, and his attempt to remain in Britain as an illegal immigrant after his university visa has expired. Tapan's status as an illegal immigrant leads him to leave the relative comfort of his previous life and to become a fugitive amongst the impoverished Bangladeshi community of East London. In representing this community, *Burrow,* like *Transmission* and *Magic Seeds,* shows how migration destabilises traditional class identities. To a far greater extent than these novels however, Tapan's experiences in East London also reveal how London, as a global city, enables transnational possibilities of class identity to be articulated. To this end, the novel investigates the ways in which the history of British colonialism, racism, and the continued economic disparity between South Asian and Britain provide narratives and images through which globally reflexive class identities might be imagined today.

The plot of *Burrow* punctuates the central narrative of Tapan's flight from the British immigration authorities with numerous flashbacks to his childhood in Bangladesh. These scenes of Bangladesh show a world in which the relationship between class identity and economic production is very clearly defined. For instance, from the perspective of the sharecroppers and peasants that work his family's land, Tapan's grandfather stands as a tangible personification of the conflict between the landowner and renter that Marx identifies. Bisu Bhai sums up this relationship to Tapan in the following way.

'How do you expect them to be? Loving him like their own fatherji? Let me tell you one or two correct things – achya? I suppose even you're not so silly that you don't see that it's the peasants who put in all the back breaking work. Na? '

'From the time the muezzin calls for morning prayer to the time when the birds return to their nest, rain or sun, they work the land with their bare hands. You must know they provide all the seeds and fertiliser. Not to mention reaping and harvesting. What big Sahib does? You don't need Vatya Das's funny funny ideas to see it. Achya? But Big Sahib gets the half of the harvest.' [198]

Class-consciousness amongst the peasants and sharecroppers is produced through recognition that Tapan's grandfather controls economic production and profits from their labour. Consequently, peasant identity in this context is a function of tangible observations of everyday life and is, therefore, both highly localised and grounded in direct experience. Such a class identity corroborates Naipaul's representations of peasant identity in rural India. However, unlike *Magic Seeds*, Islam describes the identity of peasants through self-awareness of economic exploitation, rather than by drawing upon physical and biological imagery.

Nevertheless, as with the protagonists of *Magic Seeds* and *Transmission*, the complex subject position of Tapan destabilises the clear divisions of class evident in South Asia following migration to Britain. In one respect, Tapan's new status as an illegal immigrant allows him to identify with other illegal and working class immigrants in the Bangladeshi diasporic community and to assuage the guilt of his own bourgeois background. Tapan's identification with this community in East London, however, reveals it to be a community fractured with its own complex divisions of status and economic disparity. Such fissures are brought to light by Tapan's class background and high level of education that appeal to a number of financially successful characters including Shahid, Dr. Ali and Poltu Khan. Consequently, Tapan receives numerous offers of assistance from these characters to join them as 'successful immigrant[s].'[199]

The response of these 'successful immigrants' shows that while Tapan may share the poor working and living conditions of the Bangladeshi working class in East London, this does not simply erase his class background. Tapan is not, therefore, simply one of the poor 'very uneducated types' that Dr Ali looks down upon, but an exalted member of the community who deserves preferential treatment.[200] Thus, Dr. Ali's offer to help Tapan is

predicated upon his perception of Tapan's class and educational background, as the following passage indicates:

> You've brought to my abode a learned person, Sundar Mia. A BA from an English university. Very high class, Mr. Tapan, Very good, very good. Not many people appreciate a learned person these days. But I'm old fashioned type. I esteem leaning more than anything else in the world. You see I am a man of science myself.[201]

For Dr Ali then, Tapan's Bangladeshi class background continues to matter in Britain even though it bears no relationship to the class stratum that Tapan has come to occupy. Consequently, if as Appadurai argues, globalisation accelerates global migration, then Tapan's character represents an important way in which this complicates traditional Marxist conceptions of class identity. Specifically, Tapan's character highlights how class identities in immigrant/migrant communities are not exclusively defined in relation to economic production in the host country. Rather, the vestiges of class background from immigrants/migrants country of origin continue to shape class identities after migration, irrespective of whether these class markers accurately reflect economic status in the host country. In this respect, Tapan's character might profitably be read as a metonym for the destabilising influence upon traditional class identities that the growing numbers of migrants from the Third World currently migrating to Britain represent. After all, as a recent report has shown, like Tapan many such migrant workers are from well educated, middle class backgrounds and yet perceive more opportunities for financial advancement to exist in Britain even as manual labourers.[202]

While the complex class position of Tapan recalls many of the issues that Naipaul and Kunzru raise, what is notably different in *Burrow* is the political will evident in both Tapan's character and the novel more broadly. Unlike *Magic Seeds* and *Transmission*, *Burrow* identifies a grass roots political consciousness amongst certain members of the diasporic Bangladeshi community. The novel finds in London's street life a rich working class heritage, as well as a long history of immigration, to represent considerable potential for rethinking class from a transnational perspective.[203] It shows the experience of racism amongst working class immigrants in London to be one way that the transnational working class coalitions envisioned by Wallerstein are produced. In

particular, Islam uses Josef K's character to frame East London's anti-racist protests of 1978 in the history of the ant-Semitic protests of 1936. The collective identity that emerges from this narrative is one that Islam describes in the following way.

> Their bodies pressing through the asphalt did it: so many of them surfaced on July 17, brown faces, their eyes cleansed of terror, so many of them sat unyielding on Bethnal Green Road, their separate bodies merging into each other. No one spoke a word, but Sundar saw his father next to Brother Josef.[204]

In such instances, East London is represented as a crucible in which the categories of race, ethnicity, and nation, which have historically complicated class identities within the world system are strategically re-appropriated to produce a powerful sense of solidarity. The novel uses the symbol of the mole, and the extended metaphor of burrowing from which the novel takes its title, as a way of linking the sense of solidarity evoked here to colonial history and across global space. Thus, the mole is a symbol that connects the Bengali anticolonialist Vatya Das, the Jewish Marxist character Josef K, and young British-Asian activists such as Sundar and Tapan in the novel. And in so doing, it offers Tapan a different way of thinking of London as a global city on the part of the immigrant working and underclass – a narrative of '*Our City*' (Islam's italics). [205]

The idea of *Our City* in the novel is one that contrasts sharply to the London that Guy embodies in *Transmission*. Thus, if as Paul Taylor suggests, Guy is a figure that flies above the city, eschews identification with history and collective identities and exemplifies the values of the new yuppie class that economic neoliberalism has produced, then, by way of contrast, the mole, which symbolises 'the lowest rung of species' represents the often-unseen underground immigrant working class of the global city. *Our City* is, in other words, the London of those who uphold the production end of the consumer lifestyles that characters like Guy lead – the waiters, cooks, and sweatshop workers that do not register in Guy's narrative of globalisation. Significantly, Tapan comes to identify this underground London with colonial Bangladesh. He therefore increasingly equates his own attempts to escape British immigration forces in 1970's London with Vatya Das' attempts to evade British colonial authorities through the recognition that he and Vatya Das 'were both moles.'[206] More explicitly still, Tapan later

reflects as he is hiding in an East London tower block that 'Vatya Das's underground war against the Raj wasn't that different from his own burrowing.'[207] The effect of these connections is to suggest that the subordinated labour that Vatya Das champions in colonial Bengal has simply been transformed into a new exploited class of immigrant labour in East London. In this way, the novel signals that British colonialism has been reconstituted in London because the British state continues to profit from exploited South Asian labour even after decolonisation.

One way that the novel can be read as responding to this continued exploitation of South Asian labour is through the articulation of the transnational sense of class solidarity that the address of 'Soul Brother' engenders.[208] The repeated use of this address amongst numerous members of the working class Bangladeshi community in Britain echoes the influence of Joseph K's use of 'Comrade in the novel.'[209] However, the shift from 'Comrade' to 'Soul Brother' reflects an American imprint upon identity, in which African American culture provides a language of solidarity that conjoins an awareness of racial and class oppression. A recent commentator has noted a similar influence of African-American culture upon contemporary South Asian identity produced through the globalisation of African-American culture. After visiting London she therefore comments:

> I heard Indian boys address each other as "brown soul brother" and listened while South Asians and Asian Muslims discussed how much they had been affected by leaders such as Malcolm X. I began to feel a kinship with the South Asian population as I noticed how they were influenced not only by their own culture and heritage but by black American and Caribbean cultures as well.[210]

In light of such comments, 'Soul Brother' signals an identity that connects the diasporic inner cities of America and Britain and demonstrates how global culture can be appropriated to express new transnational forms of solidarity. It suggests an identity that responds to Wallerstein's argument of how race has been central to the formation of class identities because of its role in 'allocating work, power and privilege within the modern world-system.'[211] 'Soul Brother' may, therefore, be read as a resistance identity on the part of unseen exploited labour upon which the prosperity of core countries depends within the world system. It is an identity that represents *Our City* for the young working

class British-Asians, such as Sundar and Abdul Ali, and signals solidarity with inner city African-Americans, rather than the white working class of East London.

The imprint of African American culture upon this sense of solidarity is supported by reading Islam's extended use of the underground metaphor as an allusion to Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*. Like Ellison, Islam uses the underground to suggest a hierarchy of identity and a parallel struggle for South Asian identity to be made visible in late 1970's Britain. In the case of *Invisible Man,* Shelley Eversley has argued that the invisibility of African-American identity is because

> epistemological blindness to full humanity stems from a logic that positions black people and women as subhuman, as out of sight. In the novel, "Monopolated Light and Power" thus stands for a metaphorical myopia that pretends to possess exclusive control of the defining features of human actuality, of truth. ("The Truth is the light and the light is truth"). The narrator's underground appropriation of a "Monopolated Light and Power" enacts his dissent from their totalising control. By avoiding having to pay for the 1,369 light bulbs that illuminate his hole, the invisible man seeks an independent source of insight.[212]

A similar conception of underground resistance is at work in *Burrow*. However, in *Burrow*, Tapan's enactment of dissent – his refusal to adhere to immigration law – is a direct refusal of the control of state boundaries. In this way, the representation of the underground as a site of resistance not only enables Tapan to seek an 'independent source of insight,' as Eversley suggests of *Invisible Man*, but also allows him to reject the legitimacy of the British state. This is important because, as the novel shows, state boundaries prevent South Asian workers from entering the western core of global production and, subsequently, crucial to the devaluation of their labour as illegal immigrants. This global division of labour is true not only for the impoverished Bangladeshis in *Burrow*, but also amongst highly skilled postindustrial workers like Arjun in *Transmission*. Consequently, Tapan's rejection of national boundaries might be read as a refusal of class hierarchies on a global scale – a refusal of the structures integral to the hierarchy of the world system.

In other words, the championing of illegal immigration in the novel is represented as a way of refusing the geographic boundaries of class that Wallerstein identifies in the world system. Central to this project is a reclaiming of space in London by Bangladeshi immigrants that allows for an alternative transnational flow of people, money, and culture. For example, Sundar describes the geography of East London's illegal immigrant safe houses in the following way:

> Bhaio, you'll be in Shadwell. As you know, this is our territory. Nearly all the houses are ours. So nothing to worry about from security point of view. In fact, anywhere in Spitalfields, Stepney, Wapping, Bethnal Green and Mile End is safe. You can walk as freely as you like in those places. [213]

Such claiming of space described here constructs a narrative of 'our territory' - *Our City* - on the part of the Bangladeshi poor. It is a city quite distinct from the metropolitan London that Tapan had previously known as a university student: a city removed from metropolitan London by class and from the rest of East London's working class by race. At the same time, this nexus of class and race that separates *Our City* from the rest of London also enables it to look beyond Britain's borders and to identify with South Asia and the African-American inner cities of America.

Nevertheless, it is important not to overstate the potential that the narrative of *Our City* and the address of 'Soul Brother' to express a globalised class identity. Most obviously, the identity that emerges from this in the novel excludes the traditional white working class in Britain. Indeed, 'Soul Brother' is an identity that is produced through the experience of racism and in no way represents the possibility of including the various white working-class characters discussed in this chapter, such as Marian in *Magic Seeds*.[214] Moreover, conceiving of class in terms of non-white otherness does not map exactly to class strata in the world system, as Tapan's own class background indicates. Hence, Tapan's identification with a transnational sense of non-white identity and his rejection of British immigration law can be read as much as an escape from his own class background as an endorsement of class solidarity. His working class British-Asian lover, Nilufar, for example, comments that Tapan's obsession with his status as an illegal immigrant was perhaps to 'atone for the crimes of his grandfather, whose ill-gotten riches

– gained for his collaboration with the British Empire – had brought him to England.' [215] Hence, the conflation of racial/ethnic identity with class may actually muddy an understanding of class within the world system, rather than illuminate how the global division of labour has historically been produced.

Further, although 'Soul Brother' is an identity that looks toward South Asia and draws upon African-American culture to express a sense of solidarity, its power to engender a sense of solidarity is produced locally through face-to-face exchanges and neighbourhood histories. Islam is explicit in showing that the identities emerge from these localised experiences is quite distinct from the sorts of class identities of which Naipaul is distrustful. Indeed, like *Magic Seeds*, *Burrow* dismisses political identities that are produced through global communication networks as western metropolitan elites purporting to speak for 'international solidarities.'[216] This emphasis upon locality suggests that class identity is, first and foremost, produced through direct experiences of oppression that provide a strong emotional dimension to class identification. Consequently, global communication networks cannot speak to the most compelling aspect of class identity – its emotional thickness – because this aspect of identity comes from direct experience and is, therefore, always local.

Perhaps most significantly, however, the collective identity that the novel identifies amongst the working class Bangladeshi community of East London – the image of *Our City* – is one that is not defined primarily in relation to global capitalism. Thus, while *Our City* is an identity that gestures toward the structures of the world system, it is nevertheless is not the sort of Marxist identity that Wallerstein associates with Porto Algere and the Marxist anti-globalisation movement. It is not, in other words, an identity that can be reduced to the struggle between the proletariat and bourgeoisie that Marx envisioned, because the novel shows race and class shape South Asian subjectivity in complex and interconnected ways. Consequently, the novel more closely reflects Gilroy's view of class than that of Wallerstein, because despite the transnational political possibilities Islam attempts to imagine, the identities that emerge from this do not show class to be the most important singular factor upon which such alliances will depend.

Conclusion

The difficulty that Tapan's character faces in identifying himself within a cogent class identity, despite an acute recognition of the structural inequality of the world system, is a telling point with which to draw this discussion together. It captures the ambivalent responses to the effect of globalisation upon class identities that all three novels represent. And while there are important differences between the novels, it is nevertheless possible to draw five broad conclusions from them. The first is recognition that effective class identities have traditionally been produced within tangible, local contexts. Thus, the scenes of rural South Asia in both *Burrow* and *Magic Seeds* depict peasant identities that have been created through long unbroken histories of class oppression. In such instances, landowners, such as Tapan's grandfather, stand as concretised symbols around which class identities are formed. However, these sorts of direct relationships between identity and economic production are destabilised by globalisation, and the postindustrialisation of core countries. The effect of this is to complicate and conceal the relationship between workers and production, as Appadurai has argued. Most notably, we see this in Arjun's character in *Transmission*, in which the complexity of the global economy undermines any ability to identify an "enemy" that controls the means of economic production.

Second, both Arjun and Willie in *Magic Seeds* show how the complexity of the new global economy erodes the emotional responses that come from direct experiences of industrial and pre-industrial modes of production. All three novels indicate that such direct experiences of class have historically been vital to producing working class-consciousness, rather than intellectual conceptions of the class struggle. Consequently, globalised political identities in *Burrow* and *Magic Seeds* are principally seen as a "top down" approach to class, theorised by privileged intellectuals in western metropolises but not evident amongst workers themselves. Both novels explicitly disavow this approach to class with Naipaul, in particular, articulating a deep distrust of the class identities and political interventions that Jameson and Wallerstein call for.

Third, these texts show how global migration has complicated class identities in Britain by de-linking cultural markers of class from economic class strata. Tapan's

character in particular exemplifies how migration can produce a disjuncture between class identities in South Asia and economic status in Britain. Certainly the difficulty that Tapan's faces reconciling his disjunctive relationship to class might be read as metonymic for a broader fracturing of traditional class identities that global migration often results in. Indeed, all three South Asian protagonists embody class identities that are not congruent with Marxist class identities. Arjun, for example, at once hails from a respectable middle class family in India, yet like Tapan in *Burrow*, ultimately comes to comprise part of the illegal immigrant underclass in the West after migration. In this way, both characters corroborate the cultural resilience of traditional conceptions of class that Roger espouses in *Magic Seeds*, and reveal the inadequacy of such identities to reflect economic inequality in the age of globalisation.

Fourth, these texts show how global migration has had a significant influence upon the formation of class identities in Britain as a result of ethnic and racial pluralisation. On the one hand, South Asian diasporic subjectivity highlights an implicit racial dimension to traditional class identities in Britain that is evident in Roger in *Magic Seeds*, Guy's father in *Transmission*, and the white working class in *Burrow*. Such ethnically and racially homogeneous views of class are fractured by migration: a process that would only appear to increase if globalisation is understood to promote global migration. On the other hand, for numerous South Asian diasporic characters in these novels, the nexus of race, ethnicity and class enables new transnational class identities to emerge, such as those espoused by Sarojini in *Magic Seeds* and numerous young British-Asian characters in *Burrow*. Consequently, these novels corroborate the work of Paul Gilroy by demonstrating how class identities cannot be separated from issues of race and ethnicity, and that group identities may 'include class but are not reducible to it.'[217]

Finally, these novels also provide some important qualifications to the theoretical models considered in this chapter. In particular, they show how global consumer culture has captured the cultural imagination of a wide range of characters in Britain and metropolitan South Asia, as Appadurai has argued. At the same time, there is a strong recognition of economic inequality in these texts that Appadurai's work largely overlooks. It is not therefore, that these writers reject Marxist class identities because they are not concerned with economic inequality or social justice, but that production-

based identities no longer fully reflect how individuals desire to self-identify in Britain and metropolitan South Asia. In response to this, fictional accounts of South Asian diasporic subjectivity provides more flexible ways to think about class and economic inequality in contrast to theoretical Marxist accounts of globalisation. These narratives, therefore, offer a way of conceiving of the global economy in human terms, in which the reader is confronted with the often-unseen costs of consumer culture that pervades metropolitan spaces. Thus, the impoverished Bangladeshi immigrants of East London, exploited Indian computer programmers in Silicon Valley and the rural poor of South Asia remind the reader of another narrative of globalisation: a narrative of the labour upon which the consumption and lifestyles patterns of the metropolitan West depend. Re-thinking class identities in this way, while perhaps unlikely to convince Marxist theorists, represents one way of responding to the transformations that globalisation has wrought. Certainly from the perspective of the South Asian diaspora represented in these texts, the advantage of such an approach to global economic inequality is its ability to account for the numerous inflections of traditional class identities that migration and globalisation produces - a point that these novels are unequivocal in making.

Chapter 2

Remapping the Borders of Identity: Globalisation and The Negotiation of National Identities in Hanif Kureishi's *My Beautiful Laundrette*, Salman Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* and Ravinder Randhawa's *The Coral Strand*.

> 'Yoga exercises, going to Indian restaurants, the music of Bob Marley, the novels of Salman Rushdie, Zen Buddhism, the Hare Krishna Temple, as well as the films of Sylvester Stallone, therapy, Hamburgers, visits to gay bars, the dole office and the taking of drugs.'
>
> - Hanif Kureishi [218]

Introduction

The above re-imagining of T.S. Eliot's cataloguing of British culture by Hanif Kureishi, points to the vast sea change that has occurred in British society in the forty years between these two writers' comments. On the one hand, Eliot's evoking of 'Wensleydale cheese' and 'the music of Elgar' in 1948 suggests a British national identity grounded in a shared homogenous past. [219] On the other hand, Kureishi's embrace of 'Indian restaurants,' 'the novels of Salman Rushdie,' and 'the music of Bob Marley' celebrates the pluralisation of British society, as well as the imprint of Americanisation. But if Kureishi's comments show that being British today is no longer what it was for T.S Eliot in 1948, then how we read such a transformation in national identity is hotly debated. Do Kureishi's comments simply re-imagine a more plural version of Britishness that reflects its shifting demographic profile and new global influences upon its society? And if so, is this re-imagining of a new plural British identity conceived through an American model of national identity? Or do Kureishi's comments signal a more pronounced rupture that identifies a new relationship between territory, culture and identity?

The aim of this chapter is to explore questions of how diaspora and globalisation transform traditional conceptions of the relationship between culture, territory and identity. In particular, the chapter investigates the extent to which the pressures of deterritorialisation erode national identities or lead to their re-articulation in new ways. I begin the chapter by framing this discussion within two different theoretical responses to

the effects of diaspora and globalisation upon national identities. The first is grounded in Wallerstein's world systems theory and argues that national identities will continue to exist as long as capitalism continues, because nations remain integral to the structure of the world system. Consequently for Marxist critics, recent transformations in national identities do not reflect a passage toward postnationalism, but rather the hegemony of an American model of national identity. Conversely, the second theoretical paradigm, exemplified in the work of Arjun Appadurai, regards the delinking of culture from territory to represent a rupture in how identity is now imagined. Therefore according to Appadurai, the nexus of mass migration and global communication networks in recent times have produced a new era of identity formation that renders national identities imminently obsolete.

Two Theoretical Models of the Effects of Globalisation on National Identity

According to Immanuel Wallerstein, the nation state is integral to the structure of the capitalist world system. This structural interdependence between the nation state and the world system means that the nation is the world's 'primary cultural container,' and will continue to be so as long as the capitalist world system exists. [220] Nevertheless, despite the pre-eminence of national categories, a 'gigantic paradox' is inherent to the incorporation of the world into a system of nations with distinct cultures and identities. [221] Thus, on the one hand, the very definition of a national identity is particularistic: that is, one nation must be distinguished from another through its distinctness for the very category of the nation to exist. [222] Yet on the other hand, the division of the world into a system of distinct national cultures also represents the unification of the world through the 'inescapably universal phenomenon' of nation building. [223] The incorporation of the world into an interstate system, therefore, requires both the assumption of national particularity, as well as the assumption of a common set of values, such as the 1948 UN Universal Declaration, in order for nations to exist.

A further contradiction also exists in the production of national identity and culture within the nation-state itself. This is because most nation-states are not comprised of culturally or ethnically homogenous populations and states must therefore manage a

tension between cultural diversity and national singularity. This contradiction has become more pronounced in recent years because of increasingly mobile labour patterns that break 'down national distinctions.'[224] For Wallerstein, how the state manages this contradiction in national culture and identity is shaped by issues of class. Thus,

> at the top of the occupation scale, people move regularly from rich countries to poor ones, and such persons are normally sojourners, rather than emigrants. They neither "assimilate" nor wish to assimilate; nor do the receiving states wish them to assimilate. Culturally they tend to form relatively discrete enclaves in their country of sojourn. They often see themselves as bearers of world culture, which means in fact bearers of the culture of the dominant groups in the world-system. [225]

From this perspective, 'world' or cosmopolitan culture is seen as elitist because only the 'dominant groups in the world system' are afforded the possibility of identifying themselves as such by the state. [226] By way of contrast, the state's response to labour that moves from 'poorer countries to richer ones' is very different.[227]

> These persons are in cultural conflict with the receiving country. They often stay permanently or try to stay. When they wish to assimilate into the national culture of the receiving country, they are often rejected. And when they reject assimilation, they are often required to assimilate. They become, usually quite officially, a "minority."[228]

According to Wallerstein, in both instances migration does not lead to the erosion of national identities. Rather, labour migration simply means that the nation-state is faced with the dialectic of 'simultaneously creating homogenous national cultures and distinctive ethnic groups, or "minorities" within these nation-states.'[229] In other words, the state manages its minority citizens in such a way as to ensure a unified national identity, and at the same time, designates minorities as distinct (and subordinate) ethnic groups within this national identity. The state has historically had 'the upper hand' in managing these tensions and continues to do so today,'[230] simply because it 'has controlled the most physical force.'[231] Therefore, while globalisation may have increased such complexities and contradictions, national identities will continue to exist until a form of political governance emerges that supplants the nation state.

From Wallerstein's perspective, the capitalist world-system has always required a certain permeability of state boundaries – 'flows of commodities, flows of capital, flows of labor' – that have historically challenged the manufacture of national particularity.[232] Nevertheless, the political power of the state has always managed to counter this erosive force by controlling the institutional production of identity through, for example, the educational system. For many critics this means that plural, globally inclusive re-imaginings of national identity (such as that espoused by Kureishi in the epigraph of this chapter) are responses to the exigencies that neoliberal globalisation places upon national identity today. For example, Ulrich Beck has noted how the new economy turns the idea of imperialism on its head: the nation state is not threatened by conquest but non-conquest, the fear is not invasion by investors but retreat.[233] Consequently, recent transformations in the global economy necessitate increasingly "global" visions of national identity that project openness to the world in order to attract investment from multinational companies. In the case of Britain, the recent remarks of London Mayor, Ken Livingstone, provide a concise reminder of these new demands upon British national identity. Writing in defence of a British multicultural identity following the London bombings of 2005, Livingstone warns of the negative effects of Islamaphobia as a response to the bombings, because of its consequences for Britain's competitiveness in the new global economy. He maintains that the narrowing of British multicultural identity damages London's status as a global city and its ability to project the idea that 'any company, anywhere in the world, looking to invest here...knows that their staff will find a community to welcome them.' [234] In short, the projection of a multicultural British national identity is crucial to Britain's ability to attract global capital, and therefore its competiveness in the global economy.

For numerous Marxist critics, this close association between global capitalism and the sort of plural visions of national identity that Livingstone espouses reflects the Americanisation of national identities. Thus, discourses of multiculturalism often belie an underlying American influence that go hand in hand with the spread of American-led multinational capitalism. Recognition of American hegemony in shaping national identity leads these Marxist critics to remain highly sceptical that globalisation is ushering in an age of postnationalism, as defined by Appadurai. Hence, what are frequently offered as

examples of "cosmopolitan" or "global" culture often reveal American pluralism writ large: not the end of nationalism, but the universalisation of American national identity. For example, Timothy Brennan identifies a 'new "cosmopolitanism" in the London and New York book markets,' of the sort Bill Buford celebrated in the introduction to this thesis.[235] According to Brennan, this cosmopolitan trend extends beyond the realm of literature to 'the newspaper commentators, professors and talk show hosts' who helped promote it, and further still to the networks of 'academic, governmental, media, and think tank intellectuals.'[236] Thus, the emergence of a new literary cosmopolitanism is one aspect of a much broader series of power structures that produce similar global outlooks in a range of discourses and fields of public-policy. Brennan's exposure of these structures in which a new 'Western aesthetics' of cosmopolitanism has emerged, leads him to distinguish it from earlier articulations of cosmopolitanism, such as that advanced by Kant in the nineteenth century. Of this, Brennan writes:

> Accompanied by a phalanx of debates in several disciplines, the revival [of cosmopolitism] occurs at a time when there are more objective foundations for a "new world" than Kant ever knew: namely, the existence of a nation (the United States) with the individual means, the motive, and the alliances to establish the first universal law. We are finding more and more common the claim that American judges have jurisdiction everywhere – that not only does the sun never set on the American empire, there is no place it shines that is not America. [237]

Acknowledging the global hegemony of the U.S. in this way enables Brennan to bring to light the particular imprint of American national identity and culture – 'its' famous, highly celebrated mixedness of population, which has created a repertoire of troping and a reason for being' – upon "global" culture. [238] Consequently, discourses of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism frequently serve to privilege U.S. experience, and to implicitly offer the U.S. as prototypical of a new "global" cultural identity. [239]

Brennan's conception of multiculturalism in an age of American-led globalisation has important implications for how we understand the representation of national identities considered in this chapter. This is because whereas during British colonialism, ideas of "good breeding" and "proper speech" were crucial to Britain drawing distinct boundaries against subordinate national identities, American pluralism, by contrast, is a model of

cooption. Thus, tropes of American pluralism undermine ideas of autonomy and independence associated with nationalist identities and signify 'assimilation with dignity' into a global American empire. [240] Recognition of this shift cautions against valorising 'mixed-race, intercultural' re-imaginings' of national identities that challenge hegemonic conceptions of Britishness in the colonial past without accounting for how such identities might reinforce American global power in the present.

*

In contrast to the Marxist emphasis on the continuing power of the nation-state to shape identity, Arjun Appadurai argues in *Modernity at Large* that the nation-state, as a political and cultural category, has been significantly undermined by the new structural dispensation that globalisation represents.[241] For Appadurai, erosion of the nation state's power in recent years has two important implications for the conception of contemporary national identities. First, it suggests that globalisation de-links national identities from the structures of the state. And second, that globalisation produces deterritorialised forms of culture and identity that cannot be categorized within national frameworks.

Central to both these claims of postnationalism is Appadurai's conception of nationalism, following Benedict Anderson, as an "imagined identity." [242] While Anderson's work charts the centrality of print capitalism to the emergence of national identity, Appadurai argues that the last decades of the twentieth century have witnessed a rupture in how culture and identity are now imagined. At the heart of this rupture lies the nexus of mass migration and the emergence of a global electronic media, which has resulted in the diminishing importance of territory to identity formation. Therefore, while according to Anderson print capitalism played a central role in the historical creation of the nation-state by allowing 'imagined communities' to emerge, Appadurai argues that Anderson's concept of 'imagined communities' must now be reconceived as 'imagined worlds.' [243] This new global imaginary landscape is both highly unstable in nature and represents a severe challenge to national identification because of the state's inability to control how identities are now produced.

The inability of the state to control cultural production reflects a much wider failure of the state to marshal its borders. Indeed, according to Appadurai global integration is now evident, both technologically and economically, to the extent that 'previously impervious boundaries' have now become obsolete. [244] Consequently, the nation state is unable to control the movement of culture (*mediascapes*), money (*financescapes)*, ideas (*ideoscapes*), people (*ethnoscapes)* and technology (*technoscapes*), heralding an era in which 'the nation-state as a complex modern political form, is on its last legs.'[245] We are now therefore, moving into a period of postnationalism that Appadurai suggests can be understood in three ways:

> The first is temporal and historical and suggests that we are in the process of moving to a global order in which the nation-state has become obsolete and other formations for allegiance and identity have taken its place. The second is the idea that what are emerging are strong alternative forms for the organization of global traffic in resources, images and ideas – forms that either contest the nation-state actively or constitute peaceful alternatives for large-scale political loyalties. The third implication is the possibility that, while nations might continue to exist, the steady erosion of the capabilities of the nation-state to monopolize loyalty will encourage the spread of national forms that are largely divorced from territorial states.[246]

According to Appadurai, then, national identities are both poorly suited to the new structural dispensations of globalisation and, at the same time, undermined by new modes of identity that challenge the nation's ability to 'monopolize loyalty.'[247]

One significant reason that Appadurai argues the nation-state's ability to 'monopolize loyalty' has been undermined is because globalisation de-links ethnic identities from national territories and produces *ethnoscapes*. [248] *Ethnoscapes* represent new relationships between ethnicities and territories that transform how we must now conceive of national identities. Consequently, it is not so much that globalisation undermines ethnic identification, but that 'ethnicity, once a genie contained in the bottle of some sort of locality (however large), has now become a global force, forever slipping in and through the cracks between states and borders.'[249] The globalisation of ethnicity means that rather than conjoin national identity to the state, ethnicity is now central to a 'battle of the imagination, with state and nation seeking to cannibalize one another.'[250] In

other words, the globalisation of ethnicity plays a crucial role in contesting national identities from beyond the borders of the nation-state. In particular, Appadurai argues that global media networks undermine the power of the state to control the taxonomy of difference and, therefore, provide a 'stage' upon which various separatist movements can make their claims.[251] Thus, Appadurai speaks of *mediascapes* that are 'image-centred, narrative-based accounts of strips of reality,' which cut across global terrains. [252] Such transnational networks enable collective identities to materialize that connect various diasporic nodes across the world through a shared sense of ethnicity. A good example of this is the globalisation of Sikh identity, which connects Sikhs in Canada, Britain, Australia, and the Punjab through a complex interplay of *ethnoscapes* and *mediascapes.*

Globalisation not only facilitates the articulation of such transnational ethnic identities, but also produces deterritorialised forms of culture and identity that transcend ethnic, national or territorial categories. John Tomlinson, for example, notes how the 'complex hybrid nature of contemporary global youth cultures organized around music, dance, and fashion' signals a 'cosmopolitanizing' tendency of globalisation.[253] Contrary to Marxist critics, Tomlinson argues that national categories do not capture the complexity of these new forms of culture, which 'pay little heed to the exclusivity of national or ethnic divisions.'[254] The growing ubiquity of such new cultural forms– from pop music to street fashion to cosmopolitan food culture - delinks everyday cultural experiences from localities. The importance of these new forms of culture to identity in the contemporary world challenges national identities, because it represents a 'loss of the "natural" relation of culture to geographical and social territories,' as Garcia Canclini puts it. [255] Consequently, national identities must work against this process of deterritorialisation in order to remain a relevant and compelling identity to individual's everyday lives.

For Appadurai, the distinction between national culture and the new forms global culture that Tomlinson notes is not only one of content, but also form. While national culture is by definition framed within territorially bound categories, new emergent forms of global culture are far more fluid - chaotic even - in Appadurai's formulation. In order to chart this shift, Appadurai proposes the term culture be replaced by the term *cultural* in an attempt to undermine the substantive associations of culture that implies coherence

and boundedness. Appadurai's use of the term *cultural* then, attempts to move the conception of culture away from its possession by a particular group toward understanding it as a heuristic device that establishes difference across global space.[256] Within this analytical framework, Wallerstein's view of the nation as the principal category of culture in the modern world is undermined, and national identity simply becomes one group identity amongst many within a constantly shifting terrain of 'imagined worlds.'[257]

Having considered some of the salient aspects of the debate over the effects of globalisation on traditional concepts of national identity, I will now examine how South Asian diasporic fiction treats these issues with reference to three key texts, namely *My Beautiful Laundrette*, *The Coral Strand* and *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*. The complex family, ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the South Asian protagonists in these narratives represent a range of challenges to traditional conceptions of national identities. This chapter explores what role globalisation plays in Kureishi, Randhawa and Rushdie's responses to such challenges and, in so doing, investigates a number of key questions. Do these texts signify the waning power of the nation to shape a sense of belonging in a globalised world? Or do national categories continue to matter to lives and identities of the characters in these narratives? Are these texts able to re-imagine national identities in ways that encompass the cultural and ethnic complexities of the South Asian diaspora in Britain? And if so, what is the role of Britain's colonial past and/or contemporary American global influence in shaping such re-imagined national identities?

The Local-Global Dialectics of Britishness: Hanif Kureishi's *My Beautiful Laundrette*

In his book, *Hanif Kureishi*, Bart Moore-Gilbert comments that 'Kureishi's first three films suggest that recourse to an ethnically-grounded monoculturalism as the principal guarantee of a common national identity plays a major role in fostering conflict and exclusion in contemporary Britain.'[258] Kureishi's antipathy toward the 'Raj Revival' and the 'Heritage Films' of the 1980's that Moore-Gilbert notes, indicates that *My Beautiful Laundrette* is concerned with an attempt to re-imagine Britishness in a way that

does not look back to a narrow view of Britain's past, but rather negotiates the complexity of contemporary British society.[259] This focus on the present leads *My Beautiful Laundrette* to engage in an ambivalent relationship with the globalisation process. The screenplay negotiates the tensions of globalisation through its representation of locality, which Kureishi shows to be a space that continually shifts between local and global influences in his attempt to re-invent ideas of British identity.

A significant theme of *My Beautiful Laundrette* is the way in which economic globalisation and, in particular, the Anglo-American discourse of free market capitalism, destabilises mono-ethnic/cultural conceptions of national identity. The principal way this tension is played out in the narrative is through the contestation of local space between South Asian businessmen and the white working class character of Genghis who espouses a racist form of British nationalism. Genghis' nationalism is bound to ideas of Britain's colonial past and alludes to the nostalgia for 'Raj Revivalism' of the sort that Moore-Gilbert noted during the period in which *My Beautiful Laundrette* was written. For example, from Genghis' perspective labour hierarchies are delineated through racially defined ideas of Britishness, which legitimate his claim that non-white immigrants 'came here to work for us.'[260] Yet despite Genghis' belief in a white monopoly of Britishness and their innate superiority in the economy, he remains a character with little power to enforce his beliefs outside of highly localised racist violence. By way of contrast, the British-Asian character of Omar becomes increasingly empowered as the narrative progresses through his entrepreneurial endeavours that enable him to command local space. Therefore while Genghis regards himself to hold considerable authority in defining Britishness ethnically and culturally, it is Omar, through his ownership of a bourgeoning chain of laundrettes who is shown to be the more empowered agent of social change in Britain. What this suggests is that the main challenge to Genghis' version of Britishness does not come from affirming a counter ideological position to racist-nationalism (for example, British multiculturalism of the 1970's) but from a world that is changing economically.

My Beautiful Laundrette shows the considerable contribution that South Asian businessmen have made to this changing economic world in Britain and the extent to which this has displaced traditional notions of British national identity. For example,

Omar's uncle, Nasser, enthusiastically embraces what he calls 'the new enterprise culture,' associated with the economic reforms of Margaret Thatcher.[261] For Nasser, this culture of entrepreneurialism allows for the emergence of a capitalist identity that is not confined by issues of nationality or ethnicity. As Nasser puts it, 'we're professional businessmen. Not professional Pakistanis'. There is no race question in the new enterprise culture.'[262] From Nasser's perspective then, the idea of the nation as a cultural or economic category has no place in a borderless world of global capitalism and, in this regard, his character represents a "purer" form of global free market capitalism in Britain precisely because he is not constrained by the sort of nationalistic concerns of Margaret Thatcher. Similarly, there is little evidence of national exclusion in the cosmopolitan circle of international businessmen that trade stories at Nasser's social gatherings. The character named 'Englishman,' for instance, reiterates the view that business concerns supersede cultural or ethnic identities and argues that the 'only prejudice in England is against the useless.'[263] In this respect, the discourse of global free market capitalism is shown to challenge the subordinate status that Genghis ascribes to South Asians in Britain and, therefore, to destabilise the conflation of ethnicity and class that his views espouse. More broadly it suggests that economic neoliberal globalisation undermines the power of the state to designate 'minority' status to Third World immigrants in core countries as Wallerstein maintains.[264] Certainly from the perspective of 'Englishman,' the characterisation of South Asians as a subordinate minority is irrelevant to a new British economic climate in which the value of its citizens is measured solely by their ability to generate wealth. [265]

Such valorisation of entrepreneurship by the South Asian, American and English businessmen in *My Beautiful Laundrette* presents Britain as a node in a worldwide network of capitalism for these characters. As such, their validation of global business culture represents a considerable challenge to the nation-state to shape identity and engender a sense of loyalty in its citizens. After all, Nasser's embrace of England is principally a result of the business opportunities it has offered him and, therefore, is associated with the free market policies of Thatcherism rather than Britain representing any significant cultural aspect of his identity.[266] This dearth of national identification and loyalty in Nasser's character is reiterated by certain characters in Kureishi's later work

and, in particular, Chili in *The Black Album*. Unlike Nasser, Chili is part of a new generation of British-Asians who came to age under Thatcherism and remain as indifferent to identification with Britain as Nasser does. Thus, motivated by the goal of making money, Chili has no time for emotional attachments to Britain and his desire to leave for America is contingent upon the business opportunities that 'small-time England' does not afford him.[267] Consequently, both Nasser and Chili might be regarded as postnational figures in Appadurai's formulation, not because they regard themselves to be the bearers of a new cosmopolitan culture or society, but rather because the nation-state has become largely irrelevant to them and, to use Appadurai's phrase, no longer 'monopolises loyalty.' [268]

In *My Beautiful Laundrette*, the laundrette itself stands as an important symbol for how international business culture undermines traditional conceptions of national identity through its metamorphosis from 'Churchill's'[269] to 'Powders.'[270] 'Churchill's' is, of course, a name that links the laundrette to one of the most powerful symbols of Britain's past, World War Two and its most iconic leader, Winston Churchill. Yet the condition of disrepair in which Omar finds 'Churchill's' when he takes charge of it implies a general decay of such traditional symbols of Britishness. In contrast, the laundrette's rejuvenation by Omar and Johnny is coupled with its re-naming as 'Powders': a name that does not evoke Britain's past, but rather reminds us of the shady global capital from Salim's cocaine smuggling business that finances the laundrette's renovation. In this respect, 'Powders' signifies Britain's inability to control its borders and substantiates Appadurai's claims that localities are now being transformed by forces over which the nation-state has little control.

However, despite the deterritorialising effects of globalisation and diaspora upon identities, Kureishi's characters also confront the fact that, to use David Harvey's words, 'everyone occupies a space of individuation.'[271] In particular, Kureishi shows Omar's desire to identify with locality as crucial to how British national identity resists the destabilising effects of globalisation. For example, Kureishi draws attention to the ways in which Omar feels very much at home in his local environment, thereby challenging Cherry's ideas of 'home' based upon South Asian ethnic connections. [272] From Cherry's perspective, Omar is one of the new breeds of 'in-between' that 'should make up their

minds where they are' and she therefore rebukes him for his lack of identification with Pakistan in the following way: [273]

> 'You Stupid, what a stupid, it's my home. Could anyone in their right mind call this silly little island off Europe their home? Every day in Karachi your other uncles and cousins are at our house for bridge, booze and VCR.' [274]

Cherry attempts to connect Omar to Pakistan in this passage through the sort of global *ethnoscapes* that Appadurai argues delink identities from territories. However, Kureishi strongly challenges Cherry's idea that Omar should identify with Pakistan by showing him to be very much be at 'home' in his local environment. Rather than appear as an 'in-between,' therefore, Omar is well attuned to his local environment – a point that Kureishi emphasises by making Omar's local knowledge and connections pivotal to the plot of the screenplay. Thus, Omar is able to save Cherry and Salim from a racist attack by Genghis and 'the lads' because of his 'obvious friendship with Johnny,' having grown up together.[275] And more importantly, he is able to make the laundrette succeed where Nasser had failed, in large part because of his recruitment of Johnny, and his ability to forge links with the local community in a way that Nasser was unable to.

Nevertheless if Omar appears very much at home in his local environment, then the question remains how such local identification signifies Britishness for Omar? Or to put it another way, how does *My Beautiful Laundrette* connect a sense of being at home in a local environment to British national identity? Although Omar does not explicitly articulate a British identity as Karim Amir famously does to begin *The Buddha of Suburbia*, Kureishi nevertheless associates Omar with Britishness in various ways. In particular, a sense of Britishness is mediated through the suburban London setting of the screenplay that alludes to older literary representations of British identity. For instance, in her analysis of the writings of Stevie Smith, Kristin Bluemel finds London's suburbs to be 'an extraordinarily suggestive, dynamic site for discovering the conflicted meanings of Englishness during the 1930s and '40s.' [276] For other writers, such as George Orwell, the London suburbs symbolise the decline of Britain, and are consequently described in *Coming Up For Air* as a 'line of semi-detached torture-chambers.'[277] The point is that whether seen as the positive spaces that Bluemel finds in Smith's writing, or as negative

in Orwell's description of them, literary representations of London's suburbs have been repeatedly used to characterise British society and identity.

The same suburban houses that were so suggestive of the condition of Britain for Orwell, as well as the conflicted meanings of Englishness for Smith, provide Kureishi with the imagery for the screenplay's own assessment of British society. Consequently, Kureishi's attention to the details of setting prevents London from appearing as a homogenised global city that is delinked from British identity. Rather, Kureishi's London emphasises its Britishness because it draws upon a body of imagery and motifs that have historically been used to signify British identity. For example, in a scene near the end of the screenplay Johnny kisses Omar in front of what Kureishi describes as '*street of desolate semi-detached houses in bad condition, ready for demolition.*' (Kureishi' italics) On the one hand, the fact that Kureishi draws attention to the 'bad condition' of London's suburban streets implies the decline of traditional conceptions of Britishness imagined by Orwell and Smith. On the other hand, the juxtaposition of this image of decay with the vibrant image of Omar and Johnny's kiss signifies that their relationship represents a new, more optimistic conception of Britishness, which embraces multiethnic relationships and more progressive attitudes towards gender and sexuality. Images such as this indicate that Appadurai exaggerates the effects of deterritorialisation, by showing that globalisation has not led to the disappearance of symbols of Britishness from everyday life. Rather, discourses and signifiers of national identity appear everywhere in *My Beautiful Laundrette*. Indeed, for Omar a sense of being at home in his local environment necessitates the negotiation of Britishness because he is repeatedly confronted with what it means to be British. This means struggling with exclusionary narratives of British national identity, such as those espoused by Genghis, as well as the anti-immigrant marches through South London that he remembers as 'bricks and bottles and Union Jacks.' [278] But it also means being assessed by Papa as 'a little Britisher' because unlike his father, he feels very much at home in his local environment.[279] Both instances show that while Britishness may be a conflicted narrative for Omar, it is one that he must repeatedly negotiate, rendering problematic Appadurai's claim that globalisation reduces the significance of national identity to individual subjectivity.

Further, the connection between the local and the national is pronounced in Omar through the various ways in which Kureishi shows Omar's upbringing to distinguish him from many of his relatives. In this regard, several South Asian characters in the text serve as foils against which the ordinariness of Omar's Britishness is defined, rather than as facilitators of the sort of transnational connections that Cherry advocates. Most notably, the distinction between Omar, as a British-Asian character, and South Asian characters not born in Britain is evidenced through their use of language. Omar's idiomatic use of English, his monolingualism and his localised South London speech patterns distinguish the tenor of his character from the first generation of South Asian characters in the text. For instance, Omar's English ('I've been through it. With my parents and that'[280] or 'For fifty quid as well.'[281]) contrasts with the Indianized English of Salim ('We were all there, yaar, to see Ravi Shankar.'[282]), as well as the more formal, antiquated phrasing of Papa ('I want my son out of this underpants cleaning condition. I want him reading in college.'[283]). The effect of these differences in language and idiom is not only to make a clear distinction between members of first and second generation of the South Asian diaspora, but just as importantly to align Omar's character with Johnny on a verbal if not ethnic level. This linguistic alliance between Omar and Johnny is furthered by the fact that Omar is explicitly shown not to understand Urdu ('Speak in English, Zaki, so this boy can understand')[284] while Salim and Nasser use Urdu as a means of excluding Johnny from their conversation. [285] Consequently, Omar and Johnny's monolingualism positions them as cultural outsiders to Salim, Zaki and Nasser's 'family business,' and stresses the extent to which their relationship is built upon shared British cultural experiences.[286]

In her analysis of *My Beautiful Laundrette* Alexandria Barron supports reading Omar and Johnny's relationship as a new conception of British national identity that 'represents the birth of a new Britain capable of healing its racist past.'[287] Specifically, Barron finds the closing image of the screenplay in which Omar and Johnny playfully wash each other to be a hopeful image that heralds a new way of being British. Yet Barron also notes that if the optimism of this final image is not to be reduced to an oversimplified 'collective fantasy' of a unified nation, then it must be read in conjunction with the continued social unrest on the streets outside of the laundrette.[288] Despite this

qualification, Barron argues that the romantic union between Omar and Johnny is significant because it inaugurates a new genre of films that she calls 'queer national romance.'[289] This new genre extends the eighteenth century literary genre of national romance and represents narratives for imagining unified contemporary national identities. Thus, *My Beautiful Laundrette* 'uses its audience's desire to see this fragile space [of the laundrette] survive to create an emotional investment in a new conception of Britishness.'[290] From Barron's perspective, therefore, a significant contribution of the film is the extent to which it engenders a sense of empathy for multiethnic relationships in a British audience, thereby fostering a plural conception of British national identity.

While I largely find Barron's argument convincing, it is also important to note the conditions that make the laundrette possible in the screenplay and the ideological discourses that legitimate the 'new conception of Britishness' that Omar and Johnny's relationship represents. Barron's reading of *My Beautiful Laundrette* overemphasises the extent to which such new conceptions of Britishness are simply a matter of a British audience emotionally connecting to a plural vision of national identity. The laundrette is, after all, a space that represents new possibilities for British society, but also one made possible by the financial investment of South Asian businessmen. It is, therefore, a space that couples the 'new conception of Britishness' that Barron identifies with the social possibilities that free market capitalism enables. And while Margret Thatcher may have been instrumental in promoting the global discourse of free market capitalism during the 1980's, as Brennan demonstrates, it is principally American rather than British power that advances free market capitalism in the contemporary world. Consequently in light of Brennan's work, the space of the laundrette should not only be understood in terms of the new possibilities of Britishness that it signifies to a British audience, but also for how it re-orientates Britain toward American-led globalisation.

This imprint of American global influence is evident in *My Beautiful Laundrette* through the presence of the American businessman Dick O'Donnell. Although a marginal character, O'Donnell plays a significant role in endorsing the new conception of Britishness that Omar and Johnny represent. It is noteworthy that at the end of the screenplay, O'Donnell gives the clearest articulation of the future of Britain's national identity by affirming that the country 'needs more men like Omar and Johnny, from what

I can see.' [291] Kureishi's identification of O'Donnell as 'the American businessman' in this scene signals a direct allusion to American global power, and reveals that an important consequence of Britain's embrace of global free market capitalism is the diminished power of the state to marshal British national identity. After all, O'Donnell's approval of Omar and Johnny as the future of Britain is not concerned with the sort of cultural nationalism that Margret Thatcher advocated alongside free market capitalism.[292] Rather it is a vision of Britain's future as one congruent with his own perspective as an American businessman in London. Consequently, Dick O'Donnell reminds us that new conceptions of Britishness are not only shaped by the changing attitudes of Britons to the pluralisation of British society, but also by their congruency with American business interests around the world.

Further, while Johnny's relationship with Omar can be read as the harbinger of a more progressive British national identity that embraces its multiethnic society, it is also important to note that Johnny's financial future ultimately depends upon his relationship with Omar and, by extension, with Nasser's group of international businessmen. In contrast to Genghis, therefore, Johnny's trajectory implies that employment in Britain, for the white working class, is bound to the acceptance of a plural vision of British society and the willingness to work for the sorts of international business interests that Nasser's international circle represents. Thus, the coupling of Johnny's embrace of a multiethnic British identity with his acceptance of what Genghis calls 'working for them,' implies that the acceptance of a plural ethnic and cultural Britain is inseparable from the acceptance of international business interests. [293] In other words, Johnny's character evokes the ideological position championed by Ken Livingstone earlier in this chapter, in which a plural vision of British society is validated through the better economic future it promises Britain. In light of Marxist accounts of globalisation therefore, the emotional investment of the audience that Barron identifies in Johnny and Omar's personal relationship might be read as one that reinforces the hegemony of American-led neoliberalism, as much as it endorses a more progressive conception of Britishness.

However, if the conception of Britishness that Omar and Johnny represent is indeed one that is congruent with American-led globalisation, then *My Beautiful Laundrette* does not show this to be the negative outcome that Brennan claims. Rather,

because the audience is led to connect emotionally with Omar and Johnny's relationship and, as Barron argues, to hope for it to survive, the presence of the American businessman O'Donnell is cast in a positive light. After all, O'Donnell's response to Omar and Johnny's relationship and the new conception of Britishness that it signifies, contrasts to the violent antagonism that Genghis represents throughout the screenplay. From the perspective of the South Asian diaspora in Britain then, one significant advantage of American influence is that it challenges British racist nationalism that Genghis typifies. The appeal of O'Donnell's American outlook, therefore, is that it legitimates a more flexible approach to British national identity, which embraces multiethnic relationships, South Asian entrepreneurship and yet does not preclude the everyday sense of Britishness that the screenplay celebrates in its South London setting.

Englistan: The Global Histories of Britishness in Ravinder Randhawa's *The Coral Strand*

A different perspective on the relationship between national identity and globalisation is offered by Ravinder Randhawa in *The Coral Strand*. In *My Beautiful Laundrette*, the new conception of Britishness that Omar and Johnny's relationship represents is one negotiated principally in the globalised present. One important outcome of this, as has been seen, is that Kureishi does not look directly to British colonial history as a narrative in which to legitimate Omar and Johnny's relationship, but rather draws upon tropes and allusions of American global power in order to undermine traditional conceptions of Britishness. In contrast, the recounting of colonial history is central to the new vision of British national identity that *The Coral Strand* imagines. Consequently, the protagonist of the novel is named Sita/Ferret because, as she comments, ferret is 'often followed by *out*, to find by persistent investigation, for example, *to ferret out, to search around*.'[294] This act of 'ferreting out' the past through historical investigation and memory not only drives the narrative of the novel, but also understands British identity in light of the colonial history of the state, revealing recent multi-ethnic re-imaginings of Britishness to be less shaped by American influence than *My Beautiful Laundrette* implies. [295]

The importance of history and memory to the construction of British national identity is implicit to the structure of *The Coral Strand* and its dialectical organisation around two narratives: one that centres upon colonial Bombay from 1935-1947 and the other upon London from 1947-1997. This organization of the novel renders contemporary Britain historically bound to India and provides the structural foundation for the motif of doubling that occurs throughout the novel, most notably in Sita/Ferret's name. In the last five chapters of the novel, Sita/Ferret's quest to 'utilise the past' synthesises the two narratives, unifying the Indian and British dimensions of her background that had been bifurcated throughout the novel.[296] In this respect, the novel corroborates Steven Connors' contention that the British novel since the 1950s should be read 'not just as passively marked with the imprint of history, but also as one of the ways in which history is made and remade.'[297] The contribution of *The Coral Strand* to this process of re-envisioning British history collapses numerous boundaries of identity between India and Britain in an attempt to destabilise the ethno-nationalist formulation of Britishness associated with Emily in the text.

The process of destabilising Emily's colonial conception of Britishness is achieved in the novel through narrating the lives of three generations of South Asian women and depicting the varying degrees of subordination that they face at the hands of Emily. The most passive of these women is Champa, who works for Emily as a prostitute in colonial India and is never able to emerge as an independent subject from Emily's claims of ownership.[298] Significantly, the novel demonstrates that Emily's ability to profit from Champa is not only a function of direct colonial power, but also her exploitation of an ethnically grounded English identity that is crucial to establishing and legitimating her superiority. For example, Champa is described as placing 'Emily on a pedestal'[299] and believing that her brothel 'must be a very superior set-up if Emily was involved.'[300] Therefore, having internalised the idea of white England as 'the ruler' land' that 'must be so much better than here, so much grander and luxurious,' Emily personifies the discourse of white English superiority to Champa.[301] By naming Emily's brothel 'The English Rose Garden,' Randhawa draws a direct connection between Emily's brokering of white English identity and her ability to accumulate capital in colonial India.[302] The symbolism of 'the English Rose' is important because it conjoins the imagery of the rose

and the connection to the soil it evokes, with a representation of English national identity, providing precisely the sort of imagery that Garcia Canclini argues creates naturalised links between identities and territories.[303] At the same time, it exposes how naturalised ideas of Englishness - what one character describes as the conjunction of 'biology' and 'geography' – are integral to the division of labour that Wallerstein identifies in the world system. [304] Thus Champa's belief in Emily's superiority as a white Englishwoman, and the myth of the 'English Rose' that perpetuates this hierarchy, are shown to be central to Chamba willingness to 'serve Emily.'[305]

Following Indian independence in 1947, and her subsequent return to Britain, Emily attempts to continue this relationship of subordination with the two South Asian women she has brought with her. While this proves to be relatively straightforward with respect to her relationship with Champa, it is considerably more problematic in the case of her child servant, Girl/Ferret. For Girl/Ferret, who came to Britain as a child, 'the myth about Great Britain'[306] that was vital to Emily's exploitation of Champa in India, is dispelled by her own formative experiences in Britain of 'a factory job,' 'racist remarks' and 'English classes.'[307] The effect of these experiences is that in contrast to Champa, Girl/Ferret found that she 'couldn't take orders' and 'knew the only way left was to go it alone.'[308] Yet if the subsequent independence from Emily enables Girl/Ferret to adopt the more empowered identity of Ancient/Ferret, then the act of migration also has an enduring influence upon her subjectivity because 'exile to England had wrenched from her certainties.'[309] In this respect, Ancient/Ferret's independence from Emily neither heals the exclusion that she has been made to feel from British society, nor the pain of her childhood separation from India. Certainly on an emotional level, this means that Ancient/Ferret's character is unable to connect with either a sense of British or Indian national identity and is, therefore, someone for whom the dislocation of migration has erased the possibility of national identification. While in this respect, Ancient/Ferret corroborates Appadurai's work by demonstrating how migration destabilises national identities, her character also provides it certain qualification. Ancient/Ferret exposes an emotional force to the experience of migration at a young age that is specific to it. This specificity implies that experiences of globalisation that do not involve such traumatic uprooting (such as the 'image-centred *mediascapes*' that Appadurai identifies) are

unlikely to erode national identities to the same degree. Consequently, Ancient/Ferret's erasure of national identification is an isolated case in the narrative that in no way signals a more generalised erosion of national identities.

Nevertheless, if in this respect *The Coral Strand* provides certain qualification to Appadurai's work, then elsewhere the novel responds favourably to the propensity of globalisation to destabilise national identities through two processes that Appadurai identifies. In this first instance, Randhawa shows how recent advancements in the development and expansion of air travel have shrunk global space and made transnational existences possible for certain members of the South Asian diaspora in Britain. For example, Sita/Ferret identifies one segment as 'the group that criss-crossed the globe, from western municipalities to village courtyard.'[310] This new 'jet-age' contrasts to the arduousness of Emily, Champa and Girl/ Ferret's boat journey from India to Britain in 1947.[311] Such collapsing of geographic space between India and Britain blurs the mapping of ethnicity to territory and shows how Sita/Ferret's idea that 'no one has a fixed place in the world' has become a global reality.[312] In this respect, increased global proximity and mobility destabilise naturalised narratives of national origin that trouble Sita/Ferret for much of the novel ('the question of 'Origin! Which part of the earth's soil did you spring from?') because they result in these narratives being repeatedly challenged, eroded and re-inscribed anew.[313]

Secondly, *The Coral Strand* indicates that the global economy undermines the power of the state to shape national identity in a different way to the transnational business culture that Nasser espouses in *My Beautiful Laundrette*. Specifically, Mr Kaylan, the South Asian businessman who employs Sita/Ferret, highlights the extent to which the global cultural economy transforms national identities into brands that add value to goods in the marketplace. From Mr Kaylan's perspective, the value of Sita/Ferret as a salesperson of Indian art is bound to her adopting an "authentic" Indian identity. Her success at this performance of Indianess leads Mr. Kaylan to compliment her at an art sale for looking 'very charming and Indian.'[314] and creating the impression upon one customer as having 'a really thick Indian accent.'[315] In this way, the global cultural economy is shown to have an ambivalent effect on Indian identity, at once reifying it and, at the same time, revealing how the global economy produces representations of Indian

identity outside of India's national borders. In both instances the performative aspect of Indian identity is exposed, as well as the extent to which this performance of Indianess is shaped by the demands of the global marketplace rather than the nation-state. Thus, Sita/Ferret assesses the art opening as an '"Asian Situation,"' in which Indianness – a sense of 'Over There'- is reconstructed for a wide range of South Asian subjects that live outside of India.[316] This assessment of commercial cultural events like Mr Kaylan's corroborates Appadurai's claim that 'deterritorialisation creates new markets for film companies, art impresarios, and travel agencies, which thrive on the need of the deterritorialized population for contact with its homeland.'[317]

Yet if globalisation is shown to delink ethnically grounded national identities from the state in *The Coral Strand*, then the novel also indicates how the history and political boundaries of the nation-state prevent the passage to postnationalism that Appadurai posits. Therefore, while technology may have collapsed global space for some, the novel shows that this should not overstate the very real political boundaries that continue to exist between India and Britain. An important implication of these political boundaries is an imbalance in how global economic flows are experienced in India compared to in Britain. For instance, the experience of those involved with the production of Mr Kaylan's Indian Art enterprise in India is profoundly different to Mr. Kaylan's experience in London. One British-Asian character sums up this inequality by commenting that the art sale looked 'like a thieves market to me. Those antiques and whatnots, ripped off from some poor villagers [in India].' [318] These remarks are important because they bring to light the extent to which the diminished power of the state to shape national identity is not necessarily commensurate with a broader erosion of state boundaries. Indeed, British citizenship remains integral to the success of South Asian diasporic businessmen such as Mr. Kaylan because it enables him to benefit from the exploitation of cheap labour in India. From the standpoint of Wallerstein's world-system, this disparity between South Asian entrepreneurs in Britain and workers in India highlights how national borders remain vital to the global division of labour that benefit 'core countries' such as Britain.

More central to the concerns of the novel, however, is the way in which Britishness is evoked in Sita/Ferret through a strong sense of belonging. In contrast to her

mother's erasure of national identification, Sita/Ferret shows how second generation members of the South Asian diaspora are able to re-territorialise their identities by re-imagining what Britishness means. Following Omar in *My Beautiful Laundrette*, Sita/Ferret is very much at home in London - a sentiment that is emphasised toward the end of the novel by the image of her 'melt [ing] into the London crowd.' [319] Like Kureishi, Randhawa draws attention to the Britishness of London that prevents Sita/Ferret's connection to the city from appearing as nationally indistinct metropolitanism. Therefore, as Sita/Ferret navigates the London summer streets we are reminded of the everyday symbols of British culture, such as 'pub lunches,' as well as the institutional manufacturers of national identity that connect Sita/Ferret to traditional narratives of British identity.[320] In particular, Randhawa repeatedly associates Sita/Ferret with images of 'the museums of London,' including 'The Natural History Museum,' 'The Science Museum' and 'The Victoria and Albert.'[321] These allusions to national institutions are significant because they symbolise how the state mobilises public memory, heritage and history to produce narratives of national identity that resist the deterritorialising effects of globalisation that Appadurai identifies.

More explicitly still, Randhawa stresses the connection between Sita/Ferret and Britain by following the image of her 'melting into a London crowd'[322] with her participation in the 'democratic process' for the first time.[323] This address to Britain's political process ensures that Sita/Ferret's trajectory toward reconciling the duality of her background and feeling part of a collective identity is directly linked to the British state and her rights as a citizen within it. Consequently, Sita/Ferret's identification with London not only resists the deterritorialising effects of globalisation by affirming a place-bound identity, but also engenders a new sense of civic responsibility and engagement with the nation-state. In this respect, Sita/Ferret supports Wallerstein's work by highlighting that the nation-state as a political form of governance continues to matter to individual lives and, therefore, remains relevant to their identities.

However, if the novel's recognition of the British political process signifies the importance of the nation-state to Sita/Ferret's subjectivity, then her investigation of Britain's past also forces a re-examination of the British nation-state. In so doing, the novel responds to Sisodia's often quoted comments in *The Satanic Verses* 'that the

trouble with the Engenglish is that their hiss hiss history happened overseas, so they dodo don't know what it means."' [324] One character concisely sums up *The Coral Strand's* response to this oversight of global influence upon British history by coining the term 'Englistan.' [325] 'Englistan' deftly encompasses the double sense of British identity that Sita/Ferret embodies and its use in the novel goes beyond attempting to brand a generation of British born South Asians through an etymological synthesis of national identities. Rather, 'Englistan' is used to not only signal the historical connections between India and Britain but, just as importantly, to recognise the extensive financial contribution of India to the construction of the British localities as a result of colonial economic exploitation. Sita/Ferret's friend, Jeevan, enumerates this contribution to her in some detail:

> "Do you know how much money was transferred to England from 1757 onwards? Over seventeen million pounds a year. Figures by William Digby. Work it out to 1947, add in extra taxes for wars, plus men and materials, loans that were never repaid, the loss of industries, inflation etc. I'll write it out for, the figures will make you eyes go dizzy..."[326]

'Englistan' then, legitimates Sita/Ferret's right to participate in the British political process by signifying that her presence in Britain is the outcome of an earlier flow of capital from India to Britain. Therefore, as Jeevan remarks to her, 'we should enjoy Englistan properly now. We paid in advance.'[327]

If 'Englistan' re-conceives of British identity in a way that acknowledges the economic importance of colonial India to the development of Britain as a nation-state, then in the case of Sita/Ferret this economic connection is particularly acute. This is because the London suburbs in which Sita/Ferret grew up are intimately bound to the history of British colonialism. John Clement Ball writes of this relationship:

> There are some fascinating parallels between the histories of suburbia and of empire. Imperial and suburban expansion occurred not only simultaneously, but for some of the same reasons: the desire for economic growth and investment of surplus capital and labour; a pioneering attraction to spatial frontiers; a sense of race – or- class-based superiority and exclusivity and, as a function of that sense, an evangelical moralism. The wealth that funded suburbia in its birthplace (London) came from merchants profiting from imperial trade. [328]

In light of this historical connection, the Indian dimension of Sita/Ferret's background is not separate from her upbringing in the London suburbs, but rather constitutes a vital aspect of its local history. Consequently, the extent to which Sita/Ferret's identity is bound to her upbringing in the London suburbs goes far beyond the personal identification with her local environment that she shares with Omar in *My Beautiful Laundrette*. Rather, Sita/Ferret's connection to the London suburbs is shown to be a structural one that re-writes narratives of British localities in light of British economic history.

The Coral Strand makes direct reference to this material connection between South Asia and growth of the London suburbs through its representation of Emily's house in the South London suburbs. Randhawa details how Emily purchased the house after her return from India with the ill gotten profits she had made there – a house financed with what Emily describes as 'my Oriental treasures.'[329] By investigating Emily's colonial past, Sita/Ferret uncovers how Emily's 'Oriental treasures' were accumulated through a series of fraudulent deceptions, enabling Sita/Ferret to arrange 'a barter of the most unholy kind' with Emily.[330] This bargaining process means that Sita/Ferret acquires a half stake in Emily's house and eventually agrees on terms to own the house outright. The passage of ownership and occupation of the house from Emily to Sita/Ferret provides the novel with an extended metaphor for the process of reclaiming the resources of the British state by members of the South Asian diaspora. It puts into a personal register the re-conception of Britain as 'Englistan' and grounds Sita/Ferret's new found ability 'to belong' within the global history of the British state that 'Englistan' represents.[331]

The symbolism of Emily's house is important then, because it provides a concrete connection between Britain's colonial history and the physical space of contemporary London. In so doing, it represents an ambivalent response to the theoretical works considered in this chapter. On the one hand, Sita/Ferret shows that laying claim to British identity, as well as its resources, is a crucial response to addressing Britain's colonial past. This reveals that one of the shortcomings of Appadurai's view of globalisation is that it offers no way of accounting for the historical dimension of the flows of capital that

produced localities such as the London suburbs. Moreover, on a personal level, the idea that deterritorialised identities can fulfil Sita/Ferret's desire for a sense of "home" and, therefore, usurp national identities as Appadurai argues is strongly refuted in the novel. Rather, from the perspective of the South Asian diaspora in Britain, the nation-state continues to be important because, as Sita/Ferret shows, it is the basis for coming to terms with the conflicted histories of her background in both cultural and economic terms. On the other hand, the importance of Sita/Ferret reconciling the Indian and British dimensions of her identity also challenges Marxist accounts of globalisation. If Randhawa coins the term 'Englistan' to capture this new formulation of Britishness then, unlike *My Beautiful Laundrette*, there is no evidence in *The Coral Strand* that indicates this identity is legitimated through allusions to American global power. Thus, the specificity of the use of 'Englistan' in the novel suggests that Marxist critics, such as Brennan, overlook how 'mixed' identities and 'immigrant narratives' are not only an outcome of American global power, but also an important way of Britain acknowledging its colonial past and multi-ethnic present. [332]

Pop Goes the Nation: Imagining the Postnational in Salman Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her Feet.*

To a far greater extent than the fictional texts discussed thus far, Salman Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (*GBF*) responds most enthusiastically to the destabilising effects of globalisation upon traditional conceptions of national identity. The novel embraces the idea that 'instability is the modern condition,' [333] which it advances by showing the world to be subject to incessant shocks and transformations, symbolised by the extended metaphor of earthquakes. [334] One possible outcome of this instability that Rushdie takes seriously in *GBF* is that globalisation is the harbinger of new postnational forms of culture and identity. This possibility is not only a central theme of the novel but also influences its form significantly. Thus the East-West sweep of the novel, its multifarious cultural allusions, use of mythology and sustained engagement with pop music attempts to construct a narrative able to represent identities that transcend national categories. However in so doing, the novel repeatedly conflates

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the possibility of postnationalism with an American model of national identity, supporting Marxist claims of globalisation as a process of Americanisation.

The opening scenes of *GBF* illustrate the ambition of the novel to imagine new identities that go beyond *The Satanic Verses'* reformulation of British and Indian national identities. Following *The Satanic Verses*, *GBF* begins with its protagonists travelling by air. In the case of *The Satanic Verses,* Gillian Gane notes that the significance of air-space is because of its propensity to turn

> upside down traditional perceptions of humans as earthbound, with fixed identities rooted in "solid ground" and in the particular territory of "home"; paradoxically, people's roots are in *dreams* and *clouds*, and—prefiguring a central theme of the novel—people are "*reborn In flight.*"[335]

Gane goes on to comment that the image of falling is a familiar trope in Rushdie's fiction, used to describe the rebirth of the migrant and the process of renegotiating identity in a new country. Therefore if air travel in *The Satanic Verses* de-links the migrant's subjectivity from a particular territory, then the trope of falling represents the migrant's act of reterritorialisation. In other words, when Saladin and Gibreel fall from the air as migrants in Britain they attempt to reconnect their sense of self to the new country that they have landed in. For Saladin this results in an attempt to assimilate into British cultural identity while for Gibreel, by way of contrast, it involves an attempt to impose South Asian identity upon Britain, to "tropicalise" London. [336] In the opening of *GBF* however, Vina, the protagonist, and Rai, the narrator, do not fall to earth but simply circle above it speaking in English, Spanish and 'Bombay's garbage argot' of 'Hindi Urdu Gujarati Marathi English.'[337] The effect of this image is quite different to the sort of migrant rebirth that Gane identifies in *The Satanic Verses*, because the dialectical act of reterritorialisation is absent. Hence, Vina and Rai's circling above Mexico in a helicopter implies a complete disconnect between territory and identity, bringing the idea of a 'pre-arranged itinerary' - the very concept of a destination - into question.[338] In this respect it is an image that foreshadows a central theme of the novel, in which air-space does not so much represent the act of migrant rebirth, but rather symbolises the possibility that identities have been more enduringly decoupled from geographic territories.

While these opening scenes of the novel represent some of the most pronounced images of the decoupling of identity and territory, there are numerous other instances in which Rushdie draws attention to the deterritorialising effects of globalisation. For example, like *My Beautiful Laundrette* and *The Coral Strand*, *GBF* also finds global capitalism to challenge national identities. In particular, the Indian record mogul, Yul Singh, at first appears to epitomise a more extravagant version of Kureishi's global jet-setting businessmen as the following passage suggests:

> Yul Singh's trans- and inter-continental movements make him a hard man to pin down. He owns a Napa Valley winery, a secret Arizona hideaway ranch, a Caribbean island and great stashes of classical period sculptures in bank vaults in, allegedly, Toronto, Boston and Savannah. It is said he visits these vaults alone, at night, to fondle his winged marble Nikes and full-breasted Aphrodites in subterranean chambers with two-foot-thick walls of steel. He has mistresses and protégés, schemes and assignations, and always plays the cards close to his chest. He also owns cows. Sixty-six million dollars' worth of Holstein dairy cattle, a sizable portion of the entire Massachusetts herd. Cows are sacred, mystic, he tells people when they ask why. Also, business is doubleplus good. [339]

For much of the novel Yul is seen as 'the ultimate cosmopolitan' who, like the international group of businessmen in *My Beautiful Laundrette,* places little importance on national identities. However, toward the end of the novel he is revealed to be 'one of the financial mainstays of the terrorist fringe of the Sikh nationalist movement.' [340] This revelation shows that the embrace of global capitalism does not inevitably lead to the disavowal of nationalism in favour of global business culture. Rather, his character highlights the sort of contradictory responses that globalisation often produces, in which global capitalism and ethnic nationalism make strange bedfellows. Yet as paradoxical as Yul Singh's response to global capitalism may seem, what is important for the purpose of this discussion is that it illuminates how the global flow of capital undermines the power of the state to define identity. Consequently, the vast wealth that Yul Singh accumulates through his global business interests enables him to challenge the legitimacy of the Indian nation-state from outside its borders. Sikh nationalism is fuelled, therefore, by Singh as a

non-state actor through the sort of complex interchange of *financescapes* and *ethnoscapes* that Appadurai argues to characterise globalisation.

Far more central to the novel however, is an exploration of the ways in which pop music represents a new form of cultural production that transcends national categories and challenges traditional conceptions of national identity. Certainly there is considerable evidence in the novel that corroborates John Tomlinson's claim that global youth culture 'pay[s] little heed to the exclusivity of national or ethnic divisions,' and might therefore be the harbinger of postnational identities. [341] In particular, Vina is the poster child of postnationalism because of her role as a pop icon, her complex ethnic and national background and self-conscious disavowal of any fixed boundaries of identity. Hence, Vina is described as someone that

> embraced instability, her own and the world's and made up her own rules as she went along. Nothing was certain in her vicinity any more, the ground was always trembling, and of course the fault lines spread through her from top to toe, and faults in human beings always open up in the end, like cracks in the groaning earth.[342]

The fault lines that cut across Vina's body in this passage represent the fundamentally unstable nature of identity that her character embodies. But they also naturalise Vina's approach to identity by associating it with the earth that, like Vina, refuses to adhere to national boundaries. Vina is the embodiment, therefore, of the idea advanced in the novel that 'the maps are wrong. Frontiers snake across disputed territory, bending and cracking.'[343] This representation of the earth is quite different from the role that the earth plays in the dialectical act of reterritorialisation in *The Satanic Verses*. If in *The Satanic Verses* the '"solid earth"' provides the counterpoint to instability of air-space, then *GBF* representation of the earth as 'always trembling' destabilises this earlier distinction between air and earth. Hence in *GBF*, the earth is shown to be as unstable as the air, challenging its substantive qualities within traditional conceptions of the four elements, and providing a vivid metaphor for conceiving of culture as Appadurai's formulation of *cultural*. Such destabilisation means that it is not only the act of migration – of moving through the air – that transforms identity, but that the instability of identity is now a generalised condition.

The most pronounced way that *GBF* shows this instability to challenge traditional national identities is through its representation of 'the Vina phenomenon.'[344] The 'Vina phenomenon' results from Vina's death in 1989 and provides an acute example of the sorts of global 'imaginary' spaces that Appadurai argues destabilise traditional conceptions of national identity. Of this Rushdie writes:

> All over the world, when the news of her death breaks, people pour into the streets, whatever their local hour, pushed out of their homes by a force they can't yet name. It's not the news of the earthquake that galvanises them, not the myriad Mexican dead they're mourning, it's just her. It's hard to mourn for strangers except conventionally, routinely; the true mourners of the hundred thousand casualties are themselves among the dead. But Vina is not a stranger. The crowds know her, and over and over again, in the streets of Yokohama, Darwin, Montevideo, Calcutta, Stockholm, Newcastle, Los Angeles, people are heard describing her death as a personal bereavement, a death in the family. By her dying she has momentarily re-invented their sense of a larger kinship, of their membership in the family of mankind. [345]

And shortly after:

> in death she [Vina] has indeed transcended all frontiers: of race, skin, religion, language, history, nation, class. In some countries there are generals and clerics who, alarmed by the Vina phenomenon, by its otherness and globality, seek to shut it down, issuing commands and threats. These prove useless. Inspissated women sexually segregated societies cast off their veils, the soldiers of oppression lay down their guns, the members of racially disadvantaged peoples burst out from their ghettos, their slums, the rusty iron curtain in torn down. [346]

There are a number of points that need to be made about these passages and the new experiences that they signify globalisation enables. The first is that it shows the world is now connected through global communications networks so that people from Yokohama to Los Angeles can experience a single event 'whatever their local hour.' [347] This singular global experience collapses the perception of spatial and temporal barriers – an experience that Rushdie's prose attempts to capture by cramming numerous global locations into a single sentence. Second, the experience of this event is dependent upon Vina's universal appeal as a pop icon that transcends cultural, national or religious backgrounds. In this respect, Vina's image embodies the idea that globalisation produces

new forms of culture that transgress national categories and are universal in appeal. And finally, although threatened by the 'globality' of the 'Vina phenomenon,' the nation-state is unable to 'shut it down,' because it is the outcome of spontaneous and chaotic flows of information. Indeed, Rushdie shows the 'Vina phenomenon' to be an event that eschews intervention by the state, because 'the gathered crowds have no interest' in the official government 'reaction of the high and mighty.' [348]

The challenges that the aspects of the 'Vina phenomenon' outlined above represent to traditional national identities are twofold. On the one hand, the 'Vina phenomenon' leads people to refute identities grounded in ideas of 'race, skin, religion, language, history, nation, class,' and to identify with 'their sense of a larger kinship, of their membership in the family of mankind.' [349] In this respect, Rushdie signals how a densely interconnected world enables the possibility of "global" experiences ('in all the world, or so it seems, there is only this single, uniting event') that promote a sense of global consciousness – of being part of 'mankind.'[350] This aspect of the 'Vina phenomenon' supports Tomlinson hypothesis that one possible outcome of globalisation is the promotion of a cosmopolitan world-view, 'free from national prejudices and limitations.'[351] Consequently, the nation-state must work against these new forms of global consciousness that galvanise the world and foster a sense of allegiance to mankind, rather than to a particular nation or group.

On the other hand, the 'Vina phenomenon' offers an acute example of how globalisation deterritorialises culture. Thus, it represents an experience that has no connection to a specific territory but rather 'surges round the world, crossing all frontiers, belonging everywhere and nowhere.' [352] In contrast to national identities, which are by definition produced through narratives that connect identity to specific territories, the 'Vina phenomenon' undermines the "natural" relation of culture to geographic and social territories precisely because it belongs 'everyway and nowhere.' [353] Following Tomlinson's work, Rushdie shows that this does not alienate audiences, or make them feel themselves to be victims of cultural imperialism. On the contrary, Rushdie's remarks that people around the world respond to Vina's death 'as a personal bereavement, a death in the family.' [354] The strong emotional bond that Vina is able to produce in people reveals the extent to which people now identify with cultural images that bear no relation

to their local environments. This representation of deterritorialisation represents a significant challenge to traditional national identities because, as we have previously seen in *My Beautiful Launderette* and *The Coral Strand*, localities play an important role in connecting people's everyday lives to broader narratives of national identity.

As Anshuman Mondal points out in his reading of *GBF*, the possibilities of postnational identification that the 'Vina phenomenon' represents are best understood as a 'species of cosmopolitanism that, in contrast to Rushdie's earlier 'affiliation with postcolonial theories of transnationalism and diaspora,' reflects the adoption of a more philosophical register.[355] Despite the enthusiasm with which Rushdie describes the 'Vina phenomenon' and the cosmopolitan possibilities of identification that it offers, there is evidence in the novel that reveals the shortcomings of this approach in an age of globalisation. In particular, Rushdie's celebration of the cosmopolitan possibilities of globalisation must be balanced against the more sobering political influences that nation-states continue to exert. For example, despite the eventual wealth and fame of Ormus in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* his status as an Indian national means that 'he gets the Immigration and Naturalisation Service' by the American government.[356] The legal battle against deportation that Ormus must subsequently fight provides a reminder of the continued power of the state to control the movement of people across national borders that Wallerstein identifies. In this respect, Ormus' embattled relationship with the American government represents a significant challenge to the idealised representations of New York as a cosmopolitan space that Vina's following remarks exemplify:

> 'However you get through your day in New York City, well then that's a New York kind of day, and if you're a Bombay singer singing the Bombay bop or a voodoo cab driver with zombies on the brain or a bomber from Montana or an Islamist beardo from Queens, the whatever's going through your head?, well that's a New York State of mind. [357]

Ormus' deportation order brings to light the extent to which such enthusiasm for New York is predicated upon Vina's status as a U.S. citizen and that New York City is not simply a 'state of mind,' but an actual space subject to the control of the US government.[358]

More importantly, if Vina's valorisation of New York City as a cosmopolitan space is undercut by recognition of her American citizenship, then her role as a global cultural icon is also brought into question for reasons that Marxist critics such as Brennan identify. Specifically, Brennan's work questions the idea advanced in the novel that just 'as England can no longer lay exclusive claim to the English language, so America is no longer the sole owner of rock 'n' roll.'[359] This claim is vital to novel's representation of rock music as an emergent postnational cultural form and, therefore, to establishing the 'Vina phenomenon' as a de-centred global event, predicated upon the spontaneous individual responses of people around the world to Vina's death and her music. After all, if Vina and the music she produces with Ormus are seen as evidence of American cultural imperialism, then the 'globality' of the 'Vina phenomenon' is entirely undercut. Consequently, Rushdie articulates at length not only how Ormus and Vina's complex backgrounds warrant their status as global pop icons, but also how their music is 'un-American.' [360]

A good example of the novel's attempt to characterise 'rock 'n roll' as a global rather than American form of culture is Rushdie's description of Vina and Ormus' (V.T.O.) seminal album, 'Quakershaker.' Of this Rushdie writes:

> America which by losing certitude has newly opened itself to the external world responds to the un-American sounds Ormus adds to his tracks: the sexiness of the Cuban horns, the mind-bending patterns of the Brazilian drums, the Chilean woodwinds moaning like the winds of oppression, the African male voice choruses like tree's swaying in freedom's breeze, the grand old ladies of Algerian music with their yearning squawks and ululations, the holy passion of the Pakistani *qawwals*.[361]

Despite Rushdie's claim that the album is 'un-American,' its appropriation of various global music traditions is ultimately dependent upon American production, distribution, and an American audience to achieve its "global" status. Consequently, the "global" aspects of the album, such as 'the Cuban horns' and 'Pakistani *qawwals*,' are lifted out of their traditional cultural contexts and re-packaged for the consumption of 'young Americans, in search of new frontiers.'[362] This means that the idea of "global" culture is exclusively defined through the English language (in its Americanized form that is

mimicked in the diction of the novel), and mediated through American musical contexts with a few notable British exceptions.[363] Hence, simply because the 'Quakershaker' album is influenced by a range of musical traditions does not mean it represents an egalitarian, "global" musical conversation. Rather, it exposes how the ostensibly "global" sound of the album does not take place in a neutral space of cultural exchange, but must first pass through America in order to be "mixed." In this respect the novel supports Brennan's work by illustrating how America acts as the final arbiter in defining the criteria of what constitutes "global" culture.

The process of (re) inscribing America at the epicenter of an emergent global culture is further supported by the plot of *GBF*. Vina and Ormus do not achieve worldwide fame and become "global" celebrities in the novel until they both move to America and produce music that is commercially successful there. Consequently, America's functions as a gatekeeper in the narrative through which Vina and Ormus must pass in order to achieve their status as "world" stars. This means that the narrative trajectory of the novel is decidedly more linear than complex plot of *The Satanic Verses*, which continually shifts between East and West and suggests a more symbiotic process of cultural exchange. In *GBF*, however, the linear plot of the novel undercuts the idea of globalisation as a de-centered process because America appears a 'hot pot' in which global flows of culture converge and are then be exported back out into the world. [364]

In contrast to the possibilities of global consciousness that the novel celebrates in representing the 'Vina phenomena,' recognizing America to be at the centre of global cultural production reveals a different and contradictory effect of globalisation on national identities in the novel. This second effect signifies an ambivalent relationship to the theoretical paradigms considered in this chapter because it questions Tomlinson's claims that emergent forms of global popular culture ''pay little heed to the exclusivity of national or ethnic divisions.' [365] At the same time, however, it does not suggest American-centred global popular results in cultural homogenisation that destroys traditional national cultures and results in oversimplified Americanisation. Therefore, on the one hand, Rushdie's attempt to establish V.T.O.'s music as 'un-American' is predicated upon national categories. This means that the 'Pakistani *qawwals,*' Cuban horns and Brazilian drums are crucial to Rushdie articulating the cosmopolitanism of the

'Quakershaker' album. Traditional conceptions of national culture, in this sense, are both integral to the novel's refutation of American cultural imperialism and to Rushdie's articulation of the newness of the album's sound. Rather than erode traditional conceptions of national identity then, American-led globalisation would only seem to reify traditional national categories, because they are crucial to inventing new forms of globalised culture in the marketplace.

On the other hand, the 'Quakershaker' album reveals a particular way in which the novel negotiates national difference. Thus, Ormus and Vina's music borrows from national traditions and mixes them together to produce a single album. This process of cultural mixing is the metaphor of globalism that Brennan objects to strongly because it reinforces American global hegemony. It does so by advancing a narrative of globalisation as cultural fusion that connects Cuban, Chilean, Brazilian, and Pakistani cultures in a single "global" sound. The sort of global or cosmopolitan culture that the 'Quakershaker' albums represents, therefore, is one that undermines the idea of national autonomy and reinforces a narrative of global interdependency in an American-centred world. Moreover, the album's valorisation of cultural mixing, from Brenan's perspective, posits America as the prototypical national identity in a globalised world, because 'intercultural products of the American crucible are seen as a source of American strength.'[366] In this respect, far from being 'un-American' as a result of its diverse cultural influences, the 'Quakershaker' album exemplifies an American model of national identity by celebrating the central motifs of American identity.

In contrast to the 'Vina phenomenon' then, the Quakershaker album shows how culture does not incessantly move around the world in a state of chaotic flux, but is dependent upon centres of production that record, publish, market and distribute cultural products. Such centres of production are located in actual spaces (centred in America), and provide an important qualification to the images that open the novel, in which culture and identity appear delinked from territories. Indeed, despite Rushdie's claim that 'instability is the modern condition,' as well as his enthusiasm for the new cosmopolitan possibilities that globalisation enables, the principal metaphors that the novel uses to represent this world-view are all temporary in nature. Thus, Vina's helicopter must land at some point, earthquakes do not last indefinitely and the 'Vina phenomenon' passes.

Conversely, the ability of the American government to control the movement of people across its borders, the privilege of America as a site of global production and of economic wealth all persist at the end novel. What this suggests is that the world is not as unstable as both Rushdie and Appadurai claim and that the nation-state continues to be a very real category in shaping how people experience their everyday lives, despite certain destabilising effects of globalisation.

Conclusion

The three writers discussed in this chapter provide mixed and contradictory support for aspects of the debate about national identity and globalisation identified in the first section of this chapter. All three texts respond favourably to Appadurai's model of globalisation with respect to its propensity to destabilise naturalised connections between culture and ethnicity and national territories. Hence, the challenge that globalisation represents to the ethno-nationalist identities of Genghis in *My Beautiful Laundrette*, Emily in *The Coral Strand* and various white British and American characters in *GBF* is cast in a positive light. Beyond this, however, the destabilising influence upon traditional conceptions of national identity is uneven. Of the texts, *GBF* undoubtedly responds most favourably to Appadurai's model of globalisation. In particular, the novel enthusiastically embraces the idea of a world interconnected through global communication networks as a postnational imaginary space. Rushdie's representation of the 'Vina Phenomenon' both corroborates Appadurai's claims that the nation-state can no longer control the flow of culture and ideas across its borders, but also extends it by imagining how this can lead to new forms of global consciousness. The novel finds global popular culture to be crucial to such new global experiences because it provides icons and cultural forms that are universal in their appeal and are able to galvanise the world in unprecedented ways. In this respect, Rushdie advances a narrative of globalisation as cosmopolitanism, because it reveals how global popular culture can lead to people to identify with 'their sense of a larger kinship, of their membership in the family of mankind.' [367] Hence, the novel supports Tomlinson's hypothesises that one possible outcome of globalisation is a world

in which new global forms of solidarity render national divisions obsolete, or at the very least, diminishes their importance.

The response of *My Beautiful Laundrette* and *The Coral Strand* to the destabilising effects of globalisation upon national identities is decidedly more muted than *GBF*. While neither text engages to any significant extent with global popular culture, both explore the effects of economic globalisation on British national identity in different ways. In *My Beautiful Laundrette,* the influence of global business culture is shown to powerfully undermine traditional (mono) cultural narratives of Britishness. While *The Coral Strand* shows how diasporic cultural markets de-link national identities from the nation-state and produce versions of national identities beyond the borders of the nation-state. In this respect, both texts corroborate Appadurai's claim that economic globalisation undermines the power of the nation-state to define national identities.

However, despite these challenges to traditional conceptions of national identities, all three texts also reveal the continued importance of the nation-state to people lives. Thus, the nation-state continues to control the movement of people across its borders as Ormus' experiences in America highlight, and remains the principal political form of governance as Sita/Ferret reminds us. In this respect, both texts corroborate Wallerstein's work by showing that until a form of governance emerges that replaces it the nation-state will continue to have an important influence upon identities. Beyond this, *My Beautiful Laundrette* and *The Coral Strand* also provide an important qualification to the theoretical works considered in this chapter by articulating a desire in their British-Asian protagonists to identify with their local environments. This desire exposes an important way that national identity resists the deterritorialising effects of globalisation, because narratives of national identity are shown to be an important aspect of "being at home" for these characters. Hence, the notion that the postnational identities that Appadurai posits can provide satisfying narratives of belonging that connect individual lives to their local environments is refuted in both texts

The continued importance of the nation-state both as a political and economic reality, as well as a way of providing narratives of "home," means that traditional national identities are transformed by globalisation in these texts but not made obsolete as Appadurai contends. The transformed national identities that Rushdie, Kureishi and

Randhawa offer in response to globalisation vary considerably. *GBF* represents the clearest corroboration of Marxist accounts of the effects of globalisation upon national identities, because the novel conflates the possibility of new cosmopolitan global cultures and identities with an American model of national identity. This conflation does not result in an oversimplified process of Americanisation, but rather represents America as the gatekeeper of global flows of culture and valorises America as prototypical of national identities in a globalised world. In particular, Rushdie's celebration of Ormus and Vina's music as a crucible of the world's musical traditions provides the sort of vivid metaphor of globalism that Brennan objects to, because it posits an interconnected American-centred world and denies the idea of national autonomy.

The imprint of an American influence upon the new conception of Britishness is also evident in *My Beautiful Laundrette*. Yet, *My Beautiful Laundrette* provides qualification to both Rushdie's uncritical celebration of America as a global melting pot, as well as Brennan's antipathy to it. Kureishi shows that in contrast to Genghis' racist nationalism, the American businessman O'Donnell endorses a more flexible approach to British national identity that Omar and Johnny represent. This new conception of Britishness embraces multiethnic relationships, South Asian entrepreneurship, and does not preclude the everyday sense of British particularity that the novel celebrates in its South London setting. Consequently, from the perspective of the South Asian diaspora in Britain, one of the advantages of an American model of national identity is that it offers recourse to chauvinistic narratives of Britishness based on parochial pride that exclude non-white citizens.

Finally, in contrast to *GBF* and *My Beautiful Laundrette*, *The Coral Strand* shows no evidence of American influence, but rather demonstrates how a transnational re-imagining of British national identity is crucial to Britain addressing its colonial past. In this respect, the novel reveals that one of the shortcomings of Appadurai's view of globalisation is that it does not account for the colonial flows of capital that were instrumental in developing Britain as a nation state. From Randhawa's perspective, the nation state continues to be important because, as Sita/Ferret shows, it provides the basis for British-Asians coming to terms with the conflicted histories of their backgrounds in cultural and material terms. Randhawa's use of the term 'Englistan' indicates that

'mixed' identities and 'immigrant narratives' are not only a part of American model of national identity, but also an important way of countries like Britain acknowledging their colonial history and multi-ethnic present.[368] Taken together, these three very different 'mixed' national identities that Kureishi, Randhawa and Rushdie represent in their respective texts, reveal that multicultural and multiethnic re-imaginings of national identities are not monolithic in South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain. Hence, this chapter's findings caution against both the uncritical celebration of 'hybridity' that Ania Loomba identifies in certain postcolonial theories,[369] as well as the oversimplified connections between American-led globalisation and multiethnic, multicultural national identities that some Marxist critics have made in reading South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain.[370]

Chapter 3

The New Ummah: Negotiating Muslim Identities in Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*, Hanif Kureishi's *The Black Album*, and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*.

> 'No single episode captures these realities [of globalisation] more than the now mind numbing Salman Rushdie affair, involving a banned book, a religiously mandated death sentence, and an author committed to personal voice and aesthetic freedom.' – Arjun Appadurai [371]

Introduction

This chapter explores how fictional accounts of Muslim identity respond to the exigencies placed upon Islam today by globalisation. Toward this objective, the chapter compares Salman Rushdie's widely discussed novel, *The Satanic Verses*, with two more recent accounts of Muslim identity by Hanif Kureishi and Monica Ali. I am particularly interested in a central theme that these texts raise. Namely, why Islam continues to be attractive to diasporic subjectivity outside of traditional, territorially based Islamic societies, and why this appeal has not diminished amongst second and third generation British-Asians. In addressing this theme, the chapter asks a number of central questions: How is Muslim identity produced amongst members of the South Asian diaspora born outside of traditional Islamic societies? Why does a desire to identify with Islam persist in an increasingly secular British society? And in particular, what is the role of globalisation in facilitating and/or undermining these processes?

I begin the chapter by scaffolding discussion of the novels within two theoretical explanations of effects of globalisation on Muslim identity. The first, grounded in a centre-periphery model of globalisation, argues that globalisation is a process through which the West subordinates Muslim societies. This perspective emphasises the cultural and epistemological effects of Western dominance and, in particular, the universalisation of a secular, westernised worldview. Consequently, from the perspective of Ziauddin Sardar and Akbar Ahmed, globalisation signals a new phase of western imperialism that refuses to respect Islamic boundaries and erodes traditional Muslim identities. In contrast, the second theoretical response regards globalisation as a de-centred process that partly

strengthens and rearticulates, rather than erodes, Muslim identities. Hence, for critics such as Oliver Roy and Bobby Sayyid, globalisation has enabled an unprecedented articulation of the global Muslim community - the Ummah - in recent years.

Two Theoretical Explanations of the Effects of Globalisation on Muslim Identity

Numerous Muslim commentators have drawn upon selective aspects of centre-periphery theories of globalisation to argue that the process of globalisation conflicts with Muslim identities. Unlike Marxist critics, however, for Muslim scholars such as Akbar Ahmed and Ziauddin Sardar, globalisation is not conceived in terms of the class struggle but rather as a struggle of cultures, or even a 'Clash of Civilizations' as Samuel Huntington has famously put it.[372] While Sardar, in particular, disagrees with aspects of Huntington's analysis, both he and Ahmed share Huntington's conception of Muslim identity principally in terms of cultural tradition.[373] Understanding Muslim identity in this way necessitates a model of conflict between globalisation and Muslim identity for a number of important reasons. First, on the broadest level, it suggests an incompatibility between the social construction of Muslim identity and the types of identities that globalisation produces. This is because tradition is a 'model of compulsion' operating through 'accepted meanings voiced by authoritative speakers, on certainty and closure and on the elimination of alternatives.'[374] Thus, the production of traditional Islamic identities depends upon relatively closed societies in which face-to-face communication and localised cultural contexts predominate. As a result, globalisation threatens traditional Muslim identities because it brings awareness to a plurality of truths that are decontextualised and abstract, and which disrupt the continuity of traditional cultures. Put simply, globalisation leads to a new space of identity formation in which different truth claims compete against each other to shape identities.

Second, both Sardar and Ahmed argue that if globalisation erodes cultural tradition in general, then it also advances a Western worldview, resulting in what Ahmed calls the cultural 'triumph of the West.'[375]. In this respect, Ahmed's analysis of the global media parallels Marxist critics such as Herbert Schiller who regard globalisation as a

process of westernisation.[376] For Ahmed, such Western cultural dominance means that Muslims are either misrepresented or excluded from participation in an emergent media-based global culture. Moreover, the extent to which the world is now integrated through global media networks means that 'whereas a century ago Muslims could retreat so as to maintain the integrity of their lives, their areas are now penetrated; technological advances have made escape impossible'.[377] From this perspective, the pervasiveness of global media networks erodes the geographic boundaries that have historically ensured Islamic autonomy from Western influence and enabled the continuance of Islamic tradition. [378]

More specifically, what Ahmed and Sardar find so threatening about the incursion of the global media into Islamic societies is bound to their understanding of it as the harbinger of 'postmodern' social reality.[379] For both theorists, this new 'postmodern' social reality is particularly erosive to Muslim identity, because it denies the idea of cultural authenticity that defines Islamic cultural tradition and identity.[380] In particular, Sardar is highly critical of postmodernism's appropriation of non-western identities and cultures that strips them of their voice and meaningful representation. Consequently, Sardar finds an underlying homogeneity in the seeming plurality of global culture because it co-opts world cultures into a cultural marketplace, primarily for consumption by a Western audience. [381]

According to Sardar, this process of cultural co-option is particularly problematic for Muslims because, on an ideological level, the globalisation of postmodern culture promotes the allure of western lifestyles and ideas of 'freedom'.[382] In contrast to an Islamic worldview, such commodified images of freedom are better described as 'libertarian individualism, every individual's potential for fulfilment, the pursuit of endless consumption, withdrawal of all collective, communal and social responsibility.'[383] They are in short, 'a synonym for license' and are antithetical to ethical codes of Islam, as well as the sense of collectivism inherent to Muslim identity.[384] On another level, the result of transforming 'all cultures into ahistorical, liberal, free markets'[385] represents global 'epistemological imperialism,' because postmodern culture precludes the articulation of a religious worldview as Sardar conceives of it. [386] This represents a problem to the existence of a genuinely plural world because if global

pluralism is to legitimately exist then, from an Islamic perspective, allowing religious worldviews to have a meaningful voice is essential. Consequently, Sardar argues that rather than seek representation within global postmodern culture, Muslims should forge a path of self-determination, grounded in an Islamic worldview, even if this conflicts or indeed is incompatible with Western-led globalisation.

Significantly, Sardar draws upon the work of Marxist literary critics to argue that the contemporary novel plays an important role in advancing the globalisation of postmodern culture and the liberal, secular worldview that is inherent to it. For example, following Timothy Brennan, Sardar highlights the role that multinational corporations play as the gatekeepers of 'Third World cosmopolitan' fiction.[387] Like Brennan, Sardar argues that an important effect of the global publishing industry is the reconstruction of non-western identities by writers such as Rushdie and Marquez for a western audience.[388] Similarly, Sardar finds in the seeming plurality of postmodern fiction an underlying ideology of bourgeois liberalism and free market capitalism. Unlike Brennan, however, Sardar concludes that novels like *The Satanic Verses* represent 'one of the most powerful instruments for the colonisation of the imagination.'[389] In particular Sardar singles out Rushdie's magic realist narrative technique as a literary form that appears to give voice to the Other but, upon closer inspection, only does so in a way that makes the Other comprehensible to a Western , secular audience. In short, magic realism marks 'the death of the Other,' because it does not allow the articulation of Muslim identity from an alternative epistemological centre and, in fact, undermines the idea that any such alternative standpoint exists.

Finally, if the globalisation of postmodern culture universalises a western worldview, then both Sardar and Ahmed argue that this has very real effects upon the world and Muslim societies in particular. For these theorists, the process of cultural westernisation is seen as integral to legitimating and justifying various forms of western intervention in Islamic societies. In particular, and following Marxist critics like Wallerstein, both Sardar and Ahmed regard globalisation as an extension of European colonialism that ensures western global dominance through the discourse of universality. The comments of Paul Wolfowitz exemplify how this discourse has been used in recent

years to justify Western intervention in the 'Muslim world.'[390] For instance, in defending the American-led "War against Terror," Wolfowitz claims:

> To win the war against terrorism and help share a more peaceful world, we must speak to the hundreds of millions of moderate and tolerant people in the Muslim world, regardless of where they live, who aspire to enjoy the blessings of freedom and democracy and free enterprise. These values are sometimes described as "Western Values", but, in fact, we see them in Asia and elsewhere because they are universal values borne of a common human aspiration. [391]

Yet for Sardar, appeals to universalism such as Wolfowitz's are simply a strategy for reinforcing western global dominance. Muslims or Islamic societies that reject being defined within this worldview are seen as problematic, thereby legitimating western intervention on the grounds of upholding 'the universal values borne of a common human aspiration.'[392]

Sardar argues that discourses of universality are not only used to justify political and military intervention in Muslim societies, but also more subtle interventions. In particular, Sardar finds the increasing importance of NGOs in Islamic countries to promote westernisation in the guise of charitable and humanitarian projects. Sardar characterises the effects of NGOs on Muslim societies in the following way:

> "Humanitarian work", "charitable work", "developmental assistance" and "disaster relief" are all smokescreens for the real motifs behind NGO presence in the south: self-aggrandisement, promotion of western values and culture, including conversion to Christianity, inducing dependency, demonstrating the helplessness of those they are supposedly helping and promoting what has been aptly described as "disaster pornography". [393]

The most egregious effects of NGOs upon Muslim identity outlined here are exemplified in the 16,000 foreign aid and charity organisations in Bangladesh.[394] Sardar notes that in Bangladesh fifty-two NGOs are explicitly Christian organisations and that Christianity is compulsory in most NGO schools because they are not funded by the state and, therefore, are not answerable to governmental control. A more subtle way that this reconstituted colonial missionary project is evident is through 'NGO monopoly on communication, transport, jobs', as well as the 'moral high ground' that silences local oppositional

voices.[395] For Sardar, the effect of this influence has been to create a 'new class amongst the indigenous people', who work for NGOs in relatively privileged positions, and as a result, are far more likely to adopt the westernised values and identities that NGOs represent, including the adoption of Christianity. In this respect, Sardar argues that NGOs are indicative of a wider western presence in Islamic countries (including multinational corporations) that challenge the authority of traditional Islamic institutions because of the financial influence they exert.

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In contrast to the previous theoretical paradigm, both Oliver Roy and Bobby Sayyid do not conceive of Muslim identity in terms of inherited cultural tradition, but rather through sociological and political frameworks respectively. Islam, within Roy's formulation, is seen as a deterritorialised imaginative space, defined by new interpretations of Islamic law. According to Roy, second-and-third-generation diasporic Muslims in the West have played an important role in this transformation of Muslim identity. Roy argues that while for first-generation diasporic Muslims Islam is primarily a link to a traditional cultural homeland, a 'pristine culture,' for subsequent generations it represents a way of identifying with a global Muslim community.[396] Thus, recent years have witnessed the emergence of neo-fundamentalist Muslim identities that are not 'based on territory or culture.'[397] As Roy puts it:

> the quest for authenticity is no longer a quest to maintain a pristine identity, but to go back beyond this pristine identity through an ahistorical model of Islam. It [neofundamentalist Islam] is not a matter of nostalgia for a given country, for one's youth or for one's family roots. [398]

Neofundamentalist Muslim identities then, reject the particularisation of a homeland culture as much as they do western culture 'and can therefore fit with every culture, or, more precisely, could be defined beyond the very notion of culture.' [399]

Similarly, Sayyid rejects conceiving of Muslim identity in terms of inherited cultural tradition and instead emphases how globalisation facilitates Islamic universalism. For Sayyid this means rethinking Islam as a master signifier in order to avoid both the

essentialism implicit in Orientalism, and the politically disabling consequences of anti-Orientalism. Of this Sayyid writes:

> In Orientalism we encounter a reduction of the parts to the whole (local phenomena are explained by reference to the essence of Islam), while in anti-Orientalism there is a reduction of the whole to its constituent parts (Islam is disseminated in local events). The space left vacant by the dissolution of Islam as a serious concept is occupied by a series of 'little Islam's' (that is local articulations of Islamic practices). [400]

Therefore, while Sayyid acknowledges that Muslims around the world are heterogeneous, he argues that what unites them is not cultural homogeneity, but rather an insistence that Islam is 'the point to which all other discourses must refer.'[401] Thus, the 'Muslim slogan, "Islam is the solution"'[402] provides a succinct summary of how Islamism refuses to centre itself in western discourse. For Sayyid, it is this refusal to submit to a western episteme that makes Islamism so disruptive to the geopolitical order: Islamism rejects defining itself within western discourse and the hierarchies of identity that Sayyid maintains are implicit to such a discourse.[403] Consequently, what distinguishes Islamism from Roy's conception of 'neofundamentalism,' is that Islamism is a coherent political framework that advances a legitimate alternative world order to that conceived by the West,

There are a number of ways that Roy and Sayyid argue globalisation facilitates their conceptions of Muslim identity. First, Roy maintains that within the globalisation process, Muslim identity is 'no longer based on territory or culture,' but is rather a global imaginative space in which faith, rather than culture defines Muslim identity. [404] This promotes neofundamentalism by acculturating and objectifying Islam and de-linking Muslim identity from specific territories.[405] Consequently, according to Roy, globalisation has led to Muslims affirming their identities through personal faith and adherence to a universal understanding of Islamic law, rather than by inheriting a Muslim identity through culture and tradition. [406] A significant implication of this, contra to Sardar and Ahmed's view of globalisation as a secularising process, is that the deculturation of Islam promotes religious belief. Thus, while globalisation is a secularising process insofar as it sanctions a western model of democracy that separates church from state, this does not necessarily result in the secularisation of individual

belief. Rather, the de-linking of Islam from the state leads to a crisis of religious authority, resulting in the proliferation of various religious sects and schools.[407] In this respect, the separation of Islam from the state is analogous to economic deregulation, because it decentralises Islam and, therefore, enables a range of new institutions to interpret theology and define Muslim identity.

Second, the effect of de-linking Islam from the state is a transformation of how Muslim identity is now produced and conceived: a shift that has led to individual religious belief taking precedence over social tradition. Roy calls this transformation of Muslim identity 'the triumph of the religious self' and argues that it has led to Muslim youth no longer being satisfied with the religious identities of their parents. [408] Instead, for this new generation of Muslims, 'faith and authenticity' are prized over culture, 'academic knowledge or scholarly training:'[409] a shift that Roy describes as one from religion to 'religiosity.' [410] This emphasis upon individual faith goes hand in hand with the propagation of charismatic leaders such as Mullah Omar and Abu Hamza who, as Roy points out, stress new forms of belief, codes of behaviour, and religious experience, over classical approaches to Islamic theology. Significantly, Roy finds global communication networks to play a vital role in promoting these sorts of Islamic leaders, because it provides them a platform to communicate with a new generation of technologically proficient Muslims. In particular, Roy finds the Internet to be a globalised imaginary space in which various self-proclaimed Islamic leaders shape new versions of Muslim identity independently of traditional religious institutional control. [411]

Third, global communication networks increase awareness of a range of political conflicts and promote Muslim identification with various 'Muslim struggles' around the world.[412] Indeed according to Roy, this global outlook means that radical Islam and the anti-globalisation movement are now the only two 'movements of radical protest that claim to be '"internationalist"' today.' [413] Conceiving of Islam in this way means that western converts to radical Islam must be placed within a broader context of contemporary radicalism and not understood narrowly in terms of Islamic theology or history. Hence, twenty years ago Roy argues that Muslim converts such as Richard Reid, Jose Padilla and John Walker Lindh would have joined radical Third Worldist or Marxist groups, rather than turn to Islam.

Finally, in the case of second-generation and third-generation diasporic Muslims in the West, both Roy and Sayyid regard social marginalisation and economic impoverishment to be a key factor in the appeal of globalised Islamic political movements. For instance, Sayyid argues that experiences of 'racism and Islamaphobia' amongst diasporic Muslims have played a crucial role in young Muslims rejecting Western secular identities.[414] Unlike Roy however, Sayyid regards this turn away from western discourse, and toward Islam, as the harbinger of considerably more political potential than Roy's conception of neofundamentalism. Sayyid terms this broad political project Islamism, which he sees as a self-conscious attempt by Muslims to locate their identities within an Islamic genealogy and worldview. According to Sayyid, the proliferation of Islamism around the world since the 1970s is a direct consequence of the inability of the West to universalise its worldview. In this respect, Islamism remains subversive to the West precisely because it refuses to accept globalisation as a process of westernisation; or as Sayyid puts it, 'the logic of Islamism disrupts the logic of Eurocentrism.'[415] Islamism, in other words, represents an alternative to westernisation and, consequently, should not be regarded to conflict with globalisation, but more precisely to conflict with westernisation. This formulation of Muslim identity and globalisation allows Sayyid to propose that globalisation facilitates solidarity amongst Muslims (the Ummah) and promotes the common idea of looking to Islam to address the different political problems that Muslims around the world face. [416]

The concept of the Muslim Ummah then, represents a potential global remapping of identity in both the work of Sayyid and Roy. However, both theorists only briefly address why such an identity has become appealing to so many young diasporic Muslims on a personal level. As traditional Islamic societies fracture because of globalisation and diaspora, resulting in what Roy describes as a shift from religion to 'religiosity,' then understanding Islam from this perspective becomes vital. [417] This is because within both Roy and Sayyid's conceptions, globalisation has made Muslim identity increasingly a matter of individual agency, rather than a matter of cultural inheritance as was the case in traditional Islamic societies. At this level of analysis, literature becomes an important resource for understanding what motivates some Muslims born outside traditional Islamic societies to identify with Islam. Toward this objective, the dual British and Muslim

perspectives of the novels examined in this chapter are useful for exploring how identification with Islam, for many British-Asians, might be shaped by a sense of alienation from the "West", as well as by an attraction to Islamic theology. These fictional texts reveal the emotional and psychological issues of this dialectical process of Muslim identity formation, thereby supplementing the theoretical explanations of the effects of globalisation upon Muslim identity previously outlined.

Translating Islam: Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*

The Satanic Verses is Salman Rushdie's literary celebration of migrancy in part because it is a novel, as he puts it, written 'for the first time from the whole of myself. The English part, the Indian part.' [418] The novel self-consciously explores the value of these dual aspects of Rushdie's identity and the possibilities for new types of literary expression it enables. On the level of form, this is evidenced through the novel's encyclopaedic intertexuality and vast scope of cultural allusions that effortlessly shift between Bollywood movies, Islamic texts, classical literature and European high modernism. Similarly, the plot of *The Satanic Verses* supports a fluid pluralist conception of cultural production and identity by contrasting the fates of Gibreel and Saladin in the narrative. On the one hand, Gibreel Farishta is portrayed as an 'untranslated,' unyielding, monomaniac character whose 'brittleness' proves to be fatal. While on the other hand, Saladin Chamcha is shown to be a 'translated,' transformative man whose very survival is a function of his 'flexibility' and readiness to 'come into newness'[419]

Important aspects of the contrast between Gibreel and Saladin's identities are reflected in many of the fierce debates that surrounded the publication of *The Satanic Verses*. In defending the novel, Rushdie, as well as many of his literary supporters, repeatedly stressed the translational approach to culture and identity associated with Saladin in the text.[420] Conversely, several of the novel's most virulent Muslim critics were often seen to represent a similar 'untranslated' approach to cultural identity to Gibreel. Thus, as Ruvani Ranasinha notes, '*The Satanic Verses* and its contradictory reception began to be seen as a metaphor for "clash of civilisations" with "dogmatic Islamic certainties" pitted against the "free inquiry of Western liberalism."'[421]For

instance, Rushdie describes the divided reception of the novel in his essay 'In Good Faith' in the following way.

> Those who oppose the novel most vociferously today are of the opinion that intermingling with a different culture will inevitably weaken and ruin their own. I am of the opposite opinion. *The Satanic Verses* celebrates hybridity, impurity, intermingling, the transformation that comes of new and unexpected combinations of human beings, cultures, ideas, politics, movies, songs. It rejoices in mongrelization and fears the absolutism of the Pure. Melange, hotchpotch, a bit of this and a bit of that is how newness enters the world. It is the great possibility that mass migration gives the world, and I have tried to embrace it. *The Satanic Verses* is for change-by-fusion, change-by-conjoining. It is a love-song to our mongrel selves.[422]

This defence of the novel has important implications for understanding the relationship between globalisation and Islam, because numerous theorists have used Rushdie's conception of hybridisation as a metaphor for the globalisation process itself.[423] In this formulation, globalisation is conceived as a process that increases global cultural 'intermingling,' against which Muslim critics of *The Satanic Verses* are argued to be at odds. This chapter, however, proposes that conceiving of Muslim identity as a conflict between globalisation and Islamic cultural tradition overlooks a more complex relationship between Islam and globalisation that *The Satanic Verses* represents. Gibreel's character reveals how the novel shows globalisation to open a discursive space in which new articulations of Muslim identity are made possible. Yet at the same time, Rushdie does not give these new articulations of Muslim identity a legitimate voice along the lines that Sayyid advocates because the novel insists that Islamic claims of "truth" are partial and provisional. This reading of the novel shows globalisation to have a dialectical effect on Muslim identity that both promotes and undermines the articulation of Muslim identity in complex and, at times, contradictory ways.

Following Rushdie, numerous critics have read *The Satanic Verses* as a novel that celebrates the hybridisation of identity that migration results in. For example, Jaina Sanga argues that

> Saladin Chamcha is the emblematic figure of the postcolonial migrant. The migrant's identity

> is marked by notions of ethnic and racial impurity, melange, and hodgepodge, because the migrant, in order to survive, must translate himself into something different, and acknowledge, inevitably, that he lives between two worlds. [424]

Sanga's comments here closely echo Rushdie's own in equating 'the postcolonial migrant' with the approach to identity that Saladin represents.[425] But by defining 'the postcolonial migrant' through Saladin's character, Sanga implies that the acknowledgement of living 'between two worlds' is true for all postcolonial migrants. It suggests that the experience of migrancy leads to awareness of the provisional and incomplete nature of culture and identity and is, therefore, an inevitable outcome of migrancy. However, while this may be true for Saladin it overlooks the very different response to migration of Gibreel in the novel, which, unlike Saladin, refuses to accept the cultural instability that Sanga argues characterises the 'postcolonial migrant.'[426]

Recognising Gibreel's version of Islam as an alternative response to migration exposes that celebrating the mutability of identity is not an inevitable outcome of migration. Rather in Gibreel's case, the act of self-invention (of 'taking the creators' role' and 'playing God') that Rushdie argues is common to all migrants, leads to the reformulation of Islamic tradition. The distinction between Islamic cultural tradition and Gibreel's reformulated version of Islamic tradition in *The Satanic Verses* is important. It offers a point of entry into how the novel shows Muslim identity is not in conflict with globalisation, but is facilitated by it in a number of ways. In the first instance, despite the ostensible emphasis upon submission to religious authority and tradition, Gibreel remains a highly individualistic and self-centred character in the novel. This individualism constitutes the very core of his re-imagining of Islam. Consequently, rather than submit to a divine authority in his role of "playing God," Gibreel imagines himself at the centre of Islam's genesis. Of this Rushdie writes:

> And then, without warning Hamza says to Mahound: 'Go ask Gibreel,' and he, the dreamer, feels his heart leaping in alarm, who, me? I'm supposed to know the answers here. I'm sitting here watching this picture and now this actor points his finger out at me, who ever heard the like, who asks the bloody audience of a 'theological' to solve the plot?- But as the dream shifts, its always changing form, he, Gibreel, is no longer a mere spectator, but a central player, the star. [427]

This interruption of Mahound's narrative by Gibreel 'to solve the plot' reveals how his character repeatedly intrudes and questions the novel's representation of Islam. According to Sardar, the effect of this narrative technique is to undermine the very notion of Islamic sacred texts, resulting in the fictionalizing of what for Muslims is the unquestioned truth of the Koran. [428] From this perspective, Gibreel's re-appropriation of Islam questions the foundation upon which sacred texts are manufactured, because it represents Islamic theology as subject to human intervention. Hence for Sardar, Rushdie's mode of narration conflicts with Muslim identity by undermining the idea of divine revelation and insisting upon man's role in the creation of sacred texts.

While Sardar's view of narrative may be true in one respect, there is also a second way of reading Gibreel's reinterpretation of Islamic tradition. In this reading, Rushdie's narrative technique reflects the new ways in which contemporary Muslim identity is now produced. In particular, the connection I wish to make here is between the narrative form through which Gibreel's re-imagining of Islam is represented and what Roy refers to as 'the triumph of the religious self.'[429] In light of Roy's work, Gibreel's identification with Islam, and refusal to be 'a mere spectator,' reproduces the shift from an institutional conception of religion to one increasingly centred in the individual.[430] Consequently, if, as Roy argues, globalisation leads to an emphasis upon the individual determining Muslim identity, then Gibreel's character reveals the implications of this for interpreting theological texts.

In other words, Gibreel's identification with Islam not only reflects how 'poststructuralist narratology' questions divine revelation, but also provides a pronounced example of the relationship between subjectivity and text that Mark Currie points out in *Postmodern Narrative Theory*. [431] Specifically, Currie shows how contemporary approaches to narrative have shifted away from conceiving of the relationship between reader and fictional texts as one of sympathy to one of identification. He explains this distinction in the following way.

> Sympathy amounts to little more than a feeling of goodwill toward a character. Identification suggests self-recognition. One difference is that the manufacture of sympathy will not profoundly change the world. When I reach the end of *Emma* I will resume normal life. Identification, on the

> other hand, touches my own subjectivity in a more profound way, because I have seen myself in the fiction, projected my identity into it, rather than just made a new friend. This gives fiction the potential to confirm, form or transform my sense of myself. [432]

Reading the relationship between Gibreel's character and Islam in this way suggests that Rushdie's narrative technique reflects a turn from Islam as uncontested truth (as it is in traditional Islamic societies) to one in which Islamic texts are self consciously used to shape a sense of self. Consequently, Islam becomes a narrative that blurs the boundaries between individual subjectivity and theology. In the most pronounced form this leads to the sort of re-imagining of Islam that Gibreel undertakes. In more moderate forms it illuminates the proliferation of Muslim identities and reinterpretations of Islam that Roy argues now exist, particularly amongst diasporic populations and on the Internet. Framed in these terms, Rushdie's own theological views, as well as whether or not *The Satanic Verses* 'fictionalises' Islamic texts, becomes less important to its representation of Muslim identity than Sardar argues. Instead, it raises a second question: if migration exposes Gibreel to a new range of narrative influences in London, why does Islam remain such a compelling narrative to 'form or transform' his sense of self and what are the implications of this for understanding the relationship between globalisation and Islam? [433]

To be sure, the most compelling reason *The Satanic Verses* gives for Gibreel's attraction to Islam is as a response to social marginalisation. Indeed within Gibreel's migrant imagination, the inception of Islam is seen as a response by Mahound to his position as an outsider – as someone who feels 'excluded' from Jahilia's ruling elite. [434] According to Abu Simbel, this sense of exclusion, because Mahound 'lacks the right sort of family connections' and has been orphaned 'from the mercantile elite,' motivates him to take up religion in the first place. Thus, in the eyes of Abu Simbel, the very origin of Islam is predicated upon a disgruntled prophet who 'feels he has been cheated, he has not had his due.'[435] Furthermore, while Abu Simbel finds Mahound to be motivated by a sense of marginalisation, Mahound's initial followers are similarly described as outsiders. Thus, the poet Baal contemptuously describes the inception of Islam as nothing but 'a revolution of water-carriers, immigrants and slaves'.[436] But what Baal fails to account for

in these dismissive remarks, is that Mahound's prophetic revelations provide a narrative in which his followers are able to transcend the categories of identity in which Jahilian society describes them. As followers of Mahound they therefore become 'disciples,' charged with the mission of winning 'converts,' which endows them with a sense of purpose and importance that is unattainable for them in Jahilian society.[437] In other words, Islam provides these characters an escape from the social hierarchies that subordinate them in Jahilia by imparting a religious identity that transcends the city's social authority. Consequently, a crucial aspect of Islam's appeal in the novel is that it provides a narrative that transforms identity in societies where social transformation of the self is perceived to be limited or not possible.

The Satanic Verses specifically connects this understanding of Islam as a response to social marginalisation with the process of globalisation in the Ayesha section of the novel. Here the perception of American global dominance in the contemporary world extends Mahound's sense of marginalisation to a global horizon. Islam therefore becomes a 'pure' space of identification in which an individual can free themselves from the systems of power that subordinate them. Consequently, in addressing the African-American convert to Islam, Bilal X, the Imam insists:

> Bilal, your suffering is ours as well. But to be raised in the house of power is to learn its ways, to soak them up, through that very skin that is the cause of your oppression. The habit of power, its timbre, its posture, its way of being with others. It is a disease, Bilal, infecting all who come near it. If the powerful trample over you, you are infected by the soles of their feet. [438]

But if the Imam insists that Bilal X must adopt a "pure" Islamic identity to escape his 'oppression,' then his comments also reveal the extent to which the articulation of such an identity is dependent upon the "infected" culture of the West to define it.[439] Consequently, without the idea of global western dominance there is no possibility of articulating a Muslim 'us' in the Imam's rhetoric. In this respect, if globalisation is perceived as a process of westernisation as Sardar and Ahmed argue, then far from erode Muslim identities, it would only seem to propagate it.

Significantly, despite the Imam's rhetoric of westernisation, his character shows that globalisation is not in fact a process of westernisation. Rather, his approach to

Muslim identity appears particularly well suited to globalisation because it is not dependent upon a shared collective history. In contrast to the Islamic traditionalism that Sardar and Ahmed posit, the Muslim "us" of the Imam does not rely on a sense of the past to construct a collective identity, but upon a 'timeless time.'[440] Consequently, the Imam's 'revolution against history' has important implications for re-mapping Muslim identity, because it removes the cultural divisions that historical specificity implies.[441] Echoing Khomeini's call for a world-wide Islamic state, the Imam's articulation of Muslim identity is a global one. Rushdie is acutely aware of how global communication networks can be employed to promote such a deterritorialised Muslim identity through his representation of the Imam and Bilal X's radio broadcast, which he describes as follows:

> Bilal the muezzin: his voice enters a ham radio in Kensington and emerges in dreamed-of Desh, transmuted into the thunderous speech of the Imam himself. Beginning with ritual abuse of the Empress, with lists of her crimes, murders, bribes, sexual relations with lizards, and so on, he proceeds eventually to issue in ringing tones the Imam's nightly call to his people to rise up against the evil of her state. [442]

The novel is prescient here in highlighting the role that Roy argues the Internet now plays in articulating a deterritorialised sense of Muslim collective identity. The Imam's address shows how cultural and linguistic particularity inevitably loses its importance to such an identity and leads to a degree of standardisation. Consequently, the Imam draws upon a simplified coda of Islam that defines Muslim identity against the cultural and ethical values of 'the empress', but does not appeal to a discourse of cultural tradition that Sardar and Ahmed argue is axiomatic to Muslim identity.

One way to read the Imam's approach to Muslim identity is as an attempt to disarticulate globalisation from westernisation along the lines argued by Sayyid. In this reading, Islam provides an alternative centre of identification to western discourse, enabling Islam to function as a master signifier that connects Muslims around the world via global communication networks. From this perspective, that the transmission of such a Muslim identity comes from London and is articulated by an exiled Imam and an Africa-American former pop star, exemplifies a multi-polar world. Islam, therefore, is no

longer an identity confined by geographical boundaries or cultural tradition, but is transformed into a global discursive space. For a critic like Sayyid, the emergence of such a discursive space signals the inability of the West to define the terms of globalisation and shows how Islam provides an alternative narrative of globalisation to westernisation.

Framing the Imam's version of Islam within the context of Sayyid's work is productive because it reveals a paradox at the heart of *The Satanic Verses*. Specifically, it raises the question of how a novel committed to the vision of transnational pluralism outlined by Rushdie in 'In Good Faith' responds to the Imam's universal Islamist claims. On the one hand, if Rushdie gives the Imam a legitimate voice then the novel's vision of pluralism is undermined because the Imam rejects its version of pluralism that depends upon the recognition of cultural particularity. On the other hand, if the novel insists upon Islamism recognising the provisional and partial nature of its claims to truth, then Rushdie is forced to fall back upon the sorts of authoritarian gestures that the novel eschews in Mahound and the Imam.

Reading this paradox in light of Sayyid's work, shows that *The Satanic Verses*' recognition of how globalisation facilitates Muslim identity is not the same as recognising Islam as a legitimate voice within its vision of global pluralism. This distinction is important, because it reveals that the issues surrounding Muslim identity and globalisation in the novel have little to do with cultural tradition, and everything to do with the power to narrate identity in an increasing convergent world. It is at this level of analysis that Sardar's objections to the novel are most convincing, because they reveal how *The Satanic Verses* never really takes seriously the possibility of Islam as an alternate epistemological centre. Indeed, one of the underlying assumptions of *The Satanic Verses*, articulated by Rushdie 'In Good Faith,' is that 'the rejection of totalized explanations is the modern condition.' [443] Such a worldview precludes the meaningful articulation of Muslim identity and, therefore, from Sardar's perspective, reflects how global postmodern culture co-opts Islam into a secular, liberal, worldview. Consequently, while the novel may demonstrate how globalisation promotes Muslim identity on an individual level, it ultimately shows this identity to be the product of Gibreel's deranged mind – a deluded identity that is out of touch with the contemporary world, rather than the portent of a new epistemological centre.

Rushdie's decision to represent Islam solely through the mind of Gibreel is significant from Sardar's perspective, because it gets to the heart of how Muslims are denied a voice in global postmodern culture. In particular, Sardar identifies inconsistencies in the narrative logic of the novel, which he argues reflect the sorts of western biases and distortions of Islam that typify the globalisation process in general. Specifically, Sardar questions how Gibreel, who is delusional for much of the novel, is able to be the repository of such detailed information on Islam. Or as Sardar poses the question: 'how is it possible for a deranged character, suffering from delusions, to remember the names (even a seasoned scholar of Islam would have to look them up) and physical descriptions of every one of the prophet's wives in a dream sequence?'[444] Thus, although Rushdie describes Gibreel as having 'mental illness' shortly before he dreams the 'Return to Jahilia' section of the novel, Gibreel is nevertheless able to recount the historical details and names of Mahound's wives in the following way: [445] (fix footnote)

> The whore "Hafsah" grew as hot hot-tempered as her namesake, and as the twelve entered into the spirit of their roles the alliances in the brothel came to mirror the political cliques in the Yathrin mosque; "Ayesha" and "Hafasah", for example, engaged in constant, petty rivalries against the two haughtiest whores, who had always been thought a bit stuck-up by the others and who had chosen for themselves the most aristocratic identities, becoming "Umm Salamah the Makhzumite" and, snootiest of all, "Ramlah", whose namesake, the eleventh wife of Mahound, was the daughter of Abu Simbel and Hind.[446]

For Sardar, it is implausible that such a faceted recounting of Islamic history can be accounted for as part of the hallucinatory imagination of Gibreel. Consequently, 'the Verses of the Qur'an, even though they appear in a dream' must be attributed to Rushdie as the author of the text. [447] This raises a tension in the novel between the subjective re-writing of Islamic tradition by Gibreel as a fictional character, and a more objective approach to history by Rushdie as the author of the text. What Sardar objects to so strongly about *The Satanic Verses* is that Muslims are not given a legitimate voice in negotiating when and which aspects of Islamic tradition are 'fact' and which are 'fictional' – a process he argues is rehearsed with the globalisation of postmodern culture more broadly. [448] Hence, as global proximity increases, *The Satanic Verses* exposes how

Muslim identities become subsumed within western versions of reality, such as 'the rejection of totalized explanations,' and are therefore denied space to narrate Muslim identity from an Islamic-centred worldview.

Indeed, one aspect of *The Satanic Verses* that Rushdie and his supporters, as well as the novel's Muslim detractors widely agreed upon was that the novel advanced a liberal vision of global secular pluralism. For Rushdie such a vision celebrates hybridty and difference, while for Sardar it represents 'the complete removal of the insulating space of the Other, skinning it alive as it were, so that it is totally exposed to the mercies of the postmodern wind.'[449] On the surface, the conclusion of *The Satanic Verses* does appear to support this claim of secular pluralism and foreclose the possibility of articulating a universal religious worldview. Gibreel's eventual suicide strongly implies that the "illusion" of God, which Gibreel represents to 'hundreds of millions of believers,' dies with him at the end of the novel.[450] Moreover, in contrast to the demise of Gibreel, Saladin ends the novel looking toward the future having been reborn as the more empowered Salahuddin and looking out optimistically to the Arabian Sea, of which Rushdie writes:

> The moon was almost full; moonlight stretching from the rocks of scandal point out to the far horizon, created the illusion of a silver pathway, like a parting in the water's shining hair, like a road to miraculous lands.[451]

Unlike the Muslims in the 'Ayesha' section, Salahuddin is shown here to read the parting of the Arabian Sea as a simile that was 'like a road to miraculous lands.' [452] Simile and metaphor of course imply multiplicity -a fluid approach to reading the world that the image of the sea itself underlines. Hence, the conclusion of the novel ostensibly supports Sanga's reading because the mutable approach to identity that Salahuddin represents – 'marked by notions of ethnic and racial impurity, melange, and hodgepodge' – wins out over the religious universalism of Gibreel. [453]

Nevertheless, Gibreel represents only one character and while he is central to the representation of Islam in the text, the novel also alludes to 'hundreds of millions of believers' that exist outside of Gibreel's imagination.[454] Although these religious

believers are neither developed as characters nor given a voice in the novel as Gibreel and Salahuddin are, their presence remains important. They remind us that the desire for religious universalism and the 'face of the Supreme' that Gibreel represents is unlikely to disappear along with his character.[455] These characters then, are reminders of the dialectical effect of globalisation upon Muslim identity, because they reveal the incompleteness of Rushdie's proclamation that 'end of universal explanations is the modern condition' (itself a universalistic, totalising claim). Consequently, they provide qualification to Sardar's reading of the novel by highlighting that individual responses to the destabilisation of traditional religious identities, as a result of globalisation, can lead to the rejection of a liberal, secular worldview as well as its embrace. At the same time, however, the fact that the religious multitude is not given a voice in the novel, in conjunction with the narrative's ironic tone, means that Islam is denied the sort of representation that Sardar and Sayyid demand in their conception of global pluralism. In this respect, *The Satanic Verses* indicates that Sayyid overemphasises globalisation as a de-centred global process, because the novel shows how Islam is challenged by a dominant secular worldview which refuses global Islamism legitimate representation. Islamism, therefore, in no way appears as an equal alternative global epistemological centre to liberal secularism in *The Satanic Verses*, and certainly does not emerge as the empowered challenge to westernisation that Sayyid argues it represents.

Defending *The Satanic Verses* Through Fiction: Hanif Kureishi's *The Black Album*

Hanif Kureishi wrote *The Black Album* as a response to the events that surrounded the publication of *The Satanic Verses* and, in particular, the anger of many British Muslims that the novel engendered. As Kureishi puts it:

> I suppose the whole of *The Black Album* is an attempt to find out the source of the rage. I wondered why all these people were going to mosques in England to denounce this fellow simply because of a novel he'd written.[456]

In defending Rushdie's novel against this 'rage,' *The Black Album* takes upon itself the task of addressing the multitude of religious believers that were silenced in *The Satanic Verses*, but who had ardently made their voices heard in response to its publication. This project means that Kureishi is forced to face the contradiction previously outlined in *The Satanic Verses* in an attempt to define the limits of British pluralism. Toward this objective, the novel is structured around its protagonist, Shahid's, attraction to Islam and his affair with his liberal college professor, Deedee Osgood. This central conflict allows Shahid to move back and forth between his involvement with Islam and Deedee's liberalism, contrasting their divergent influences upon his identity. In this way the novel is both able to show how globalisation facilitates new approaches to Muslim identity amongst second and third generation Muslims in Britain, and to explicitly reject this influence in favour of the liberal, secular viewpoint that Deedee represents. Hence, like *The Satanic Verses*, *The Black Album* advances a view of globalisation as a contested narrative, in which Shahid is a metonym for the battle over identity between Western liberalism and Islam. However, far more directly than *The Satanic Verses* Kureishi represents globalisation as an embattled discursive space that is shaped by issues of media representation, race and class as much as Islamic theology or cultural tradition.

Following *The Satanic Verses*, *The Black Album* shows social marginalisation and global communication networks to play a significant role in the propagation of new types of diasporic Muslim identities. The central concern of *The Black Album* however, means that the novel approaches these issues from a different perspective than *The Satanic Verses*. In particular, Kureishi is more explicit in showing racism to be crucial to the growing appeal of Islam in Britain amongst British-born members of the South Asian diaspora. Thus, the novel opens with Shahid's first meeting Riaz and confessing the extent to which racism has shaped his life. In making this confession, Shahid reveals the 'killing-nigger fantasies' that growing up as the only 'dark-skinned person' had fostered in him.[457] As Shahid puts it,

> 'I argued...why can't I be a racist like everyone else? Why do I have to miss out on that privilege? Why is it only me who has to be good? Why can't I swagger around pissing on others for being inferior? [458]

Shahid's remarks are significant because they connect his interest in Islam to the context of racism, implying that racism is an important motivating factor for him joining Riaz's Islamic group. Indeed, Kureishi's somewhat heavy handed treatment of this opening scene suggests that Riaz's Muslim 'us' is simply a reconstituted version of the far right groups Shahid had formerly wished to join. In this respect, British-Muslim identity emerges from the outset as a binary response to British racism: as a way to achieve the sense of collective identity that Shahid rued as a 'privilege' he had missed out on as a non-white Briton.

Nevertheless, if Shahid's attraction to Islam is a response to British racism, then this still leaves the question of why Islam? Why, for example is Shahid not driven to affirm a collective identity grounded in South Asian ethnicity? The answer to this issue, as far as Shahid is concerned, remains somewhat confused in the novel but is far more clearly defined in Chad, another member of Riaz' group. Chad leaves little doubt that, like Shahid, his attraction to Islam is bound to British racism: a transformation of identity that Chad bluntly sums up by insisting 'No more Paki. Me a Muslim.' [sic][459] But unlike Shahid, Chad clearly articulates that his attraction to the "spiritual" dimension of Muslim identity offers a way out of the social hierarchies upon which racism is built. Hence, Chad regards his embrace of Islam as an attempt to move 'beyond sensation, to a spiritual and controlled conception of life.'[460] Echoing the Imam's advice to Bilal X in *The Satanic Verses*, Islam is seen by Chad as a path to purification, a way to rid himself of the racist identifications his upbringing has exposed him to. Consequently, Chad does not regard himself as the ethnic other to white Britain but as a Muslim that transcends the categories of race, ethnicity and nation. In this way, Chad's embrace of the spiritual aspect of Islam personalises the Imam's 'revolt against history' in *The Satanic Verses*, and becomes a way for Chad to expunge his past.[461] For Chad then, it is not so much that the appeal of Islam comes from understanding Sayyid's claim that 'the logic of Islamism disrupts the logic of Eurocentrism.' but that Islam provides an emotional escape from the painful memories of racism. Understood in this way, Islam represents considerably less political ambition than Sayyid contends, because it implies that the adoption of Islam by young British-Asians is an angry rejection of racism and social marginalisation

experienced in Britain, rather than a viable strategic solution to global geopolitical problems.

Nevertheless, one important political aspect of Islam that Kureishi identifies is its ability to forge a powerful sense of solidarity. Kureishi remains sympathetic to Islam in this regard and the possibilities it represents for many young British-Asians to address the social issues they face in their everyday lives. Certainly for Shahid, despite hailing from a comfortable and privileged background himself, Riaz's project of social justice remains one of the most rewarding and compelling reasons for his attraction to Islam. Therefore, as Shahid remarks to Deedee, Muslim identity is a framework through which 'anger and passionate beliefs' are translated into social engagement, without which 'nothing could get done.'[462] This view is supported in the scenes that detail the Bangladeshi community of East London, in which a Bengali family turn to Riaz's Islamic group for help rather than the British state. Kureishi describes Riaz's championing of this family in the following way:

> Through his contact on the council, George Rugman Rudder, Riaz had arranged for the family to move to a Bengali estate, but it wouldn't happen immediately. So Riaz had taken action. Until the family moved, he would guard the flat and seek out the culprits, along with Hat, Chad, Shahid, and the other boys and girls from college.[463]

This influence of Riaz's group amongst the Bengali population of East London certainly indicates the importance of Muslim identity to community activism, as well as a political voice that represents the needs of this impoverished community to local politicians such as Rudder.[464]

Further, the political implications of the Muslim identity that Riaz represents, reveals its local dimension that responds to the social conditions facing many of the South Asian diaspora in Britain today. In describing how Riaz exploits such concerns to popularise his movement, *The Black Album* provides a proviso to the sort of global Muslim identity that the Imam represents in *The Satanic Verses*, as well as Roy's conception of Islamic 'neofundamentalism.' Like 'neofundamentalism,' *The Black Album* shows how young Muslims in Britain define Muslim identity in simplified binary terms that have little to do with cultural tradition and, instead, are defined against a monolithic

idea of the "West.".[465] However, Kureishi also demonstrates how this standardised narrative of Islam is tailored to local audiences. Indeed, the success of Riaz as a Muslim leader is dependent upon his ability to translate Islam into the language of East London youth through lectures entitled, "'Rave to the Grave?" and "Islam: A Blast from the Past or a force for the Future?"'[466] These lectures are both delivered in English and draw upon the imagery and lexicon of British youth culture in order to reconstruct an Islamic narrative that appeals to an audience born outside of traditional Islamic societies.[467] Consequently, while such lectures may share the common theme of Western immorality with the Imam in *The Satanic Verses,* as well as 'neofundamentalist' rhetoric in general, the language and tropes that Riaz draws upon are localised in an effort to attract a new generation of disenfranchised '"cockney Asians."'[468]

In detailing this ability of Riaz to connect with young British born Muslims, *The Black Album* represents Riaz as a new type of Muslim leader for whom traditional theological training has been superseded by individual charisma and rhetorical skills. Such qualities are not only important to filling the mosques and community halls of East London with a 'growing audience of young people,' but also vital to accessing the media.[469] Indeed, the ascent of Riaz as a religious leader is shown toward the end of the novel to be bound to the interest his character, and the particular brand of Islam it represents, creates in the British media. Brownlow bluntly sums up this appeal by commenting that 'for those TV people Riaz is a fascinating freak. They've never met anyone like him before.'[470] Thus, the theatrical dimension of Riaz's talks at the mosque - in which he would 'start to rage, fist in the air'- are precisely the qualities that Brownlow argues interest television producers. In this respect, Riaz's character highlights the important role that the western media has played in propagating a nascent wave of young, angry Muslim leaders in the mould of Kalim Siddiqui, who came to prominence during "The Rushdie Affair."[471]

Nevertheless, despite being aware of how the media has enabled Muslim voices to be heard around the world as Roy claims, a central concern of *The Black Album* is the repudiation of such views in response to "The Rushdie affair". This thematic focus forces Kureishi to confront the paradox that marks *The Satanic Verses*: namely how does secular, liberal pluralism respond to the challenge that Riaz's Islam represents without

falling back on the sorts of authoritarian gestures that both Kureishi and Rushdie renounce in Islam? Kureishi alludes to this challenge directly, by showing Riaz defending his right to burn a blasphemous book in the name of 'democracy.'[472] Riaz' appeal for free speech captures the challenges that Islam represents to Deedee's liberalism (she calls the police and is thus derided by Hat for having '"shopped us to the state!"')[473], and to British multiculturalism (the college principle is reticent to condemn the book burning because she is 'afraid of accusations of racism.')[474]

Aware of this Scylla of authoritarianism and Charybdis of racism, *The Black Album* formulates its repudiation of Riaz' global Islamism on a number of fronts. The first is by narrowing Muslim identity and ultimately coming to define Islam exclusively in terms of a violent, repressive form of "fundamentalism" that evokes many well worn stereotypes of Muslims that Ahmed identifies in the Western media. Thus, while Bart Moore-Gilbert argues that Kureishi 'counters many of the stereotypes about '"fundamentalism,"' it is important to note that this occurs early in the novel.[475] As the novel progresses the trajectory of Riaz' group toward violent intolerance renders these early representations as token gestures that are outweighed by the "fundamentalist" version of Islam that dominates the end of the novel. Like Mahound in *The Satanic Verses*, Riaz and Chad are both shown to resort to aggression to enforce their religious views with little regard for individual dissent. Such aggressive tendencies culminate in the violence that concludes the novel, in which Shahid's decision to leave the group in favour of Deedee results in the following hostile confrontation:

> "Beat him !" Chad shouted. "This idiot [Shahid] hates us and he hates God! Give Satan one!"
>
> Sadiq saw Hat's indecision and a step back and gave Shahid a backhander across the face. "Good!" he shouted as Shahid's mouth bled. Chad jabbed Shahid in the kidneys. "The evil spirit has gone down!"
>
> As Shahid staggered, Chad kicked him. Deedee ran out.
>
> "Leave him!"
>
> With his big arm Chad barred her way. "He belongs to us. Let us take him, bitch, and there'll be no trouble for you."[476]

The violence described here remains problematic because Riaz's group are the only Muslim characters in the novel. The effect of the novel's conclusion, therefore, is to conflate the early plural vision of Islam - where the mosque is described as a space in which 'race and class barriers' are 'suspended'- with the brand of violent Islamism that Riaz comes to embody. [477] This is not simply an issue of overlooking "moderate" Muslim voices, but also of dismissing non-violent forms of political Islam that theorists such as Sayyid advocate.

Moreover, the violence that Kureishi associates with Islam is crucial to the plot of the novel and, in particular, Shahid's final refutation of Islam. This underlines Kureishi's conflation of Islam, Islamism, "fundamentalism" and violence, because in rejecting Riaz's version Shahid comes to reject Islam entirely. Such a sweeping rejection implies that all forms of Islam are implicitly bound to violence. Why, for example, is it not possible for Shahid to continue exploring the progressive aspects of Islam he was attracted to early in the novel while at the same time rejecting Riaz' violent version of Islam? Instead of exploring these possibilities, Kureishi's narrowing of Islam toward stereotype means that what started out as a relatively complex conflict between Islam and metropolitan liberalism becomes an increasingly oversimplified as the novel progresses.

While Islam becomes progressively defined in violent terms in *The Black Album*, Deedee's influence over Shahid, by way of contrast, is associated with seduction, debate and pleasure. For example, following an argument over Shahid's involvement with Riaz, Deedee reconciles this conflict by inviting him to undo his shirt, while commenting "'I love that cafe-au-lait skin. Let me see it one more time.'" [478] The subsequent sex scene that follows leads Shahid to forget about his preoccupation with Islamism and affirm "'this is life.'"[479] Despite the rather heavy handed and clichéd way in which these sex scenes between Deedee and Shahid are written, they nevertheless serve to redouble the repressive nature of Islam in the novel: Islam always appears an effort, a submission to a set of forced codes for Shahid that contrast sharply with the naturalness of his desire for Deedee. Consequently, the competing influences of Riaz' version of Islam and Deedee's liberalism for Shahid's identity never really emerge as a convincing struggle at all. And because of this, the structure of the novel, in which Shahid moves between the two

diametrically opposed worldviews that Riaz and Deedee represent, always remains deeply unequal in favour of Deedee.

Such unevenness in the novel is, in the end, a failure of Kureishi's literary imagination that neglects to represent Islam with the same complexity and nuance that he does western literature and London's youth culture in the novel. For example, while Shahid repeatedly reflects upon a range of western cultural influences - from 'Henry Miller' to 'Guy Maupassant' to 'David Hockney'- there is no evidence of similar engagement with the Koran, or Islamic culture more generally. [480] This means that in contrast to Shahid's debates with Deedee over western literature and culture, informed by his wide range of reading, Shahid's knowledge of Islam comes from Riaz and, to a lesser extent, memories of his family's representations of Islam. Shahid's failure to read any Islamic texts is a curious omission for such a bookish character that ostensibly wants to become a Muslim. Moreover, it is an omission that has significant implications for the plot of the novel, because it means that Shahid never challenges Riaz's version of Islam with a different reading of Islam that is not violent or repressive.

In contrast to the lack of allusions to Islamic texts in *The Black Album*, Deedee, like Shahid, is repeatedly associated with aspects of what Sardar and Ahmed define as Western culture in various registers. For example, in her role as a college professor Deedee is described as part of an academic vanguard that played 'Madonna or George Clinton' in class, and that examined students fashion, music, language and 'tried to enter it, extend it, ask questions.'[481] On a more personal level Deedee and Shahid's romantic encounters are frequently associated with references to pop music. For instance, in one such scene Deedee is described crossing the room to 'put on Madonna's "Vogue,"' while in another 'a sound system [is] playing "Desire"' as Shahid enters Deedee's apartment.[482] The effect of associating Deedee so strongly with these cultural allusions is to further emphasise the clash between Islam and westernised global popular culture that Sardar and Ahmed's work posits. Consequently, as Shahid moves back and forth between Deedee and Riaz there is never any suggestion of Shahid being able to accommodate his new interest in Islam with his passion for western literature and popular culture.

The diametrical opposition between Raiz and Deedee and, by extension, between Islam and western culture, means that Shahid must ultimately make a choice between

them. In making this choice, the music of Prince plays an important role is shaping the plot of the novel and connecting Deedee's relationship with Shahid to western popular culture.[483] Prince bookends the narrative by providing the central topic of conversation through which Shahid's and Deedee's attraction to each other is formed at the beginning of the novel. At the end of the novel, the image of Deedee and Shahid attending a 'Prince concert' represents Shahid's final rejection of Islamism in favour of western popular culture.[484] Significantly, the music of Prince operates on a similar visceral level to Shahid's attraction to Deedee, against which Islam appears repressive and "unnatural." For example, when Chad enters Shahid's room to the sound of Prince's music and attempts to admonish him for listening to it, Chad's professed religious beliefs are unable to control the effect of the music upon his body. Of this Kureishi writes:

> Shahid was afraid of Chad's bulk and suppressed violence, but he pushed him aside and turned up the music, with added bass, until the furniture vibrated. At this Chad banged his palms over his ears while simultaneously, Shahid observed, bouncing his foot. [485]

While the injunction of Chad's Muslim identity may compel him to cover his ears and admonish Shahid for listening to Prince, Chad is simply unable to control a much deeper, more instinctive, desire for the music that manifests through the body. Consequently, Prince's music becomes naturalised as it responds to a deep-seated aspect of Chad's subjectivity against which his Muslim identity appears repressive. By describing the appeal of Prince's music in such visceral terms, Kureishi implies that the spread of western popular culture is driven by individual desire, rather than by western structural dominance. In light of Sardar's work, this representation of Prince strongly reinforces the hegemony of neoliberal globalisation, because it signifies what people really want is Prince rather than Mohammed and individual choice rather than religious coda, as Shahid comes to realise in the novel. Globalisation, in this formulation, is represented as a process that results in 'the cultural triumph of the West,' to use Ahmed's term, because the spread of western popular culture is shown to be the outcome of individual choice, rather than western global dominance.

A final way that global Islam is disavowed in *The Black Album* is through appealing to discourses of secularism. This occurs in two contradictory ways in the text.

The first is by drawing upon the claims of modernity, which as Max Weber has argued, reduce religion to superstition when faced with the truths of science and the rationalisation of the world.[486] Thus, Shahid reflects that while Islam contains 'old and useful stories...today they could easily be mocked and undermined by more demonstrable tales.'[487] Evidence of undermining Islamic epistemology in light of 'more demonstrable' knowledge is most clearly found in the novel's invention of an aubergine in which 'God has written.' Shahid, somewhat half heartedly, attempts to defend Muslim belief in the aubergine to Deedee in the following way.

> "That's what some people are saying. But they're simple types they can't read French philosophers. A few years ago they were milking cows and keeping chickens. We have to respect the faiths of others – the Catholics say they drink Jesus' blood and no one jails the Pope for Cannibalism." [488]

Despite the disparaging nature of these comments, Kureishi has defended them by arguing that 'all religions have daft bits to them.'[489] Be that as it may, the effect of the scenes surrounding the aubergine is to suggest that so tenuous is the Islamic way of knowing the world that Muslims are subject to such farcical revelations. [490] Moreover, Kureishi's invention of this bizarre instance in the novel emerges as a key moment in Deedee's influence over Shahid's identity and as such is crucial to the novel's invalidation of Islamic knowledge. While Islam is reduced to defending its charges of blasphemy against an unnamed novel through these absurd revelations, they are seized upon by Deedee as evidence of quite how out of step Islam is with the modern world. The aubergine incident, therefore, stands as a symbol of the primitiveness of Islamic knowledge and the threat that Islam represents to the progress of western modernity, leading Deedee to ask 'what sort of people burn books and read aubergines?'[491]

The suggestion that Muslims as a rule burn books and read aubergines is extremely problematic in itself, but there is also a wider point that needs to be made here. Namely, because faith is central to Islam, Islamic knowledge is unable to reason and, consequently, the only Muslim response Kureishi can imagine to the charge of blasphemy is both irrational and violent. In this respect, *The Black Album* establishes a clear epistemological hierarchy in which Riaz' group book burning on a college campus

underscores the perceived threat that Islam is seen to represent not only to Deedee's views, but to the tradition of western secular knowledge more broadly. By oversimplifying the relationship between Islam and western secular knowledge in this way, *The Black Album* rehearses the role that Sardar argues Enlightenment rationality to have played in European colonial expansion.[492] Thus, Kureishi re-inscribes a central narrative used to justify colonial rule in which 'progress and the influence of religion' are represented as 'mutually exclusive.'[493]

However, elsewhere and in contradictory fashion, *The Black Album* advances a second secular world-view by raising many of the issues surrounding the discourse of postmodernism that have been previously discussed. For instance, following *The Satanic Verses*, Shahid reflects upon the role of individual subjectivity in constructing Islamic claims of truth. In Shahid's words:

> The problem was with his friends their story compelled him. But when he walked out, like someone leaving a cinema, he found the world to be more subtle and inexplicable. He knew too that stories were made up by men and women; they could not be true or false, for they were exercises in that most magnificent but unreliable capacity, the imagination, which William Blake called, "the divine body in every man."[494]

By reducing Islamic religious claims to one 'story' amongst many 'stories,' and by insisting upon the role of the imagination in its construction, Islamic claims of universal truth are undermined. As such, Shahid is simply unable to submit to Riaz' demands of him, because he continually compares Islamic "truth" to the rich variety of different perspectives he finds within London and within western culture more generally. In this respect, Islam becomes untenable for Shahid because it is unable to cope with the challenges to Islamic universalism that Sardar and Ahmed argue postmodernism represents - and in particular Lyotard's argument of the 'end of metanarratives' that is central to their understanding of the term.

Shahid's rejection of Islam, then, is both bound to the discourse of postmodernity, in which knowledge appears partial and provisional, and to a discourse of modernity, against which Islamic truth claims are undermined by more 'demonstrable' forms of knowledge. From the perspective of Sardar's work, what is significant is not which of

these discourses represents the most significant challenge to Islamic epistemology, but that Muslims are not given a legitimate voice in the novel to defend Islam against these charges. This is precisely the problem that Sardar argues exists in the globalisation process, because when Muslims are represented within a secular liberal worldview, the idea of meaningful self-determination centred in an Islamic epistemological centre is precluded.

In Search of a Moderate Muslim: Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*

If *The Black Album* implies that globalisation will prevent the rise of Islamism in Britain by offering more appealing cultural influences and delegitimizing Islamic epistemology, then *Brick Lane*, written eight years later, reveals the limitations of this outlook. It does so by exposing the extent to which Islam continues to matter to the lives of numerous young British-born Muslims. Like both *The Satanic Verses* and *The Black Album*, *Brick Lane* shows globalisation to have a dialectical effect on the production of Muslim identity for these characters. Unlike these earlier novels, however, *Brick Lane* does not represent globalisation as a struggle between western liberalism and Islamism, but between "moderate" and Islamist identities.[495] Ali represents this conflict by structuring the narrative of *Brick Lane* around an affair between the novel's protagonist, an immigrant Bangladeshi woman, Nasreen, and her young British-Asian lover, Karim. While Nasreen is drawn toward western culture as the novel progresses, Karim, conversely, comes to reject the British dimension of his identity as his involvement with Islamism deepens. This narrative structure enables Ali to give a more complex range of Muslim identities than either *The Satanic Verses* or *The Black Album* offer, while at the same time disavowing the rise of political Islam in Britain that globalisation is shown to facilitate.

In describing Karim's attraction to Islam, *Brick Lane* both rehearses and extends many of the ways that Rushdie and Kureishi show the nexus of diaspora and globalisation to produce new Muslim identities. For example like Chad, Karim shows how the adoption of Islamic "tradition" is a process of self re-invention that is quite different to Sardar and Ahmed's conception of cultural tradition. To a far greater extent than *The*

Black Album, however, *Brick Lane* represents this process of self-reinvention to closely resemble what Sardar describes as a postmodern preoccupation with "lifestyle". Thus, Ali describes the Islamisation of Karim's identity through language more evocative of global youth subculture than Islamic cultural tradition, as the following passage suggests:

> Karim had a new style. The gold necklace vanished; the jeans, shirts and trainers went as well. Some of the parents were telling their daughters to leave their headscarves at home. Karim put on panjabi-pyjama and a skullcap. He wore a sleeveless vest and big boots with the laces left undone at the top.[496]

Karim adopts this identity in the context of the turbulent post 9/11 period, amid strong anti-Muslim hostility. Such timing is significant, because while Karim regards his new Muslim identity to be a rejection of westernisation in favour of Muslim traditionalism, in point of fact, it is far from traditional. While tradition is bound to social institutions, Karim's decision to adopt a self-consciously Islamic 'style' following 9/11 has nothing to do with Islamic institutional mandates. Indeed, Ali shows the Muslim community in East London to advocate the reverse course of action in order to avoid confrontation in a time a strong anti-Muslim sentiment. Hence, although Karim may attempt to couch his Muslim identity in the tropes of tradition, it is an identity that remains an act of individual will, motivated by personal conviction. In short, Karim offers an acute example of the triumph of the religious self that Roy argues characterises Muslim identity when traditional institutions have been fractured by diaspora and globalisation.

Like Roy, Ali finds Karim's approach to Islam, grounded in individual conviction, to be well suited to globalisation precisely because it is not dependent upon networks of tradition or institutional control. In this respect, an emphasis upon individual belief transforms Muslim identity into a matter of choice within a world-market of religious identities. One of Karim's fellow British-Muslims articulates this view of Islam very clearly when he comments that,

> "I tried Pentecostal, Baptist, Churcha Englan', Cat'olic, Seventh Day, Churcha Christ, Healin' Churcha Christ, Jehovah Witness, Evangelical, Angelical, and the miracle Church of our Saviour...All loose'n' lax like anything. Loose *and* lax." [sic][497]

In this understanding, it is the perceived rigidity of Islamic codes that makes Islam so appealing to many individuals born outside of traditional Islamic societies - an observation that is not only borne out amongst *Brick Lane's* British-Muslims, but also Chad in *The Black Album* and Bilal X in *The Satanic Verses*. Thus, if globalisation is understood, as Ahmed and Sardar argue, as a process that destabilises traditional cultural and social networks, then these characters indicate that this does not inevitably lead to the erosion of Muslim identity. Rather, as globalisation and diaspora bring traditional narratives of identity into question, Islam emerges as a counter response that fulfils a desire for certainty in an increasingly uncertain world. As we have repeatedly seen in this chapter, in concretised, unequivocal terms, Islam gives answers to questions of "who am I" for numerous characters in all three texts.

To Ali's credit *Brick Lane* takes this desire for stability and certainty seriously in Karim's character to a far greater extent than Rushdie and Kureishi's ironic treatment of Bilal X and Chad in their respective novels. Recognition of this desire for stable identities is important because while the trend in much postcolonial theory may advocate fluid identities, Karim's character reveals a disparity between such theoretical approaches and the lives of many inner city British-Asians. For example, Radha Radhakrishnan argues that a privileging of fluid, western, secular, hybrid identities is evident within postcolonial theory at the expense of 'authentic' approaches to identity that emphasise the idea of cultural 'rootedness.'[498] While Karim's desire for authenticity may vacillate between Radhakrishnan's more progressive version of authenticity and the sort of reified versions of Islam evident in *The Satanic Verses* and *The Black Album*, acknowledging his desire for authenticity is nevertheless important. It is an approach to identity that questions whether fluid, interstitial identities are to be celebrated in South Asian diasporic fiction to the extent that Rushdie does in his defence of *The Satanic Verses*. Therefore, while it is possible to reveal the ironies and contradictions in Karim's Muslim identity, doing so overlooks why he adopts such an identity in the first place. Awareness of this motivation implies that for many British-Asians the passage toward the liberal worldview that *The Black Album* posits, or the version secular of pluralism that Rushdie outlines in 'In Good Faith,' is unlikely to occur any time soon. In this regard, Karim would certainly seem to allay Ahmed and Sardar's fears that globalisation promotes

liberal, secular identities by demonstrating a resilient desire to identify with Islamic tradition -even if what constitutes tradition has been transformed in recent years by globalisation.

An important motivating factor behind this attraction to Islamic tradition, amongst second-and-third generation British-Asians in *Brick Lane*, is as a response to racism and social impoverishment. Echoing Shahid's comments in *The Black Album*, Karim remarks to Nasreen:

> When I was at school, we used to get chased home every day. People getting beat up the whole time. Then we got together and turned the tables. One of us got touched, they all paid for it. We went everywhere together, we started to fight and we got a reputation.[499]

The strong sense of collectivism alluded to here provide the foundation for Karim's embrace of Islam and confirms Kureishi's view in *The Black Album*, as well as those of Sayyid and Roy, that connect the growing popularity of Islam to racist violence. However, *Brick Lane* also extends this view by detailing how globalisation plays a significant role in transforming the general sense of collective identity that racism produces in Karim and his friends into a specific Muslim identity.

Indeed, the extent to which globalisation manufactures Islam in *Brick Lane* is evident in the novel's description of the formation of 'The Bengal Tigers.' The transformation of Karim's group of friends from the 'we' that 'started to fight' and 'got a reputation' into a specific Muslim organisation is largely a response to outside influence. In particular, the propaganda of the right wing group, 'The British Lions,' is important to the inception of 'The Bengal Tigers' and plays a crucial role in transforming Karim and his friends from Bangladeshi street gang into an aspiring Muslim organisation. We see this shift articulated clearly in 'The British Lions'' rhetoric that claims:

> Christianity is being gently slaughtered. It is "only one" of the world's "great religions" Indeed in our schools you should be forgiven for thinking that Islam is the official religion...Should we be forced to put up with this? When the truth is that it is a religion of hate and intolerance. When Muslim extremists are planning to turn Britain into an Islamic Republic, using a combination of immigration, high birth rates, and conversion.[500]

In this passage, the language of the British far right is transformed from the sorts of racism that Genghis exemplifies in *My Beautiful Laundrette* during the mid 1980's to a discourse of Islamaphobia. Thus, the fear of the British Lions outlined in this passage is not racial miscegenation, but Islamisation. And in order to account for this shift in far right rhetoric, we must surely look to the increasing global profile of Islam in the seventeen years that separate *My Beautiful Laundrette* from *Brick Lane*. In this respect, the rise of Islam in Britain should not only be seen as a form of local social resistance and as a response to the increasing uncertainty of identity by young British Muslims, but also as an outcome of the media's portrayal of Islam. After all as *Brick Lane* shows, Karim's and his friends adoption of Muslim identities is as much an act of re-claiming identities that have been constructed for them by 'The British Lions' as it is a matter of their own agency.

By exploring the role of the media in promoting Muslim identity, *Brick Lane* develops *The Black Album's* brief representation of this issue in more detail. Ali shows that following 9/11 the influence of the global media upon Muslim identity is far more pervasive than simply promoting controversial Muslim leaders. This complex shaping of Muslim subjectivity is succinctly captured in a particular scene in *Brick Lane*. In it the central Bengali family of the novel sit together watching the events of the World Trade Centre attacks unfold on television. Ali describes the scene as follows:

> A pinch of dust blew across the ocean and settles on the Dogwood Estate. Sorupa's daughter was the first, but not the only one. Walking in the street, on her way to college, she had her hijab pulled off. Raiza wore her Union Jack sweatshirt and it was spat on. "Now you will see what will happen," said Chanu. "Backlash." He entangled himself with newspapers and began to mutter and mumble. He no longer spoke to his audience. [501]

What this passage captures so well is the inescapable influence of global events on Muslim experiences around the world and the sense of Muslim subjectivity it produces. Here, local communities experience a 'backlash' because of events occurring thousands of miles away, caused by people connected to them only through the global media's representation of Islamic identity.

For Chanu - who remains a deeply secular character in the novel and prizes English culture and western science, whilst holding a deep antipathy to Islam - 9/11 represents a watershed moment. Chanu understands 9/11 as an event that will implicate him in the West's representation of Muslim identity, demonstrating how the increasing visibility of Islam within the media and public discourse is crucial to promoting Muslim identity in Britain. Thus, just as the Imam in *The Satanic Verses* confidently speaks on behalf of a Muslim "us" that disregards disparate contexts and cultural backgrounds, so too does the high public profile of "Islamic Terrorism" produce a monolithic Muslim "them." After all, Chanu as a secular Bengali living in East London bears no cultural, political or historical links to the Al Qaeda bombers of 9/11, and it is only through the invocation of Islam that they are tenuously linked. Nevertheless, Chanu is aware that his own power to self-identify is nothing compared to the global media's power to associate his identity with Islam. Consequently, Chanu feels himself to be part of a global Muslim community not because he chooses to be, or because of his own particular cultural background, but rather because his otherness to white Britain is now couched in these terms. In this respect, Chanu provides a second qualification to the liberal outlook of *The Black Album* that implies the rejection of Islam will come about as a matter of individual choice, because for Chanu the choice to reject Muslim identification does not exist following 9/11. Consequently, he represents a different type of Muslim identity that none of the theorists in this chapter account for: the inadvertent Muslim whose identity is produced by association with Western media stereotypes.

But while *Brick Lane* is attuned to the ways in which globalisation promotes Muslim identities, as with Rushdie and Kureishi, Ali clearly disavows this conception of Muslim identity in *Brick Lane*. What is different about *Brick Lane*, however, is the way in which this disavowal of global Islamism occurs. Rather than represent a binary division between Islamism and a liberal worldview, the novel imagines a third possibility of Muslim identification through Nasreen's character. Nasreen's Muslim identity both offers recourse to the 'terrifying singularity' of Mahound in *The Satanic Verses* and is bound to a way of reading the Koran that stresses metaphor and individual interpretation. Consider for example, the following passage:

In the night, while her family slept, she performed *wudu* and took down the Qur'an. She read from the sura The Merciful.

> *"He has let loose the two oceans: they meet one another.*
> *Yet between them stands a barrier which they cannot overrun. Which Lord's blessing would you deny?*
> *Pearls and corals come from both. Which of the Lord's blessings would you deny?"*

She thought of her husband, sitting on the sofa that evening, serenely picking his toenails. When he had come home he had kissed her on the forehead and told her, "In all these years, I have never – not once- regretted my choice of Bride." She thought of her daughters. What beautiful blessings would she deny.[502]

The association of Nasreen with the metaphorical language of the Koran - the 'pearls and corals' of the 'Lord's blessings'- contrasts to the rigid, authoritarian interpretations of Islam that the male characters in the novel represent. [503] Thus, for Karim, as well as certain other young British-Asian members of 'The Bengal Tigers,' the Koran does not represent the poetic source of personal comfort that it does to Nasreen, but rather a social code of conduct. For example, at a meeting of 'The Bengal Tigers' one young British-Muslim remarks: '"The Qur'an bids us to keep separate. Sisters. What are you doing here anyway?"' While, from a British perspective, Nasreen's reading of the Koran may be preferable to the emphasis upon social codes that Karim and 'The Bengal Tigers' emphasise, the Muslim identity she represents is not meaningful in light of the theoretical conceptions of Islam examined in this chapter. [504] Hence, Nasreen's rebuff of Islamic cultural tradition disregards the worldview that is central to Sardar and Ahmed's version of Muslim identity, whilst her individualism, disinterest in Islam as a political identity and antipathy toward Islamic social coda, rejects Sayyid and Roy's respective approaches to Islamism and neofundamentalism.

Further, the trajectory of Nasreen toward a more empowered subject position and the extent to which *Brick Lane* associates such personal empowerment with turning away from Islam valorises westernisation. There is compelling evidence to support this claim in the way that the novel contrasts Nasreen's trajectory of empowerment in Britain to the fate of her sister, Hasina, in Bangladesh. The representations of Bangladeshi society in

the novel come to us through Hasina's letters to Nasreen in London and express her increasing sense of despair and disempowerment. While Hasina's trajectory is one of mounting abuse and disappointment as the novel progresses, Nasreen by contrast, ends the novel confidently affirming the agency that England has afforded her and declares, 'this is England...You can do whatever you like.'[505] Yet, we must ask what has really changed in Nasreen's circumstances to afford her such optimism? After all, she ends the novel as economically impoverished as she begins it, working in similar conditions of exploitation to those she has worked throughout the novel, suggesting that her empowerment has little to do with the improvement of labour conditions. And if this is so, the question becomes what leads Ali to represent Nasreen's experience in Britain in such a positive light and Hasina's in Bangladesh in such despairing terms?

In answer to this question, the reason for the divergence in the fates of Hasina and Nasreen is the latter's emancipation from the structures of traditional Islamic society. Ali indicates that for Hasina, Islamic control of social life in Bangladesh remains central to her oppression as an individual by denying her the agency that Nasreen comes to enjoy. For instance, Hasina recalls:

> *Some people making trouble outside factory. They shout to us. "Here come the garment girls. Choose the one you like." A mullah organize whole entire thing. Day and night they playing religious message with loudspeaker. They say it sinful for men and women working together. But they the ones sinning take God's name give insult to us and tell lie. Aleya husband getting anxious like anything. He want Aleya to wear Burkha inside of factory.* [sic][506]

Here, despite the factory remaining the locus of globalisation's exploitation of female labour, the role of core countries is obscured from any responsibility in Hasina's oppression. Rather, the voice of the Mullah emerges as central to Hasina's lack of agency in this scene, palpably asserting itself over the image of the factory. Consequently, it is the Mullah's religious mandate that appears most oppressive to Hasina and not the poverty of Bangladesh within the world system. Furthermore, later in the same letter, Hasina comments a *'big order come from Japan'* [sic] that will result in overtime for her. Hasina's welcome of such work creates the impression that the factory represents her

chance for a better life and that she supports economic globalisation because of the opportunities for financial independence it offers her.

The idea of Hasina welcoming economic globalisation is impressed upon the reader further by the form through which Hasina's voice is represented. Hasina's letters are important because they put the issue of globalisation and Third World labour into a personal register and interrupt the surface of *Brick Lane's* social realism. Both Alastair Cormack and Sebastian Groes have discussed the significance of Ali's decision to employ this narrative technique and the significance of Hasina's letters to the general mimetic characteristics of the text. Following Cormack, Groes argues that

> the representation of these translated letters in italics is an indication of a different narrative level. The epistolary interruptions, on the one hand, destroy the smooth reading process by pointing to the act of writing itself (a metatextual device which mocks the comfortable ways in which the reader is sucked into constructing a solid reality) whilst, on the other, paradoxically, the italics indicate the author's awareness of this artificiality, thus restoring the credulity, by way of excuse, as it were.[507]

A significant implication of this interruption to the construction of 'solid reality' that Hasina's letters represent is the question of why Hasina writes to her sister in broken English, rather than Bengali. Given that Nasreen does not speak English when she first arrives in Britain, and that both sisters are poorly educated, I find the choice of English as a language of communication between them implausible. In this respect, I would disagree with Groes's view that Hasina's broken English serves to reframe Nasreen as part of the British middle class, [508] and with Natasha Walter's review of the novel that finds this an effective narrative device. [509] Rather in light of this chapter's focus on Muslim identity, the decision to represent Hasina's voice through broken English reminds us that these letters are written as direct addresses to an English speaking audience and not to Nasreen as a fictional character. Consequently, the language of the letters – *'He want Aleya to wear Burkha inside of factory'* – should be seen as a strategy to reinforce the idea of Muslim women as victims within Islamic society.

In this reading, Hasina's letters indicate that *Brick Lane* is part of a recent trend, along with books such as *Reading Lolita in Tehran,* which reconstruct "authentic" female

Muslim voices for western audiences. Such texts, as Mitra Rastegar has argued, are 'liberation narratives' that reconstitute Orientalist attitudes toward Islamic societies 'through two overlapping parameters: gender and religion/secularism.'[510] On a general level, this means that *Brick Lane* reinforces the hegemonic views of Islamic society that Sardar identifies within global culture by representing Islam as repressive for women. But what is unique about the novel and, in particular, the letter form that *Brick Lane* employs, is the emotional response it creates toward Hasina's character. For a Western audience, holding Islam culpable for Hasina's oppression rather than the global economy alleviates a sense of complicity toward the fate of her character. This means that the emotional response toward Hasina is principally one of sympathy in the reader, rather than critical self-reflection. The distinction is important because while a Western audience is directly implicated in Hasina's role as a sweatshop worker in Bangladesh, it is not in her position in Islamic society. This reading of the novel substantiates Sardar's work, because it shows that the representation of Islam as antithetical to women's rights and human rights more broadly reinforces hegemonic discourses of Western intervention into Islamic societies. Moreover, in light of Marxist accounts of globalisation, it also suggests that fictional representations of Islam as repressive for women are a significant way that Western responsibility toward the oppression of Third World women is obfuscated.

Conclusion

The debate over whether the novels considered in this chapter show globalisation to have eroded or facilitated Muslim identity in the contemporary world depends upon how Muslim identity is defined. If Islam is understood principally in terms of cultural tradition, as Sardar and Ahmed claim, then undoubtedly it has declined. But all three novels show that migration and diaspora fracture traditional Islamic social institutions and produce new approaches to Muslim identity that cannot be understood in such narrow terms. Consequently, the representations of Islam in these novels constitute a range of identities that reflect Oliver Roy and Bobby Sayyid conception of Islam as a global discursive space. Such complex and varied representations of Muslim identities

provide uneven support for the theoretical debate about the effects of globalisation on Muslim identity outlined in the first section of this chapter in a number of ways.

First, all three novels show how migration and diaspora reduce the importance of social institutions to the production of Muslim identity and make identification with Islam increasingly an act of individual will. In *The Satanic Verses*, this is evidenced through Gibreel's re-imagining of Islam after migrating to Britain that places him, rather than God, at the centre of the novel's representation of Islam. In both *The Black Album* and *Brick Lane*, the adoption of Islam by young British-born Muslims is also shown to be an act of self-reinvention, rather than the transmission of cultural identity passed down through generations. Significantly, all three texts illustrate these new approaches to Muslim identity to be particularly well suited to the globalisation process because they are not dependent upon conceptions of a shared culture, language, or territory. Rather, as the rhetoric of the Islamist leaders in the novels signals, these new conceptions of Muslim identity are globally inclusive since they are grounded in the idea of a common spiritual future, rather than a collective cultural past. Such versions of Muslim identity vacillate between Roy's definition of 'neofundamentalism' and Sayyid's Islamism, although none of the novels in this chapter herald Islam as the harbinger of the political potential that Sayyid argues it represents.

Second, the threat of global westernisation that Sardar and Ahmed identify is shown to promote Muslim identities rather than undermine them. This is because the "West" provides the binary opposition against which global Islam defines itself. Indeed, these novels indicate that the rejection of "Western" identities is a significant aspect of Muslim identity for Muslims who have migrated to, or were born in, the "West." In the case of the South Asian diaspora in Britain, resistance to westernisation is bound to the experience of racism that has produced a sense of exclusion from British society and "Western" culture more broadly. This has an ambivalent effect on the representation of Muslim identities in all three novels. On the one hand, it supports Roy and Sayyid's argument that racism and social marginalisation are important factors in producing a new generation of western born Muslims. *The Black Album*, in particular, also extends Roy and Sayyid's theoretical work by showing how the spiritual dimension of Islam enables a sense of escape from the painful memories of racist experiences. What is unique about

Islam then, is that it provides a space of identification above and beyond the categories of race, nation, and ethnicity, which have proven painful and problematic for many British-Asian characters in these texts. On the other hand, this conception of Islamism is defined principally in negative terms - a rejection of Western culture rather than an attraction to an alternative Islamic centre. Consequently, Islamism in these texts does not appear as a compelling solution to global problems as Sayyid argues, but rather reflects Sardar's view of Western culture in which Muslim identity can only be conceived in relation to a Western centre.

Third, the effects of global communications networks upon Muslim identity are once again represented as uneven. On the one hand, global communication networks provide the platform upon which various Islamic leaders, such as the Imam in *The Satanic Verses,* are able to articulate their versions of a global Muslim Ummah. For young British Muslims like Chad in *The Black Album* and Karim in *Brick Lane,* media representations of Muslims have a powerful influence upon their identities, leading them to identify with various Muslim struggles around the world. This aspect of the global media certainly supports both Roy and Sayyid's contention that global communication networks are crucial to Muslims articulating a global vision of Muslim identity. On the other hand, *The Black Album* and *Brick Lane* show that the western media's appetite for controversial Muslim leaders and coverage of global events, such as 9/11, have significant effects on shaping and, at times, producing Muslim identities. Global media networks, therefore, not only enable Muslim articulations of a global Islamic community, but also produce the sort of problematic Western representations of Muslims that Sardar and Ahmed identify. *Brick Lane* shows that one effect of this high media profile of Muslim identity in Britain is a shift from racism to Islamaphobia and, consequently, that following 9/11 Muslim identification is not simply a matter of individual choice as Rushdie and Kureishi imply.

Fourth, if, in the ways previously discussed, all three novels demonstrate globalisation to promote new globalised articulations of Muslim identity, then these identities are also shown to conflict with the writers' own secular views. In this respect, all three novels support Sardar's claims of 'epistemological imperialism' within global culture but do so in markedly different ways. Unlike *The Satanic Verses*, *Brick Lane* and

The Black Album do not fit neatly into Sardar and Ahmed's characterisation of postmodern fiction that both claim to be central to globalisation's promotion of a secular worldview. In contrast to *The Satanic Verses*, *The Black Album* and *Brick Lane* are traditional social realist novels, which draw upon the discourses and narrative strategies of both modernity and postmodernity in mixed and, at times, conflicting ways. However, the important issue here is not whether modernity or postmodernity represents the most significant challenge to Islam, but rather that none of these novels attempt to represent Muslim identity within terms that are sympathetic to an Islamic worldview. The outcome of representing Muslims through a secular worldview, rather than an Islamic one, is that the individual characters that do adopt Islamic identities are shown to be dysfunctional and out of touch with the broader world they inhabit. Thus, both *The Satanic Verses* and *The Black Album* render Islam as an authoritarian and ultimately a violent religion, while *Brick Lane* implies that Islam offers problematic roles for women and concludes with the well-worn stereotype of Karim fighting for Jihad. Taken together these fictional accounts of Islam reinforce current hegemonic representations of Muslims and ultimately reflect "Western" attitudes about Muslims, rather than meaningful representations of Muslims as conceived by any of the Islamic scholars considered in this chapter.

Nevertheless, despite all three writers disavowing global Islam from their own secular perspectives, this does not mean that their novels represent globalisation simply as a process of westernisation. Rather, they show globalisation to have a dialectical effect on Muslim identity. Thus the novels in this chapter both advance a secular worldview and, at the same time, show the limits of this worldview by revealing how important Islam remains to individual Muslims. In particular, the novels illustrate that as diaspora and globalisation fracture traditional Islamic societies, the desire for "tradition" and "authenticity" does not necessarily diminish with it. This perspective suggests that Sardar and Ahmed's rather static and narrow understanding of Islamic tradition needs to be re-thought in an age of globalisation. It shows that as long as an idea of Islamic tradition matters to individual Muslims, then Muslim identity will continue to exist in one form or another. Consequently, if indeed there is a conflict between Islam and the West, then framing this conflict in terms of a 'clash of civilisations,' or between globalisation and traditional cultures, overlooks the discursive nature of this conflict *within* the

globalisation process – a struggle that is now increasingly being played out in the identities of individuals and is inflected by a diverse range of issues.

Chapter 4

Gendering the World: Globalisation and Gender Identities in Farhana Sheikh's *The Red Box*, Meera Syal's *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee* and Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers*

> 'The "now-on-now-off" quality of the veil in West Asia has been done to death by the politics of power and subordination controlled by the West. If the imposition of the veil has elicited protest, then the ban on veiling has sent girls in France and Spain to courts demanding the right to go to school with their heads covered. The clarion call for the "liberation" of West Asian women has, in fact, pushed Muslim women in the direction of cover and clothing. It is in this mood that women of Turkey, Iran, Syria, Tunisia, Egypt and Saudi Arabia insist that war, poverty, illiteracy, starvation and globalisation are the greatest adversaries of women's rights, not the veil.'
> - Rumina Sethi [511]

Introduction

The comments by Rumina Sethi, which serve as the epigraph to this chapter, reveal how the negotiation of gender identities in an age of globalisation are connected to a complex set of religious, cultural, class and geopolitical political issues. Sethi's article exposes how the veil has become an important focal point for a range of conflicts between the 'West' and Muslims as a result of colonialism, diaspora and globalisation. The article notes that while for many western feminists the veil symbolises the oppression of Muslim women, for certain Muslim women it has become a symbol of resistance to western global dominance. In this respect, the veil represents one example of how issues of economic inequality and cultural westernisation play an important role in shaping gender identities in non-Western societies and their diasporas. Consequently, in order to analyze the effects of globalisation upon inherited conceptions gender identities within the South Asian diaspora in Britain, it is necessary to understand how "traditional" gender identities are often re-articulated as a means of resisting various aspects of globalisation. At the same time, it is also important to frame analysis of gender inequality within the context of

class and issues of global poverty, which for many non-Western women 'are the greatest adversaries of women's rights,' rather than cultural traditions such as the veil.

In light of these considerations, the aim of this chapter is to explore the effects of globalisation upon inherited conceptions of South Asian gender identities in Farhana Sheik's *The Red Box*, Meera Syal's *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee* and Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers.* The chapter asks: To what extent does the South Asia diaspora in Britain respond to globalisation by (re)-articulating and/or reifying traditional gender identities? Does globalisation promote the erosion and/or westernisation of traditional South Asian gender identities? Or does globalisation represent a third possibility, in which a universal conception of gender, framed within a discourse of human rights, transcends discourses of cultural imperialism? I begin the chapter by examining two different theoretical explanations of the relationship between gender and globalisation. The first, grounded in Wallerstein's world system theory, argues that gender is a structural aspect of the capitalist global economy and integral to the global division of labour. Therefore as long as global capitalism exists, repressive female identities will continue exist in order to devalorise women's labour and maximise profits. The second theoretical position, exemplified in the work of Arjun Appadurai, regards the effects of globalisation on traditional gender identities to be more complex and uneven than Marxists maintain. Consequently, liberal theorists of globalisation argue that globalisation has not only led to the re-inscription of traditional gender identities, but also enabled a range of new progressive gender possibilities framed within a discourse of human rights.

Two Theoretical Explanations of the Effects of Globalisation upon Gender Identities

According to Immanuel Wallerstein, universalism is 'the gospel of modernity' and is crucial to the establishment and maintenance of the world-system. Wallerstein writes:

> Universalism means in general, the priority to general rules applying equally to all persons, and therefore the rejection of particularistic preferences in most spheres. The only rules that are considered permissible within the framework of universalism are those which can be shown to apply directly to the narrowly proper functioning of the world-system. [512]

Yet if universalism remains integral to establishing a singular world-system because it demands rules that apply equally to all persons then Wallerstein also notes a contradictory feature of the world-system that he calls 'anti-universalism.'[513] Specifically, the categories of race and gender are anti-universalist because they stratify the world into a division of 'social rankings.' Within this stratification

> sexism along with racism are central to allocating work, power, and privilege within the modern world-system. They seem to imply exclusions from the social arena. Actually they are really modes of inclusion, but of inclusion at inferior ranks. These norms exist to justify the lower ranking, to enforce the lower ranking, and perversely even to make it palatable to those who have the lower ranking. [514]

Gender 'norms,' within this formulation, are naturalised narratives of identity that ascribe particular identities to men and women as 'biologically rooted necessities of the functioning of the human animal' and are as 'fundamental to the [world] system as the core-peripheral axial division of labor.'[515] The role of gender identities is to create a division of labour that legitimates the unpaid labour of women as housewives and also de-valorises female labour when they are incorporated into the labour market.[516] For example, following Wallerstein, Maria Mies shows that female identity is constructed by associating women with the domestic sphere through discourses of motherhood, marriage, and femininity. The capitalist world-system reinforces these "problematic" gender identities for women because of their importance to keeping wages low and, therefore, maximising profits. Marxist critics draw upon convincing empirical data to support these claims, noting that while women work two thirds of the world's working hours and produce half the world's food, they earn only ten per cent of the world's income and own less than one per cent of the world's property. [517]

Wallerstein' conception of gender within the world-system is extended by the work of Aníbal Quijano. Quijano shows how race and gender intersect in the world system to constitute what Quijano calls 'the coloniality of power.' [518] According to Quijano, because colonial expansion was led by white European men, global structures of

power were established by and enmeshed with, racist, sexist and homophobic hierarchies and discourses in order to legitimate their rule. As Quijano puts it:

> Historically, this [the concept of race] meant a new way of legitimizing the already old ideas and practices of relations of superiority/inferiority between dominant and dominated. From the sixteenth century on, this principle has proven to be the most effective and long-lasting instrument of universal social domination, since the much older principle—gender or intersexual domination—was encroached upon by the inferior/superior racial classifications. [519]

Quijano argues that these modern conceptions of race and gender were made possible by European Cartesian duality that allowed the body to be conceived as an object of knowledge. Within this world-view, the categories of race and gender offer an underlying biological explanation of identity that is used to classify the world's population hierarchically. Therefore to understand gender, for Quijano, necessitates an understanding of how gender is inflected by issues of race and sexuality. This fractures homogenous conceptions of gender identities and forces their re-conception as, for example, white-heterosexual- male identity. Failure to complicate gender identities in this way overlooks the relationship between identity and Eurocentric capitalist power. [520]

Recognising race and gender as deeply interconnected, but not commensurate identities within the capitalist world system, has crucial implications for how we understand the effects of globalisation upon gender identities. On the broadest level, it means that racism and sexism are structurally embedded within the capitalist world-system. Consequently, the effects of neoliberal globalisation on gender identities are very different for white male identities at the top of the world system, compared to non-white female at the bottom. In the case of non-white women, economic neoliberal globalisation (re)produces traditional gender identities as a way of legitimating their alleged proclivity to certain kinds of low waged work. For example, Marchand and Runyan argue that

> [Third World] Women become preferred candidates for certain kinds of jobs needed in a global economy organized around services and JIT production processes. The main reasons for this are that women remain associated with unremunerated and service-orientated reproductive labor and are often seen as physically better suited to perform tedious repetitive tasks as well as more docile and, therefore, less likely to organize than men.[521]

These comments show that passive female identities associated with Third World women are not simply stereotypes that individual women must overcome, but discourses that have direct consequences for how labour is divided and wages are determined in the global economy. Consequently, as several Marxist commentators have pointed out, Third World women immigrants comprise the most exploited labour segment even after migration to the West, fulfilling demand for cheap sweatshop labour and, even more problematically, comprising the international trade in domestic help and sex workers.[522]

In contrast to the re-entrenchment of traditional female identities that de-valorise women's labour at the bottom of the global division of labour, white male identity remains the most privileged identity within economic globalisation.[523] This privileged social ranking has historically been established by contrasting white male identity to various subordinate male identities from other races, as well as to female identities. [524] For example, during the nineteenth century Charlotte Hooper points out how a particular Anglo-American masculinity emerged, which was bound to the project of frontier expansionism in America, as well as British colonialism. Here the tough, adventure-seeking male was positioned in opposition to domesticated narratives of female identity, as well as inferior masculinities, such as '"untrustworthy Orientals" or "sick" homosexuals'.[525] The effect of this was to produce a normative white male identity that legitimised the political and economic global hierarchy that Wallerstein and Quijano argue emerged during European colonial expansion.

However, following the onset of neoliberal globalisation and the restructuring of the global political economy since the mid 1970's, recent critics have noted a shift in how hegemonic white male identity is now constructed. For instance, grounded in analysis of *The Economist,* Hooper argues that a new elite masculinity has emerged in recent years, characterized by a 'softening' of male identity in response to globalisation. [526] This shift in male identity reflects a transformation in how capitalism is practiced today and in particular the 'feminized working practices' that are now central to corporate business strategy.[527] Hooper does not view this shift in male identity to be a progressive one, but rather a strategy so that 'professional men can stay ahead of the employment game, albeit under less secure conditions.'[528] Hence, narratives of '"The New Man"' are simply a way

of re-centring white male hegemony in response to neoliberal globalisation, rather than an indicator that traditional gender hierarchies have been destabilised. Understanding transformations in gender identities in this way is important because it questions whether globalisation represents a meaningful passage toward gender equality, or simply re-inscribes old hierarchies in new ways.

From the perspective of the South Asian diaspora in Britain, an important implication of framing gender identities within world systems theory is that it complicates liberal feminist conceptions of gender. Thus, as several Marxist critics have pointed out, often implicitly or explicitly implied within liberal discourses of gender is a demonization of non-western men and a belief in the superiority of Western secular gender norms. Consequently, Western-led globalisation re-articulates regressive representations of non-white men that were previously used to justify European colonial expansion. Such discourses are not only a strategy to maintain the hegemony of white male identity, but also a way to obfuscate the structural causes of gender inequality in the world system, which are the outcome of global capitalism and not non-Western cultural traditions.

*

In contrast to Marxist accounts of globalisation previously outlined, Appadurai argues that globalisation and diaspora destabilise traditional conceptions of gender in the West and non-West alike. Appadurai writes:

> What is new is that this is a world in which both points of departure and arrival are in cultural flux, and thus the search for steady points of reference, as critical life choices are made, can be very difficult. It is in this atmosphere that the invention of tradition (and of ethnicity, kinship, and other identity markers) can become slippery, as the search for certainties is regularly frustrated by the fluidities of traditional communication. [529]

Within this world of cultural flux, Appadurai argues that traditional gender identities are both fractured, and reformulated as an important aspect of the 'invention of tradition' in attempt to search for cultural certainty.[530] In both cases gender is seen as a contested

narrative. On the one hand, women can often become the victims of gendered violence and reified versions of tradition, while men are 'swayed by the macho politics of self-assertion in contexts where they are frequently denied real agency.'[531] On the other hand, globalisation can also challenge repressive gender identities through the global flow of *ideoscapes* that promote 'the discourse of democracy and human rights (continually inject[ed] by new meaning-streams)' around the world. [532] Hence, contra Marxist theorists, Appadurai does not regard gender identities to be structurally bound to global capitalism, but rather the outcome of a diverse range of responses by individuals, as well as groups of individuals, to the multidimensionality of globalisation.

Following Appadurai's liberal conception of the relationship between globalisation and gender, several theorists show in more detail how globalisation destabilises traditional gender conceptions on a number of fronts. First, these critics argue that the incorporation of an unprecedented number of women into the global economy in recent years has been beneficial for many women, even those that enter the workforce as poorly paid unskilled labour in the Third World. This is because women entering the workforce challenge local patriarchal gender systems and improve the lives of women by giving them more power, autonomy and participation in the public sphere.[533] For example, Saskia Sassen argues that while exploitation of women occurs within the global economy it also brings with it positive implications for female agency. Sassen enumerates these positive effects as follows:

> Women gain greater personal autonomy and independence while men lose ground. Women gain more control over budgeting and other domestic decisions and greater leverage in requesting help from men in domestic chores. Also, their access to public services and other public resources gives them a chance to become incorporated in the mainstream society – they are often the ones in the household who mediate the process.[534]

This positive assessment of incorporating more women into the global economy is because it enables 'their possible emergence as public actors.'[535] According to Sassen, the increased engagement of women with public space is particularly significant in global cities such as London and New York where an 'unbundling of sovereignty' is intensified.

This makes global cities rich in possibilities for new transnational feminist political movements that challenge the repression of women around the world.[536]

For Sassen, central to such a feminist transnational politics is the need to frame women's rights within a discourse of international human rights and the sorts of global *ideoscapes* that Appadurai identifies. Toward this objective, Sassen is concerned with exploring the new transnational legal regimes that economic globalisation has produced, as a means for advancing women's rights around the world. Of this Sassen writes:

> The ascendance of an international human rights regime and of a large variety of non-state actors in the international arena signals the expansion of an international civil society. This is clearly a contested space, particularly when we consider the logic of capital market – profitably at all costs – against that of the human rights regime. But it does represent a space where women can gain visibility as individuals and collective actors, and come out of the invisibility of aggregate membership in a nation-state exclusively represented by the sovereign. The practises and claims enacted by non-state actors in this international space may well contribute to creating international law, as is most clearly the case with both international human rights and demands for rights made by firms and markets with global operations. [537]

By framing gender equality within a discourse of human rights, the universal rights of women are affirmed as individuals, rather than as citizens of a particular nation-state. Consequently, the individual will become an 'object of law and a site for rights regardless of whether a citizen or an alien, whether a man or a woman where there are gendered legal regimes.'[538] However, while Sassen argues that globalisation provides the conditions in which such a politics of human rights can emerge, the effect of this upon actual gender identities is less clearly defined. The conception of women as individuals within a universal human rights framework certainly represents a significant challenge to traditional gender roles and identities, which are by definition grounded in collective ideas of culture and social practices. But the extent to which this challenge leads to new heterogeneous gender identities (as many gender identities as individuals?), the westernisation of gender identities (emphasis on individualism reinforces American led globalisation?), or a post-gender era (human rights erodes gender differences?) remains open to debate.

A second, less direct way that globalisation is shown to have a progressive effect upon gender identities for women, is through the spread of global consumer and popular culture. Jacqui True, for example, argues that the 'spread of consumption, cultural production, and information in the global political economy can enable women to create new identities as individuals and citizens.'[539] For True, these new conceptions of gender re-distribute power and roles between men and women in ways that are progressive for both. Thus while men may lose ground in the public sphere, they are able to gain in the traditional areas of 'women's power, in the family, kin-community, and local social networks.'[540] In short, globalisation exposes individuals to a more heterogeneous series of gender scripts compared to what exist in traditional societies and, therefore, represents a process that increases the gender possibilities imagined within individual lives.

Frank Mort identifies an equally positive influence of global popular and consumer culture upon male identities. In contrast to Marxist accounts, Mort argues that the imagery and discourses associated with the 'New Man' in the 1980's undermine traditional conceptions of male identity and enable men to conceive of themselves in gendered terms for the first time. The effect of this is to de-centre male experience as a universal social norm. Drawing upon Mort's work, Sean Nixon goes on to argue that the 'New Man' and its successor in Britain, the 'New Lad,' represent forms of style and consumption that broaden British ideas of masculinity. For instance, Nixon argues how these new conceptions of masculinity 'circumvent the previous problem of British men being labelled outlandish or homosexual if they were concerned about the cut of their clothes or the gloss of their skin.'[541] Despite the role that multinational companies play in producing these new narratives of masculinity, Nixon maintains that this does not result in the global homogenisation of male identities. Rather, he argues that localities continue to shape 'the re-signifying of masculinity within popular cultural forms' through peculiarly national frameworks.[542] Therefore for Nixon, new male identities are produced dialectically between trends in global consumer culture and older nationally specific conceptions of male identity.

Having considered some of the relevant aspects of the possible effects of globalisation on traditional understandings of gender, I will now examine how South Asian diasporic fiction treats these issues with reference to three significant texts;

Farhana Sheikh's *The Red Box*, Meera Syal's *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee* and Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers*. These fictional narratives are a particularly rich source from which to examine the debate previously outlined, because they mediate between the effects of global restructuring, South Asian cultural and religious traditions and the experiences of people's everyday lives. The issue of agency is a key concern here - the extent to which men and women are able to choose their gender roles and identities, what conceptions of gender are meaningful to them, as well as what forces and considerations shape such choices. Just as important is the investigation of what disparities exist between the gender identities that such individuals choose for themselves and the social conditions that prevent these identities from being meaningfully enacted in their everyday lives.

The Multidimensionality of Gender: Farhana Sheikh's *The Red Box*

A frequent theme of much South Asian diasporic fiction is the idea that traditional South Asian cultures produce repressive gender roles and identities for women. Inderpal Grewal, for example, argues that a widespread motif in the sub-genre is a valorisation of assimilation from Indian tradition to Americanised modernity. According to Grewal this motif reinforces hegemonic ideas about the progressiveness of American-led globalisation and perpetuates a backward and culturally static image of India.[543] *The Red Box* certainly finds certain aspects of traditional South Asian culture repressive for women. In particular the novel clearly disavows confining women to the domestic sphere as enablers of male labour. For example, one South Asian female character, Mrs Eshan, articulates this aspect of traditional South Asian society in the following way: women worked 'as they've always worked – they helped the men, they worked to keep their families together. The men earned the money, the workers were men.'[544] Insofar as globalisation destabilises these aspects of South Asian culture through the processes that Sassen identifies, then globalisation is seen as a positive influence in the novel. However, far more prevalent in the text is a multidimensional view of gender that shows gender identities always to be inflected by issues of class, culture and race. This multidimensional view of gender repeatedly questions globalisation as a progressive

narrative for South Asian women. In particular, it reveals how globalisation increases economic inequality for many South Asian women and, at the same time, exposes both liberal and Marxist accounts of gender equality to be limited because of their failure to consider cultural difference.

The Red Box investigates the complexity of gender identities within the South Asian diasporic community in London by representing the lives of three women from very different backgrounds; Raisa, Tahira and Nasreen. The narrative is loosely organised around the meetings of these three women as part of Raisa's academic research project, enabling Sheikh to explore the memories, expectations and identities of the women and their families. The looseness of the structure allows for a variety of narrative modes to be employed: sections are written in both the first and third person, while the transcription of the interviews between the three women constructs a dramatic dialogue that creates the impression of each woman being given an unmediated voice in the text. The novel ends with a long letter written by Raisa to Tahira and Nasreen that attempts to explain her own complex family background and make sense of the lives that her research has uncovered. This lack of narrative unity reflects Sheikh's refusal to collapse the three women's subjectivities and identities into a monolithic female identity, or even a more nuanced division between British-Asian or Muslim female identity. Rather, the novel represents gender to be negotiated within a complex series of relationships and interconnected narratives that reveals globalisation to have uneven and, at times, conflicting effects on the gender identities and lives of the women.

In contrast to Grewal's assessment of recent South Asian diasporic fiction, Raisa embodies a more even handed approach to cultural exchange and, as a consequence, her ideas of gender are not only shaped by Western culture, but also by an Islamic world-view, as well as the expectations and values of her Pakistani family. The outcome of Raisa's refusal to reject her South Asian background is that in her work with Tahira and Nasreen, she explicitly frames issues of gender roles, identities, and equality within the context of the Koran. Consider, for example, the following exchange between the three women:

"Allah regards all men and women as equal," Nasreen read from her notes and then expanded on them. "You know, even though they have different roles to play, He still regards both as being equal and does not see one superior to the other, and He will give both His full protection, and give both equal unmatchable rewards, you know, as no other can."

"God!" Tahira breathed out loudly. "She does sound like a book and she ain't even reading."

Raisa said, "When you say they are equal but they have different roles, what do you mean?"

"Like in the eyes of Allah, He sees both men and women as equal. I mean, if man does good, He won't think it's better than if the woman did good. He rewards equal rewards to both."

""what about these different roles? Does this text tell you what the roles of a woman are?"

"no, but it's sort of," Nasreen was struggling for clarity, "you know the woman, she brings up the children, and she looks after the house, she cooks the dinner, and she washes her husband's clothes. Everything like that, and the man's sort of the breadwinner. He earns for them."

"Is that written here? Where does it tell you that?"

"It implies it." Nasreen looked at the table top.

"Perhaps your bring the idea from somewhere else. Perhaps you read it somewhere else. Maybe in your particular translation of the Qu'ran." [545]

Raisa's reading of the Koran here is grounded in what she refers to as the Koran's 'radical teaching on sexual equality.' [546] From this perspective, the gender roles that Nasreen identifies in Islam are not supported textually by the Koran but are rather ideas that Nasreen brought 'from somewhere else.' [547] According to Raisa, therefore, problematic gender roles and identities for women that are evident in certain Muslim societies are not inherent to the Koran, but rather reflect how the Koran has been used to justify patriarchal practices. The distinction is important because it means that a conception of gender equality can be worked out within Islamic culture, thereby contesting oversimplified representations of Islam as inherently oppressive to women

Nevertheless, if Raisa is someone who is able to synthesise her Muslim cultural background with western representations of gender identities, then there is no evidence in the novel to show that those outside Muslim communities are as open to her Islamic views of gender as she is to Western liberal conceptions of gender. Therefore, while Raisa's views of gender may exemplify the flow of *ideoscapes* that Appadurai identifies within the globalisation process, the novel shows that this process is more unidirectional than Appadurai claims. For example, amongst her circle of white British friends in London, Raisa notes in a letter to Nasreen and Tahira that 'I frequently talked about my

views and argued with others. My desire was to disrupt and change their ideas.' [548] She goes on to comment that she wanted to 'subvert' their conceptions of gender from a Muslim point of view, and to affirm 'I *am* celibate, I *am* a teetotaller, I *am* for justice.'[549] From Raisa's perspective, an Islamic worldview provides important qualifications to Western liberal conceptions of gender because it contests the idea that casual sexual relationships are liberating for women. Yet, despite Raisa's affirmation of her Muslim values, she notes that 'I struggled to make my meanings dominant' and that her views had little impact on the gender identities of her friends. Therefore, while Western liberalism is shown to shape Raisa's identity as a woman, the Koran's 'radical teaching on sexual equality' has no impact on the gender identities of the non-Muslims around her.[550]

Recognising this one-way process of cultural exchange in Raisa's life raises certain problems both in Appadurai's conception of *ideoscapes* and Sassen's framing of gender within a discourse of human rights. It shows that the effects of globalisation on gender identities are less decentred than Appadurai implies, and reveals how Muslim voices are marginalised from the progressive visions of gender that global flow of *ideoscapes* make possible. At the same time, it also exposes how important an Islamic worldview is to Raisa's conception of gender and her identity more broadly. Raisa's identity as a woman, therefore, is bound to a Muslim collective identity and is not centred in the individualism that is integral to Sassen's framing of gender within a discourse of human rights. While for Raisa the two perspectives may not be wholly incompatible, her character nevertheless highlights how Sassen's work fails to account for the importance of collective identities, grounded in cultural and religious tradition, to many South Asian diasporic women's lives. Therefore, the idea that globalisation will lead to the erosion of traditional conceptions of gender and affirm women as individuals, rather than as part of a cultural or religious community, might not necessarily be seen by all women as the positive development that Sassen claims. At the very least, Raisa broaches a number of difficult questions of defining what cultural gender practices would be deemed problematic within a discourse of human rights and who would have a say in how these limits are negotiated. On the evidence of Raisa's experiences in London, if Islamic views are excluded from this process, then the idea of framing gender within a discourse of

human rights would likely be perceived as cultural imperialism by many Muslims, rather than as the harbinger of a more egalitarian world with respect to gender.

A second important factor that shapes the effects of globalisation on gender identities in the novel is class. While Muslim identity means that Raisa' response to globalisation is not the same as her white British friends, class divisions amongst the South Asian diaspora in Britain prevents the representation as Muslim women from appearing as a homogenous group that respond to globalisation in the same way. The fissures in female identity that class produces are evident in the scenes surrounding Raisa's visits to Nasreen and Tahira's respective families. For example, upon first meeting Nasreen's mother, Mrs Ehsan, the commonalties of their backgrounds is emphasised by Mrs Ehsan as a way of establishing an affectionate bond between the two women:

> She had known Nasreen's mother only an hour, and the woman was sitting close to her, almost touching. There was a softness between them. It was as if Raisa had known her all her life. Her physical nearness, her smile, the way her children moved around her, conjured up images of her own mother, though Raisa knew those images masked so many other realities. Still, the woman communicated a mother's warmth, and Raisa knew her. Sitting with her in a terraced house in a crowded street in Barking, she was being returned to the blue room in Gulberg.[551]

Raisa is aware that despite the affectionate connection between her and Mrs. Ehsan, because of a shared language(s), religion, and memories of Lahore, the connection these shared experiences creates between them 'masks so many other realities.' [552]

Paramount amongst these 'other realities' are issues of class. Class becomes a more pressing concern as the chapter progresses because of the necessity of Mrs. Eshan's sewing work that begins to impinge upon the civility of sharing conversation, 'aromatic tea' and 'sweets and biscuits.'[553] Consequently, when Mrs. Eshan's eldest daughter's reminds her of the 'right number of blouses' that must be 'finished by the end of the day' for Mr. Khan, the conviviality of the scene is punctured by the class issues that Raisa had sensed upon first arrival. Sheikh describes the schism that class creates between Raisa and Mrs Eshan in the following way:

'Amma-jaan,' Rehana lowered her voice to her mother, "I'll start the work now.' Speaking Punjabi, she appeared older to Raisa, and Raisa felt excluded by her.

Her mother smiled apologetically at Raisa. She explained, 'You, must forgive my daughter, but work makes us forget our manners.'

Mrs. Eshan said, 'I work from home. You know how it is, bills and things have to be paid.'

Yes,' Raisa said, 'Please don't worry at all, there are no bad manners.' She thought she saw Rehana looking at her Enny handbag.

'Rehana said, 'my mum sews clothes. Mr. Khan's son will be around at six to collect them. She's had to work twice as hard this week. Mr. Khan's got to have the right number of blouses by the end of today.' [554]

The sense of exclusion that Raisa feels in this passage contrasts to the closeness that Mrs. Eshan had earlier fostered between them. This distance is reflected in Raisa's sudden self-consciousness about her 'Enny Handbag' that she recognises to symbolise the economic reality that separates her from Mrs. Eshan. Thus, the connection that Raisa had earlier felt with Mrs. Eshan and her family on the grounds of shared culture and memories gives way to a sense of otherness: a sense of coming face-to-face with the unseen labour that produces the designer brands that Raisa consumes. What binds Mrs. Eshan and Raisa as Pakistani immigrants in Britain, therefore, becomes unhinged by Rasia's recognition of their very different experiences as consumer and producer in the global economy.

The influence of class upon South Asian female identity is addressed even more explicitly later in the novel when Raisa meets Tahira's mother for the first time. Like Mrs. Eshan, Tahira's mother, Nargis, is part of Mr. Khan's East London sweatshop labour force. However unlike Mrs. Eshan, Nargis is a single mother and consequently her workload exceeds even that of Mrs. Eshan. For Nargis, the burden of this workload makes her so tired that she comments to Raisa, 'sometimes - I forget my manners.'[555] Nargis' weariness affects the tone of her meeting with Raisa and contrasts to the formal geniality of Mrs. Eshan. Moreover as a single mother, Nargis is socially marginalised from the South Asian immigrant community in East London, which, coupled with her tiredness from overwork, means that she is not concerned with social conventions to the extent that Mrs Eshan is. This leads Nargis to interrogate Raisa about her personal life far

more directly than Mrs. Eshan, forcing Raisa to reflect upon the complexities of South Asian female identity both on a personal level and in terms of her academic research. For instance, Nargis inquires, 'What is the work you are doing? What is it about?' causing Raisa to 'pause, think and re-invent,' before responding:

> 'I want to understand identity. I mean, I'm trying to understand who we are, we – Pakistani girls and women in England.'
>
> 'Who we are?' Nargis' expression was one of acute concentration.
>
> 'Yes, who we are – how we live, what we think is important, what we suffer, how we fight back.' Raisa was not sure whether it was the effort of oversimplification that made her words seem so facile, or whether there was some wider, uncrossable gap between the ideas she deployed with such deft enthusiasm, and what must be the dense, complex circumstances of Nargis' life. She continued, 'I want to understand who we are, and how we have become who we are.'
>
> 'How we live, what we think's important,' repeated Nargis. [556]

The number of times that 'we' is repeated in this short passage (twelve) reveals the unease with which Raisa feels at using the term, and suggests that Nargis' subjectivity does indeed represent an 'uncrossable gap' to Raisa's theoretical conception of 'Pakistani girls and women in England.' [557] In particular, the 'dense, complex circumstances of Nargis's life' reveal how class fractures Raisa's conception of 'who we are' and exposes two very different effects of globalisation upon gender identities. On the one hand, the effect of globalisation upon Raisa's identity is largely empowering: from her consumption of designer brands, penchant for 'late-night parties, wild dancing,'[558] to reading 'Tolstoy and Pushkin'[559] and listening to 'Santana, Captain Beefheart.' Raisa's experience of London as a global city, therefore, supports the general idea advanced by liberal theorists of globalisation that celebrates the exposure of individuals to new cultural scripts and gender identities. For Yasmin Hussain, this embrace of cultural diversity is the defining feature of Raisa's character that is driven by a search for 'self-determination and a need to establish her identity as distinct from other.'[560] From this perspective, the benefits of globalisation far outweigh its negative effects, because globalisation broadens the range of gender identities available to Raisa compared to Mrs Eshan's accounts of those available to women in traditional Pakistani society.

On the other hand, Raisa's relationship with Nargis and Tahira challenges Hussain's use of the term 'self-determination' in her reading of Raisa's character. For Hussain, self-determination is bound to the idea of Raisa defining her identity as a woman against the limitations available to her in traditional Pakistani culture and society. However, the idea that globalisation is a progressive influence upon the lives of South Asian women because it promotes different gender possibilities, makes the assumption that women can choose to enact such possibilities. Nargis lays bare the problems of such an assumption because like Raisa she is not confined by traditional Pakistani family structures, is part of Britain's workforce and engages with the public sphere in a number of ways. Yet for Nargis, there is little evidence of self-determination in her character and the limited gender roles available to her are not because of limited cultural influences, but the result of her life as a sweatshop worker. In this respect, the novel questions liberal arguments about the positive effects of globalisation upon gender identities by showing them to have a middle class bias and to bear little relation to the experiences of working class inner city women like Nargis.

The importance of Nargis's experience of globalisation in countering the experiences of Raisa is made clear by Sheikh's decision to narrate a whole chapter from Nargis's point of view. The chapter describes a single day of work for Nargis at Mr. Khan's sweatshop and details how gender remains crucial to the division of labour at the factory. For example, within the limited opportunities of the sweatshop, gender determines which jobs are available to men and women. Consequently, the more highly paid positions of 'presser' and 'cutter' are only open to men, despite Nargis's own ability and experience of performing such jobs.[561] Nargis is cognisant that these gendered divisions are manipulated by Mr. Khan as a way to divide his workforce and prevent labour organisation. Or as Nargis puts it: 'You pay me a little more than the other women...and the other women hate me a little for it; you pay the men a little more still, and we hate the men a little. Your generosity keeps us apart.'[562] Nargis attempts to use her awareness of such exploitation to inform her co-workers of their labour rights and mobilise them to demand better working conditions, as the following passage indicates:

> In secret conversations Nargis had tried to make the women understand how they were only helping Mr Khan, not themselves; how they had to be registered because without they couldn't claim benefits – sickness, unemployment, whatever. Didn't they realise without registering they couldn't even begin to argue with Mr Khan? He could pay them as little as he wanted; he could make them work for however many hours he wished; he could fire them for nothing. [563]

Yet Nargis's challenge to the traditional gender roles and identities that Mr. Khan exploits, as well as her repeated demands for better working conditions, ultimately give way to a sense of resignation after she is fired on numerous occasions as a consequence of her demands.[564] For Nargis then, the global city certainly does not represent the sort of transnational feminist political possibilities that Sassen identifies, because she is too pressed by her immediate concerns of working to make ends meet for her family to effectively challenge the social injustice that she faces.

By detailing Nargis's life at the factory, *The Red Box* shows that exploited labour conditions and the reinscription of a submissive female identity are central to the experience of globalisation for many working-class South Asian women. Nargis brings the disjuncture between her own experience of globalisation and those of Raisa into sharp relief while working at the garment factory:

> Raisa had asked her of details of her present job, and Raisa would speak and write still more words. She was educated and she might write about all this, but what did she know? Nargis pulled out an unchecked dress. Chic and expensive; she could imagine Raisa wearing it. Bulquis Ehsan had spread the word that her grandfather was rich in Pakistan and owned carpet factories. Nargis passed the dress. The girl could not be blamed for her grandfather's factories. You could see she was trying to do the right things. Nargis snipped at loose threads and fixed on the designer tags. [565]

By shifting the narrative to Nargis's point of view in this passage, the novel avoids trivialising the class differences that Raisa identifies earlier in the novel. Class, in this context, is not simply something that makes Raisa feel excluded from East London's South Asian community. Nor is it a barrier that can be overcome by the considerable empathy that Raisa shows toward Nargis, or the cultural affinity that Mrs Eshan feels

toward Raisa. Rather, class defines what choices are available in life to Nargis compared to Raisa. The disparity in agency between Nargis and Raisa is succinctly captured in the image of Nargis sewing 'designer tags' on 'expensive dresses,' which connects the new gender identities that global consumer culture represents for women like Raisa to the labour of women like Nargis who produce such goods. Indeed, insofar as traditional female identities are integral to keeping labour costs low at Mr Khan's factory, then the positive effects that global consumer culture represents for some women appears to come at the expense of women like Nargis. In this respect, the novel strongly corroborates the Marxist critics discussed in this chapter by bringing attention to how gender is integral to the division of labour and the ability of capitalists like Mr Khan to maximise profits.

Significantly, the disempowering effect of the global economy upon Nargis' life and sense of self also influences the identity of her daughter, Tahira and the opportunities that she perceives are available to her. Despite Nargis' ambitions for Tahira to achieve a better life than she had, the novel shows that Tahira conceives these aspirations to be beyond her. By the age of sixteen, she has already given up any such aspirations and is preparing herself for an unfulfilled life in a minor clerical position in a bank. [566] From Tahira's perspective, there is an unbridgeable divide between her own background and the types of career her mother hopes her to achieve, which are only achievable by women such as Raisa who come from families of 'educated' and 'big people'.[567] Following the experience of her mother, for Tahira it is not Islamic culture or traditional family structures that limit her self-determination but the roles that are available to her in life as a working class young British-Asian woman. In this respect, both Tahira and Nargis extend Marxist theoretical accounts of globalisation by showing how race and class shape their sense of self by lowering expectations of what life has to offer, and preparing them to accept their positions as poorly paid workers in the global economy. As Wallerstein argues, these effects of globalisation on gender identities are not simply a matter of individual responses to the globalisation process, but are far more structurally embedded in the social experiences of Tahira and Nargis and ultimately the global economy.

'Modern Aunties' and 'Marketable Asian Babes': Meera Syal's *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee*

A different response to the effects of globalisation upon traditional gender identities is offered by Meera Syal's *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee*. Syal's novel represents traditional South Asian culture as repressive for women and her characters do not encompass the range of class divisions evident in *The Red Box*. These differences in focus and outlook mean that *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* celebrates the destabilising effects of globalisation upon traditional gender identities in its South Asian female characters far more unequivocally than *The Red Box*. Consequently, while globalisation appears as oppressive to many working class South Asian women in *The Red Box* because they lack meaningful agency, Syal's female characters are empowered to respond to the new gender possibilities that liberal theorists argue globalisation represents. In this respect, the novel mostly follows the trajectory that Grewal identifies in much recent South Asian diasporic fiction, in which Western global modernity is represented as a progressive narrative for South Asian women. Nevertheless despite the novel's favourable representation of the effects of globalisation upon traditional gender identities, Syal is also forced to confront how destabilising traditional South Asian gender identities does not always lead to more progressive conceptions of gender. On the one hand, this is because numerous South Asian male characters reify gender identities in response to globalisation as a way of maintaining power in their personal lives. On the other hand, the novel's representation of white male characters suggests that the erosion of traditional South Asian conceptions of gender simply obfuscates the re-inscription of gender hierarchies that Marxist critics identify within the world system.

Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee follows a more cohesive and traditional narrative structure than *The Red Box*. The novel is divided into two halves that correspond to different seasons; the first beginning in winter and the second more explicitly entitled 'Spring.' These two halves are each divided into three sections that shift the narrative point of view between the three central female characters; Sunita, Chila and Tania. Unlike *The Red Box*, Syal places considerably more emphasis on the male-female relationships amongst the South Asian diaspora in Britain than Sheikh does, allowing for

a wider representation of South Asian diasporic masculinities and a more detailed examination of how globalisation affects specific relationships between men and women. In addition, *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* consciously attempts to manufacture dramatic tension by centring the narrative on Deepak's marriage to Chila and his subsequent affair with Tania. The ensuing melodrama, in conjunction with the pop culture language of the novel and fast paced narrative, evokes the tone of soap opera and popular film.[568] These stylistic features of the text support the theme of globalisation eroding traditional South Asia gender identities by underlining the extent to which the central female characters conceive of their identities in terms of global popular culture, rather than South Asian cultural tradition.

There are a number of specific ways that *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* shows globalisation to have challenged traditional gender roles and identities amongst the South Asian diaspora in Britain, resulting in what the novel clearly finds to be more empowered female identities for women. The most important of these effects is the process of increasing women's participation in the paid labour market, which as Sassen argues, has a number of positive effects on the gender roles and identities available to women. For example, Sunita recalls that for her mother, a secret collection of gold jewellery was her 'insurance', because South Asian women 'don't have bank accounts so we have these. Just in case.'[569] This lack of autonomy means that South Asian women of Sunita's mother's generation are forced to rely on their husbands and families for financial survival and, therefore, to adopt the domestic roles and identities defined for them within this social structure. The extent to which this limits gender possibilities for South Asian women is underlined by Sunita contrasting her mother to 'Modern Auntie,' whose divorce has liberated her from financial reliance upon her husband and the structures of the traditional South Asian nuclear family.[570] Freed from these constraints, 'Modern Auntie' is able to adopt a new, more empowered female identity that is extremely attractive to Sunita. Hence, in contrast to the rest of her aunties that were 'overweight fussy women,' 'Modern Auntie' is someone that 'held her head high, her armour on' and was 'beautiful, really beautiful, with sharp aquiline features and sleek black hair like a Mughal miniature, except her hair was cut in a fashionable bob.' [571]

If this passage toward becoming a 'modern' woman is represented as a progressive transformation of South Asian female identity in 'Modern Auntie', then her character remains the exception to the rule amongst immigrant women of the South Asian diaspora in 1970s Britain. By way of contrast, for the new generation of British-Asian women that Sunita, Chila and Tania represent, a sea change is evident in how South Asian women are perceived in British society and the opportunities that are now available to them in an economy that has been transformed by globalisation. Tania offers the most pronounced example of this transformation in South Asian female identity by indicating that South Asian women are no longer only perceived as wives and mothers within traditional South Asian culture and society, but also represent a new vanguard of valued worker in the global economy. Specifically, Tania's success in the British film industry shows her to be an important contributor in establishing London as a leading city in the global post-industrial economy of the 1990s. For Tania, in sharp contrast to her mother's generation, being South Asian and a woman is a prized identity in this new economy, making her a 'marketable Asian babe kicking ass,' as one production company executive, Mark, puts it.[572] Significantly, according to Mark, this marketability is bound to Tania's appeal to American production companies, of which he comments:

> 'The Yanks would love you!' Mark enthused. 'You look Mexican. Tell them you're Asian and they'll expect some bird from Vietnam, say you're Indian and they'll ask what reservation. When they twig you're from the land of Ravi Shankar and holy men, they'll cream their Calvin Kleins.'[573]

These remarks suggest that not only has globalisation enabled more opportunities for South Asian women in the labour market, as Sassen argues, but also, that within the new global cultural economy South Asian female identity is no longer articulated through the stereotypes associated with Sunita's 'Aunties,' but as a saleable 'bit of exotic.'[574]

Indeed, within the Anglo-American film world, South Asian female identity represents a considerable market advantage for Tania's career prospects. Therefore, for Martin -Tania's out-of-work television writer boyfriend - being a white middle-class male is perceived as a drawback, of which Syal wryly remarks: 'people like Tania could take the short cut; the snippets of her life she'd deigned to share with Martin made him

salivate with envy. It was all so epic!'[575] This assessment of Tania certainly represents a very different view of South Asian female identity to that identified by Marxist critics within the world system. In the context of the Soho media world, the nexus of gender and race do not devalorise Tania as a worker, but rather in an industry continually searching for 'the next big thing,'[576] represent a 'niche' that Martin perceives himself to lack.[577] Nevertheless, although Martin's remarks certainly complicate Marxist conceptions of race and gender in the context of globalisation, the scope of their relevance should not be overstated. After all, the novel shows that the Soho media world that Martin and Tania inhabit is highly insular despite its American links and, therefore, that South Asian female identity is likely to be valorised to the same degree elsewhere is a dubious conclusion to draw.

Although Sunita and Chila do not represent such pronounced examples of South Asian female career success, the importance of paid work to their lives and identities remains a significant theme in the novel. Even Chila's decidedly less glamorous job at a local supermarket is shown to be important to her, not only because it enables her to engage with the public sphere, but also for the positive effect it has on her self-esteem. Thus Chila reflects of her job:

> I was good at it. I'm good with people, always there with the chat, smiling at the kids who have eaten half the trolley before they reach the till, the old people with bent fingers who pay in loose change and the Care in the Community lot who know the price of everything and sing Beep! along with the computerised swipe. [578]

Chila's engagement with the public sphere is important to her then, not so much for the political reasons that Sassen emphasises, but because it gives a sense of self-worth and meaning to her life. Consequently, after marrying Deepak and becoming a housewife not only is her sense as being 'good' at something taken from her, but she is also cut off from the social relationships outside of the family structure that Sassen finds important.

Beyond the positive benefits that even low paid labour has on Chila's sense of self, a second consequence is that paid labour enables South Asian women freedom to participate in global consumer culture. For Syal this is important, because the novel places considerable emphasis upon the role that consumer culture plays in redefining

South Asian female identity. In contrast to *The Red Box*, therefore, the empowering influence of global consumer upon South Asian female subjectivity is largely celebrated by Syal for its propensity to destabilise traditional South Asian gender norms. For example, an encounter between Sunita and her husband, Akash, after returning from a shopping trip is described in the following way:

> Sunita stroked her boyish hair which barely skimmed the fur-trim collar of her very expensive velvet box jacket, which went remarkably well with her new slightly flared Lycra trousers and her soft leather cowboy boots. She smiled slightly, the tilt of her head revealing red and copper highlights shimmering in her crown. A tiny diamante butterfly slide winked cheekily at him from above her left ear.
>
> "Vidal Sassoon," she said finally. "The Gwyneth Paltrow was out, so they did the Natalie Imbruglia instead. Everything else I bought was on sale."
>
> It was then Akash noticed the bulging carrier bags hanging precariously from the buggy's handles. His newspaper drooped mockingly in his hands. He knew he ought to speak, but at this moment he could not think of one sensible syllable to say. [579]

This passage reveals two important effects of global consumer culture on Sunita's identity that provide strong corroboration of how globalisation destabilises traditional gender identities, as liberal theorists considered in this chapter contend. First, pop culture icons such as Natalie Imbruglia represent new articulations of female identity that broaden Sunita's conception of gender. The 'boyish' hairstyle that Sunita adopts as a consequence of such influences represents a significant challenge to the gender norms that she finds repressive in the South Asian culture of her upbringing. Second, the very act of consuming is shown to be empowering to Sunita because it offers her a way of reinventing her identity and sense of self. In this respect, consumer culture exposes the performative aspect of gender because, through her choices of style and appearance, Sunita is able to refashion her female identity. This process of reinvention destabilises the unchanging mythological narratives of gender that Syal finds problematic in traditional Hindu culture, such as '"The Sita Complex,"' which leads 'many Indian women to equate marriage and partnership with trial and suffering.'[580] Indeed, from Sunita's perspective, consumer culture represents an important way of rejecting the idea of self 'sacrifice' that is implicit to the Sita myth and the role of women as wife and mother within Hindu

mythology. Hence, in contrast to the archetypal narrative of women as self-denying, consumer culture is shown as a process that promotes and nurtures a sense of self in Sunita, enabling her to put her personal pleasure ahead of the needs of her family.

While the destabilising effects of globalisation upon traditional South Asian gender identities are represented positively with respect to the women in the novel, the response by the South Asian male characters is decidedly more mixed. One the one hand, Sunita's husband, Akash, responds favourably to the shift in economic power that Sunita's career represents to the structure of the traditional South Asian family. Therefore rather than appear as a threat to his masculinity, Sunita's earning power liberates Akash from the burden of being the breadwinner in the family. Freed from this role, Akash is able to stop practising law and chart a new career for himself as a transcultural therapist. In this respect, Akash suggests that as globalisation incorporates an unprecedented number of women into the workforce, then the effects of this upon traditional gender roles can be beneficial to the lives of men as well as women. Consequently, Akash substantiates the idea advanced by Jacqui True that the unbundling of traditional gender roles within globalisation should not only be framed in terms of the loss of male power within the family, but also in terms of the new opportunities that it represents to men. On the other hand, Deepak's conception of gender means he resists the idea of Chila working after they get married. Unlike Akash, the trajectory of Deepak's character toward an increasingly violent and pathological re-assertion of masculinity signals that the loss of male power within the traditional South Asian family affected by globalisation is unlikely to be welcomed universally. This point is made in dramatic fashion at the end of the novel when Deepak kidnaps his newly born son after being refused access to see him.

The idea that men like Deepak will contest the destabilising effects of globalisation upon traditional South Asian conceptions of gender is framed as a broader political issue through the narrative of Jasbinder Singh. Jasbinder Singh's story reflects the sort of contradictory responses that Appadurai argues characterise the effects of globalisation on gender. Singh recounts how her husband killed himself and their two children in reaction to her initiating a process of legal separation to a group of South Asian "'sisters"' who champion her cause at an East London fundraiser. [581] This mobilisation of South Asian "sisterhood" produces a sense of responsibility in Tania to

resist violence against women by producing ethically themed films that raise awareness of these issues. From this perspective, London appears rich in possibilities for promoting the sorts of transnational feminist movements that Sassen argues global cities represent. At the same, because such movements promote the rights of women to challenge patriarchal regimes and social structures, the violent responses of men like Deepak and Gurinder Singh to the assertion of female autonomy appear likely to increase. This notion is supported by Jasbinder Singh naming numerous other South Asian women in Britain that have suffered equally extreme acts of violence against them as a result of initiating divorce and legal separation. Consequently, if globalisation promotes female autonomy through the processes that Sassen argues, and that *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* celebrates, then the novel also suggests that a likely counter response to this, on the part of certain South Asian men, will be an increase in violence against women, or at the very least, the reification of traditional gender identities.

Further, while Syal represents the response of the '"sisters"' to the Jasbinder Singh case positively, this assessment is complicated by certain accounts of globalisation. From this perspective, Syal's polarisation of the repressiveness of traditional South Asian men and the progressiveness of 'modern' conceptions of gender reflects the process of re-centring white male hegemony that Hooper identifies within neoliberal globalisation. In this respect, Syal's representation of South Asian male identity rehearses the sorts of discourses that were used to justify British colonial expansion. By overemphasizing South Asian men as violent and repressive to women, the novel risks unwittingly re-writing the trope of 'brown women' being saved from 'brown men' that Spivak identifies in colonial India.[582] Consequently, Syal's oversimplified demonization of South Asian men is problematic because it implicitly reinforces the superiority of western gender norms and, therefore, promotes a narrative of intervention in non-western cultures on the grounds of gender equality.

One of the contradictions in the novel's representation of gender is that despite its negative portrayal of traditional South Asian men, Syal also appears aware of how seemingly progressive versions of white male identity often mask strategies for reinforcing traditional gender hierarchies. For example, in contrast to patriarchal South Asian men like Deepak that control women by denying them access to paid labour,

Tania's boss, Jonathon, welcomes the incorporation of women into the workforce. In this respect, Jonathon seems to support one of the issues that the novel finds to be central to the emergence of more progressive gender roles and identities. However, Jonathon's support of women entering the labour market is bound to them occupying subordinate positions that do not challenge his membership in an elite 'panel of forty-something white men.'[583] Consequently, Tania observes that beneath his 'smiling exterior' and superficially egalitarian conception of gender, Jonathon remains ruthlessly determined to retain his privileged position in the world system by treating 'his staff like family and the competition as expendable vermin.'[584] Jonathon's ostensibly non-confrontational approach to business leadership within his company and dearth of obvious macho qualities exemplify the new 'feminized' versions of elite white male identity that have emerged in response to multinational business practices. But as Jonathon demonstrates, this shift in identity of elite white business leaders does not come with a commensurate shift in power.

A similar re-centring of white male identity is evident in Martin, who has 'a developed feminine side' and at first appears the antithesis of the repressive male identities that Syal associates with traditional South Asian culture.[585] However, Tania remarks of Martin that 'scratch a New Man and a prehistoric snake always slithers out.'[586] Consequently, Tania's increasing success and greater earning power lays bare that Martin's embrace of his 'feminine side' is a strategy primarily for attracting women, which, as with Jonathon, does not extend to a legitimate desire to share power in his relationship with Tania, or with women more broadly. Nevertheless, although Syal questions the sincerity of Martin and Jonathon's 'New Man' identities, in light of the Marxist theory considered in this chapter, the novel ultimately serves to reinforce their positions in the world system. It does so by overlooking how white male identities are not only produced in opposition to female identities, but also to 'inferior masculinities,' such as the representation of South Asian men as regressive and patriarchal.

The novel's 'inferior' positioning of South Asian male identity is supported by its promotional material that claims:

> All three women struggle with living in two cultures: the Indian world in which a woman's worth is largely measured by her husband's status, and the modern British culture, where self-realisation and careerism dominate.[587]

As part of 'modern British culture' Jonathon and Martin are, therefore, implied to be more liberated and progressive in their attitudes toward women, despite their personal shortcomings. Conversely, South Asian men like Akash must prove their allegiance to 'modern British culture' if they are to avoid being associated with the patriarchal values of 'the Indian world.' It is precisely such binary distinctions that Hooper argues reinforce a normative white male identity within discourses of neoliberal globalisation. From this perspective, the novel does not represent the progressive vision of gender for South Asian diasporic women in Britain that its publishers claim, but rather legitimates the unequal distribution of power in the world system.

'The Universal Story of Human Hope:' Nadeem Aslam's *Maps For Lost Lovers*

The final novel considered in this chapter, Nadeem Aslam's *Maps For Lost Lovers*, attempts to bridge the enthusiastic celebration of the effects of globalisation upon traditional gender identities in *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* and the more critical response of *The Red Box*. On the one hand, Aslam's novel supports several of the ideas advanced by Syal, which celebrate the destabilising effects of globalisation upon traditional South Asian conceptions of gender. Yet, Aslam demonstrates a more nuanced approach than Syal in addressing the theme of violence against South Asian women and raises a number of problems that result from an oversimplified valorisation of western gender norms. On the other hand, while in this respect *Maps For Lost Lovers*, adopts a similar multidimensional view of gender to *The Red Box*, it also offers a less ambivalent conclusion to issues of gender equality than Sheikh does. Specifically, *Maps For Lost Lovers* advances the view that in a deeply interconnected world, transnational issues of gendered violence require a universal conception of women's rights that are legally enforced. Toward this objective, the novel's thematic focus and use of the detective genre dramatizes the complexities of Sassen's conception of gender within a framework of

human rights, and rejects cultural relativism as a palliative for the tensions that the effects of globalisation upon gender identities raise.

Maps For Lost Lovers is set in a tightly knit Pakistani diasporic community in an unnamed northern British city. The narrative centres upon an "honour" killing in the community, the investigation of which allows Aslam to explore the community's transnational links with Pakistan and the ways that these linkages shape gender identities. The killings also explore conflicts between traditional Pakistani conceptions of gender and the British legal system and address many of the complexities that face framing gender within a discourse of human rights. The tensions between Western and traditional South Asian conceptions of gender that the "honour killings" raise are reflected in microcosm within the Pakistani family at the hub of the novel. Most notably, two very different and conflicting approaches to gender are evident between Kaukab, the matriarch of the family, and her British-born children.

Consonant with liberal theorists of globalisation, Kaukab's children respond enthusiastically to the ways that globalisation destabilises traditional South Asian gender roles and identities. Most notably, in a similar way to the novels previously discussed, Aslam shows that the incorporation of a new generation of British-Asian women into the paid labour market is crucial to establishing more progressive female roles and identities for women. This new generation of women represents a markedly different attitude toward the value of female labour than the previous generation of South Asian immigrants. For example, Mah-Jabin re-evaluates her mother's assessment of a family 'feast' that she has cooked by reminding her mother that the cost of labour is notably absent from her calculations:

> "No mother," Mah-Jabin shakes her head. "The ingredients cost that much. You should add the cost of the planning, the organization, and the cooking that has gone into to it all. A meal like tonight's, if we were to pay for a firm of caterers for it, would cost hundreds. Hundreds. And the food probably wouldn't be half as good as yours." [588]

This revaluation of Kaukab's labour by Mah-Jabin is important because it reveals an implicit difference in their attitudes toward living financially independent lives. Kaukab's belief that her labour has no monetary value, or that women cannot earn money more

generally, means that she never takes seriously the possibility that women can live autonomously from traditional South Asian family structures. Consequently, one reason behind Kaukab's insistence on an arranged marriage for Mah-Jabin is the belief that without a husband she will be unable to financially provide for herself.

Significantly, the novel makes a strong connection between Kaukab's belief in domestic female identities and her social and cultural isolation that reifies these beliefs. Consequently, Aslam represents globalisation as a process that enables Mah-Jabin to envisage a way out of Kaukab's restrictive conception of gender and imagine new more enabling possibilities for herself. For example, corroborating liberal theorists of globalisation, one way that globalisation broadens Mah-Jabin's gender possibilities is through global consumer culture and fashion. For Mah-Jabin, fashion is a symbolic way of rejecting traditional conceptions of gender within the Pakistani diasporic community and exploring aspects of her female identity that are disavowed within the community. This means that dress codes become an important point of conflict between Mah-Jabin and her mother, of which Aslam writes:

> Mah-Jabin was allowed to wear "Western" clothes to school but only if they mirrored *shalwar-kameez* in cut and style: the shirts had to be long-tailed and remain untucked whenever she wore trousers. Aswirl with pleats like the *ghagras* of Pakistani desert women, and because it was floor-length, a skirt had been allowed once, though skirts on the whole were forbidden because they were an easy-access garment.[589]

While for Mah-Jabin fashion and consumer culture represent a means of exploring new female identities, for Kaukab 'Western clothes' symbolize the westernisation of her identity and her embrace of liberal approaches to female sexuality. This conflict highlights the extent to which female identity has become an important cultural battleground within the globalisation process and a focal point for maintaining South Asian cultural traditions and identity.

Yet while Kaukab's response to globalisation reminds us of the ambivalent effects of an unstable cultural world upon gender identities, it is also shaped by issues of race and class more than Appadurai's work acknowledges. Specifically, Kaukab's working class status in conjunction with her lack of education and proficiency in English means

that the world outside of the diasporic Pakistani ghetto in which she lives is deeply threatening to her. An important part of her reification of traditional Pakistani gender identities is, therefore, not only in response to cultural instability, but also as an act of defence against the social conditions she inhabits. Mah-Jabin is cognisant of this and defends Kaukab by arguing: 'If mother is uneducated there are reasons. She has little English and she feels nervous stepping out of the house because she is not sure whether she can count on a friendly response.'[590] This sense of threat from the outside world is reflected more broadly in Kaukab's perception of the global media that for her is as devoid of 'a friendly response' as the immediate world around her. For example, Kaukab recalls

> what one woman had once told her at the shop concerning the latest western theories about the bond between a mother and her son: 'They say all mothers secretly want to go to bed their sons. A bunch of people in suits and ties was talking about it on television last night.' Kaukab had felt repulsed, her mind spinning at revulsion at the idea: these kinds of things were said by vulgar hawkers and fishwives in the bazaars of Pakistan, but here in England educated people said them on television. To speak in this manner about a mother's love! This immoral and decadent civilisation was intent on destroying everything that was pure and transcendental about human existence. [591]

Kaukab's emphasis upon the 'suits and ties' and 'educated people' that advance 'western theories' about gender, signifies the authority with which she perceives western narratives of gender to be articulated and legitimated through the media. Like Raisa in *The Red Box*, Kaukab objects that her Islamic values and conceptions of gender are neither represented, nor taken seriously, in such discourses. Yet, unlike Raisa, whose class and educational background enables her to push back against 'Western theories' of gender, Kaukab lacks the self-esteem and critical knowledge to engage with and challenge these ideas. The effect of this upon Kaukab's subjectivity is to create an unequal sense of cultural exchange between western gender identities advanced through media networks, and her own conceptions of gender. Consequently from Kaukab's perspective, media communication networks are seen as 'intent on destroying' traditional

Pakistani conceptions of gender, rather than as the harbinger of more progressive gender possibilities, as some liberal theorists argue.

Kaukab's perception of globalisation as a process of cultural imperialism supports Marxist accounts of globalisation, as well as those advanced by Ziauddin Sardar and Akbar Ahmed in Chapter 3 of this thesis. However, Aslam extends this idea of cultural imperialism by showing how it fractures a monolithic understanding of female identity that cuts across cultural and racial divisions. For instance, Aslam shows Kaukab to experience a sense of inferiority in the presence of her son's white girlfriend, Stella, because she symbolizes a superior 'Western' worldview. Consequently Stella's presence causes Kaukab to question her ability to perform even the most simple of tasks as the following passage indicates:

> Kaukab unknots the thread, remembering the first time she had made a knot in something in Stella's presence: she had suddenly gone numb, wondering if there was a Western way of tying a knot – more sophisticated, better. Perhaps the way she tied knots was an ignorant way of tying a knot? [592]

The sense of inferiority that Stella engenders in Kaukab reveals how gender is inflected by the hierarchies that Wallerstein identifies in the world system. So complete is Kaukab' internalisation of the superiority of a 'Western way' of doing things that it not only precludes Kaukab from identifying with Stella as a woman, but also prevents the possibility of any sort of personal relationship developing between them. In this respect, Stella's presence in the novel sheds light on why Kaukab resists the influence of western-led globalisation so vehemently, particularly with respect to Mah-Jabin. For Kaukab, encountering a 'Western way' of doing things -be it tying a knot or conceiving of gender - produces such a profound doubt in her worldview and inadequacy in her sense of self that it causes her to go 'numb.' Therefore, from Kaukab's perspective, Mah-Jabin adopting a 'Western' gender identity would, to a significant degree, break the bond between mother and daughter and make her appear 'ignorant' in the eyes of her daughter.

In this respect, Kaukab's response to the effects of globalisation upon traditional Pakistani gender identities provides further qualification to liberal theorists considered in this chapter. In particular, it renders problematic the idea that the shift in domestic and

public power between men and women that Sassen celebrates will be welcomed by all women. While Mah-Jabin may exemplify this view, for Kaukab - who is not fluent in English and perceives the 'West' as a threat to her sense of self – the traditional domestic female sphere is seen as a comforting and empowering space that contrasts to the hostility of the public sphere. Moreover, the emergence of women as 'public actors' and the global advancement of 'transnational feminist politics, which Sassen argues globalisation promotes, is viewed by Kaukab as integral to alienating her from her children. It is not therefore a passage into public life and the global discourse of 'women's rights' that Kaukab wants, but rather, her reinstatement of power within the domestic sphere that she believes is vital for re-connecting her to her family. Kaukab articulates this view very clearly by remarking, 'what I don't understand is why when you spend all your time talking about women's rights, don't you ever think about *me*. What about *my* rights, *my* feelings?'[593] Aslam's italicised emphasis on the 'me' and 'my' of Kaukab's comments highlight the extent to which she feels herself excluded from narratives of 'women's rights' that she associates with 'Western' women like Stella. Hence, from Kaukab's perspective, the destabilisation of traditional South Asian gender roles and identities through discourses of 'woman's rights' represents the erasure of her identity as a traditional Pakistani woman and mother within her own family.

Issues of race and class that shape Kaukab's response to globalisation also have an important effect on South Asian male responses to globalisation and, in particular, play a significant role in proliferating violence against women within the South Asian diasporic community. In contrast to Syal's representation of gendered violence, *Maps For Lost Lovers* shows how the racial hierarchies that Wallerstein identifies in the world system directly impinge upon the relationships between men and women in the South Asian diasporic community. Thus the novel shows that violence against women is not simply a function of patriarchal cultural traditions, but also an outcome of the hierarchies that Marxists identify in the world system. In particular, working class Pakistani men are shown to experience the most virulent racist abuse in the novel, having important effects on their sense of masculinity and propensity for domestic violence.

For example, in one scene a gang of white youths, refuse to pay the full fare for their journey and are subsequently confronted by the South Asian bus driver. The ensuing

interruption to the bus journey results in the bus driver being racially abused by a white male passenger in the following way:

> 'Oi!' The man standing at front of the bus shouts, startling everyone. 'Oi Gupta, or what ever it is that you call yourself, Abdul-Patel. Mr. Illegal-Immigrant-Asylum Seeker! Get back into your seat!'...'Get back now. Come on, quickly,' he points to the driver's seat and jerks his finger as when an adult orders a child.[594]

The powerlessness that the bus driver experiences in this scene for fear of losing his job if he doesn't collect the fare, coupled with his inability to articulate himself with authority in English leaves him 'whipped' and causes him to leave the bus and sit by the roadside 'with his head in his hands.'[595] Aslam teases out the complex effects of this experience on the bus driver's sense of masculinity by switching the narrative point of view to a Pakistani female passenger, who reflects: 'I hope the driver won't take his own humiliation out at home later today...lashing out at his own children, and the wife.'[596] These remarks make a very direct connection between the racial subordination of South Asian men by white men in the public sphere, and a subsequent need to re-assert a sense of power through violence in the domestic sphere. Consequently, if as Marxist theorists of globalisation argue, racial hierarchies are endemic to global capitalism, then violence against women within the South Asian diasporic community appears to be one outcome of this.

In this respect, Aslam's representation of violence against women in the Pakistani diasporic community certainly corroborates Quijano's claim that gender is 'encroached upon by inferior/superior racial classifications.' In so doing it also shows how Quijano's model of racial/gender hierarchies is self reinforcing: racism produces violent responses by certain South Asian men that are then used to support racist stereotypes about them as repressive to women and, therefore, inferior to white men. Within Hooper's formulation, examples of 'honour killings' and violent South Asian men provide the oppositional 'inferior masculinities' against which new hegemonic narratives of white male identity position themselves. Moreover, these narratives are frequently mobilised to justify various forms of Western intervention around the world in the name of gender equality and women's rights, as has been discussed in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

Nevertheless, if class and race are shown to be significant factors in promoting gendered violence and problematic gender identities within the Pakistani diasporic community, then Aslam diverges from Marxist critics over the extent to which he holds global capitalism accountable for this. For Aslam, the reification of gender identities and violence against women within the Pakistani diasporic community may be reinforced by the hierarchies of the capitalist world system, but remains too complex to be reduced solely to economic factors. Consequently, the novel refuses the idea that challenging traditional Pakistani culture on the grounds of gender is simply a ruse to reinforce Western global dominance, while at the same time attempting to respect non-western conceptions of gender. For Aslam this means disarticulating culturally-grounded gender identities from an ethical conception of gender that is legally enforced and global in scope.

Particularly relevant to this project is the novel's use of the detective genre and, more specifically, the assumption implicit to the genre that the problem at the centre of the narrative can be solved through logic and reason. As Roger Caillois elucidates:

> The value of a detective novel can be quite neatly defined by the affront to reason and experience contained in its point of departure, and the more or less complete and believable way that both reason and experience are satisfied by its conclusion.[597]

Thus the detective genre demands narrative resolution that does not allow for indeterminacy or room for mystery at the end of the novel: it is a narrative form that insists upon a knowable and singular truth. The appeal of such a narrative for addressing issues of human rights and violence against women within the South Asian diasporic community is made clear by the United Nations' recent remarks on the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

> Drafted by representatives of all regions and legal traditions, the UDHR has stood the test of time and resisted attacks based on "relativism". The Declaration and its core values, including non-discrimination, equality, fairness and universality, apply to everyone, everywhere and always.[598]

Both the concept of Human Rights and the detective genre then, reject a plurality of "truths" based upon cultural relativism. Instead, both are narratives grounded in the values of modernity that affirm a universal worldview in which justice can be arrived at through reason.

In the case of *Maps For Lost Lovers*, the search for 'the truth about what happened to them [Chanda and Jugnu]' enables the novel to investigate two competing explanations of Chanda and Jugnu's murder that are circulating within the Pakistani community.[599] The first justifies Chotta and Barra's actions 'in Pakistan, where the laws and religion and the customs reinforced their sense of acting properly, legitimately, correctly.'[600] The second, however, criminalises their actions within secular law. Thus, 'in England, the judge, batting down all talk of "code of honour and shame" would call them "cowards' and "wicked" on the day of the trial.'[601] Within the logic of the detective novel both explanations of the murder cannot be 'true' and so by investigating beneath the surface of these two competing claims, the novel reveals what 'really happened' to Jugnu and Chanda by uncovering the facts of the case. The reconstruction of the murders through the police inquiry exposes that the facts do not support Chotta and Barra who claimed, when they 'confessed to the murders during the visit to Pakistan': '"It was a matter of honour."'[602] Hence, when the 'truth' of the murder is reconstructed through the police investigation, the brothers' actions are shown not to be motivated by the pursuit of 'honour' but by an unrelated event in Barra's personal life. The murder of Jugnu and Chanda, therefore, is revealed to be a violent and confused emotional response by Barra and Chotta to the news of a 'mix-up' at the laboratory, of which Barra laments: '"I am ruined. The doctors now say they made a mistake: it was a boy she was carrying, not a girl.' [603]

By holding the 'honour' killings up to rational inquiry in this way, the novel's disavowal of violence against women, legitimized through discourses of South Asian tradition, is quite different to Syal's treatment of this issue in *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee*. For Syal, repressive roles for women are inherent to South Asian culture and, therefore, the novel equates the erosion of traditional South Asian conceptions of culture with gender equality. Aslam, however, distinguishes between the uses of traditional conceptions of gender to justify violence by men like Barra and Chotta from Islamic

cultural tradition more broadly. The difference is important because it enables Aslam to show that Islamic tradition does not inevitably necessitate inferior gender identities for women. On the contrary, aspects of Islamic culture, such as the poetry of Wamaq Saleem[604] and most significantly the lyrics of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan,[605] are celebrated for their representations of women. For example, Aslam notes that within the Sufi tradition of Islam, to which Khan belongs:

> It was the vulnerability of women that was used by the poet-saints to portray the intolerance and oppression of their times. They – more than men – attempt to make a new world. And, in every poem and story, they fail. But by striving they become part of the universal story of human hope.[606]

Not only is this aspect of Pakistani cultural tradition shown to offer a very different conception of gender than the version of Islam that Barra and Chotta advance but, more importantly, it is crucial to the novel's advancement of the universality of gender equality. Hence, the struggle of women for equality, which Sassen argues to be an important aspect of the globalisation process, is represented to be part of a much older 'universal story of human hope' that has been articulated within the Sufi tradition of Islam centuries prior to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In this reading of Islamic tradition, contemporary notions of gender equality are not the imposition of Western gender norms upon Muslim culture as Kaukab and numerous other Muslim characters in the novel perceive, but a conception of gender that has, as Aslam remarks, always been 'the opposition party' to repressive versions of Islam. [607]

Nevertheless, the problem still exists in *Maps For Lost Lovers* that if gender equality is universal and as much part of the Islamic Sufi tradition as modern western discourse, then it still requires legal enforcement by the British legal system. This highlights a significant problem for Sassen's work on gender and human rights, by revealing the disjuncture between the universal ideals articulated in UDHR and their legal enforcement. Thus, even if as Aslam argues, gender equality is a centuries-old aspect of Islamic culture, in the absence of an effective global state apparatus and legal system, the enforcement of these rights against acts such as 'honour' killings depends upon individual nation states, such as Britain. Given the extent to which the novel shows the

reification of traditional gender identities within the Pakistani community to be a response to western influence, then these acts of British legal intercession would only seem to further reify gender identities rather than lead to the more egalitarian world Sassen advocates.

Moreover, the detective form of the novel presents too neat a conclusion to the issue of the complex effects of globalisation upon South Asian gender identities that the novel raises. It endorses the triumph of liberal British social order that brings justice against the "bad guys" and the repressive conceptions of gender that Barra and Chotta embody. The idea that the British legal system upholds values of gender equality in response to Muslim oppression of women may be soothing to the predominantly white middle class readership of the novel. However, in light of Marxist accounts of globalisation, the idea of restoring a liberal British social order through the rule of law does not address the underlying causes of gender inequality. This is because racism and poverty that are endemic to the Pakistani diasporic community in Britain, and which Aslam shows to be significant contributors toward the reification of gender identities, are structurally embedded within the world system. From a Marxist perspective, these structural issues of gender inequality are overlooked by the conclusion of *Maps For Lost Lovers* that obfuscates the role that global capitalism plays in promoting "problematic" gender roles and identities for South Asian women.

Conclusion

The novels considered in this chapter provide conflicting and uneven support for the theoretical explanations of the effects of globalisation upon gender identities outlined in the first section of this chapter. On the broadest level, all three novels agree that globalisation has destabilised traditional gender roles and identities by incorporating more women into the paid labour force. To the extent that this has increased agency and autonomy for many South Asian characters as liberal theorists of globalisation claim, then this is represented as a positive development. *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* offers the strongest corroboration of this claim, most notably through its representation of Tania, who shows South Asian female identity to be a prized asset in the global cultural

economy in a manner that challenges the gender identities Marxist critics identify as available in the world system. *Maps For Lost Lovers*, however, reveals that while the global economy may benefit some South Asian women, such as Mah-Jabin, many women in the Pakistani diasporic community are left behind. For such characters, poverty and a lack of opportunity play an important role in reifying traditional Muslim gender identities and propagating violence against women within the community.

Second, *The Red Box* provides compelling evidence to indicate that globalisation reinforces the hierarchical gender identities that Marxist critics identify within the world system. Sheikh shows that a disjuncture exists between globalisation as a process that promotes progressive conceptions of gender and the possibility of working class South Asian women enacting these in their lives. Indeed, *The Red Box* indicates that working class status not only reifies traditional gender identities as *Maps For Lost Lovers* demonstrates, but also exposes how gender identities are shaped by the global economy. The representation of South Asian women working in East London's sweatshops provides strong corroboration of Marxist claims that non-white women remain at the bottom of the global division of labour, and that given global capitalism's demand for cheap labour, the devalorisation of South Asian female identity is unlikely to disappear anytime soon. Both Tahira and Nargis provide valuable insights into how this devalorisation of South Asian female identity is experienced by showing that social impoverishment and racism in Britain lower their expectations of what life has to offer, preparing them to accept positions as poorly paid workers in the global economy.

At the other end of the global division of labour, both *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* and *Maps For Lost Lovers* provide corroboration of Marxist claims that neoliberal globalisation re-centres the hegemony of white male identity. They do so by using the representation of South Asian women as the victims of South Asian male violence as central plot devices to create dramatic tension in both novels. The effect of this is to place South Asian male identity under intense scrutiny and reinforce the idea of South Asian men as a regressive and oppressive. In contrast, white male identity is not scrutinized to any significant extent, with the exception of Martin and Jonathon who are only minor characters in *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee*. Similarly, the problematic aspects of Martin and Jonathon's masculinity do not approach the violence of Deepak, as well as that of

Barra and Chotta in *Maps For Lost Lovers*, or the ruthless capitalism of Mr Khan in *The Red Box*. In light of Hooper's work, these demonized representations of South Asian masculinity provide the identities that neoliberal globalisation exploits to establish the 'inferiority' of non-western masculinities and reinforce western gender norms. In this respect, both novels corroborate Quijano's claims that gender hierarchies within the world system are 'encroached upon by inferior/superior' classifications.[608] Rather than the biological classifications of race that Quijano posits, however, all three novels show that the contrast between Western and traditional Asian culture is used to establish gender hierarchies.

Bringing these ideas together reveals that *The Red Box*, *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* and *Maps For Lost Lovers* provide important qualifications to the conceptions of gender equality that both theoretical perspectives considered in this chapter posit. Together, these novels demonstrate that one significant challenge to Sassen's conception of gender within a framework of human rights lies in the conflation of gender equality with the westernisation of gender identities (both actual and perceived). On the one hand, *The Red Box* reveals how non-western conceptions of gender are denied a meaningful voice in articulating a transnational vision of gender equality. On the other hand, although both Syal and Aslam tend to conflate the westernisation of gender with gender equality, they also demonstrate how this only serves to reify traditional gender identities amongst many South Asian diasporic communities in Britain, rather than usher in the more equitable world that Sassen advocates.

Moreover, *Maps For Lost Lovers* and *The Red Box* highlight that the idea of global gender equality must also account for economic factors as Marxist critics argue. Nevertheless, in so doing, Sheikh renders Marxist solutions to global gender inequality problematic because they fail to take into account the importance of cultural tradition to the lives of many South Asian women. Consequently, *The Red Box* shows that gender identities are not only conceived by progressive Pakistanis as a function of the global division of labour, but also part of Islamic tradition that, as Raisa argues, has its own 'radical teaching on sexual equality.'[609] Collectively then, these novels extend liberal and Marxist explanations of the effects of globalisation upon gender by exposing a western bias to both their conceptions of gender equality. They suggest that if meaningful

progress is to be made toward gender equality in an age of globalisation, then non-western cultural traditions must be included rather than demonised within transnational discourses of gender equality if they are to avoid being perceived as a form of cultural imperialism.

Conclusion: Conflicted Identities and New Directions

To conclude, I will draw out some of the findings of this study as they relate to its two main objectives that motivated this research. The first was to examine the implications of globalisation theory for postcolonial studies. The second was to ascertain what "stories" of globalisation the literary texts considered in this thesis tell in order to supplement theoretical explanations of globalisation in the social sciences. With respect to the first of these objectives, this study's investigation of the effects of globalisation across class, national, Muslim and gender identities within South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain represents one way of addressing Ania Loomba's call for postcolonialism's need 'to absorb itself more deeply with the contemporary world.'[610] Of particular importance to postcolonial cultural theories are the uneven and inflected relationships between identities and global power that the results of this thesis highlight. This raises all sorts of contradictions and tensions in determining how the identities considered in this thesis might be considered politically enabling and questions the usefulness of models grounded in the 'colonial past' for understanding South Asian diasporic identities in an age of globalisation. In this respect, the results of this study support Roger Bromley's claims that South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain requires new theoretical approaches that go beyond models of "writing back" to a colonial centre. As has been shown, the effects of postcolonial migration and globalisation have muddied clear distinctions between the hierarchies of identity associated with British colonialism. Therefore, reading these texts narrowly through cultural theories grounded in the colonial past overlooks many of the complexities of contemporary South Asian diasporic identities in Britain that this study exposes. However, also true is that many of the inequalities that colonialism produced have not disappeared in the contemporary world. This cautions against overemphasising the newness that Bromley argues diasporic fiction represents and suggests that old hierarchies of identity associated with Britain's colonial past continue to exist alongside new ones connected to multinational capitalism in contemporary Britain. What this suggests is that new integrated models are needed for understanding South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain that are able to account for both the colonial past, as well as the globalised present.

For example, these texts show that 'racial' identities do not neatly mark the division of labour that Wallerstein identifies in the world system following European colonialism, while at the same time demonstrate that many of the economic inequalities that colonialism produced continue to exist. Thus, South Asian diasporic businessmen in London, like Nasser in *My Beautiful Laundrette* and Indian IT entrepreneurs in Delhi in *Transmission* disrupt the 'core-periphery antinomy' in which Wallerstein conceives of race in the world system.[611] At the same time, however, national borders create unequal labour markets between America and Europe and South Asia in *Transmission*, *The Coral Strand* and *Burrow*. Moreover, the inner city sweatshop workers of *Brick Lane* and *The Red Box* and ghettoized poverty of *The Black Album* and *Maps For Lost Lovers* signal that new geographies of periphery and core have emerged within Britain. Equally uneven are the ways in which colonial attitudes of white British superiority are reinforced as a response to the effects of globalisation by certain white Briton's such as, Genghis in *My Beautiful Laundrette*, Roger in *Magic Seeds* and 'The British Lions' in *Brick Lane*. While at the same time, the London media world of *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee* and the pop music business of *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* demonstrate how South Asian ethnicity has become a highly marketable commodity within the global culture industry.

Recognition of such unevenness and ambivalence between South Asian identities and global power provides certain qualifications to the direction that Bromley advocates for postcolonial studies in an age of globalisation. A significant problem with Bromley's model is that it overlooks how for many South Asian diasporic characters, globalisation has not led to the 'liberal, multicultural space' of identity formation that he posits.[612] Thus, for the South Asian sweatshop workers in *The Red Box* , Chanu in *Brick Lane*, as well as those that live in the inner cities of Kureishi and Aslam's fiction, identities are often shown to be shaped by global forces that do not promote the progressive possibilities that Bromley identifies in diasporic fiction. Consequently, Bromley reads South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain as evidence of a nascent cosmopolitan discursive space that is able to give 'shape to new social and governing arrangements'[613] and 'new patterns of post-national exchange.' However, he fails to consider the full range of effects of globalisation upon the negotiation of identities in the present. [614] In this respect, Bromley's emphasis upon the postnational possibilities of diasporic fiction around the

world appears to undermine the 'energy and revisionist power' of postcolonial studies, which Loomba argues is enhanced when it engages with 'imbalances in the contemporary world order.' [615]

Moreover, valorising the perceived fluidity of South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain as prototypical of a more progressive emergent global culture carries with it a tacit universalisation. Specifically, it denies the articulation of "traditional" cultures and, as such, overlooks the desire for cultural stability and rootedness that many in South Asia and its diaspora value throughout these texts. The problem with overemphasising the "fluid" dimension of diasporic culture is that this perspective is susceptible to Sardar's charge of 'epistemological imperialism,' because it denies Muslims representation in what both Sayyid and Sardar argue are meaningful Islamic terms. In this respect, the results of this study highlight that cultural imperialism should not only be conceived of in terms of cultural homogenisation or Americanisation. Rather, thinking through issues of cultural globalisation also necessitates examining what kinds of conceptual and narrative paradigms are capable of representing South Asian religious and cultural identities that are centred in different epistemological frameworks.

If these issues of class and religion signal that the various global 'imbalances' that both Marxist and postcolonial critics identify must be accounted for in reading South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain, then they also point to a second reason why identities do not map neatly to such 'imbalances.' This is because the categories of identity examined in this chapter repeatedly encroach upon each other and bear conflicting relationships to contemporary global power. For example, middle class South Asian diasporic women in Britain are shown to be marginalised with respect to their gender and ethnicity, but also very much at the centre of the globalisation process as young, upwardly mobile women in the "West." Consequently, the effects of global consumer culture may have empowering effects upon the identities of this group of women, while having very different effects upon the working-class South Asian women who produce consumer goods in East London's sweatshops. Conversely, while many young South Asians in Britain's inner cities may adopt Islamic identities, in part, as a way of responding to their impoverished conditions in Britain's inner cities, in so doing they often promote the sorts of "problematic" gender roles that middle-class British-Asian

women disavow in traditional South Asian cultures. Both instances show that identities must be conceived multidimensionally in order to account for what Loomba calls the 'difficult interplay between their local and global contexts.' [616]

By attending to how identities function in the affective realm, this study responds to this need for addressing the 'difficult interplay between their local and global contexts' and , in so doing, provides three important qualifications to the theoretical paradigms of globalisation considered in this thesis. [617] First, the texts in this thesis repeatedly demonstrate that globalisation is so complex at the level of individual subjectivity that the world often appears 'phantasmagoric,' to use Naipaul's words. Identities are shown to be most powerful in establishing alliances and motivating action when they are focused on tangible symbols and experiences in people's everyday lives. Thus, national identities in these narratives remain compelling to individual subjectivity because they are a part of people's everyday experiences and are reinforced in numerous subtle ways – through everyday language, local histories, the educational system and so forth. The power of Islam to shape identities amongst several young British-Asians is bound to the certainty it offers them in an uncertain world. The Islamic leaders in these texts are shown to be fully cognisant of this appeal and subsequently offer (over) simplified versions of Islam that identify the "West" as the enemy in order to engender solidarity with Muslims around the world. Similarly, for feminists and South Asian cultural and religious conservatives alike, women's bodies often become the focal point for a much broader set of issues, including human rights and cultural Westernisation.

By way of contrast, the postindustrialisation and globalisation of the British economy means that many of the traditional (and tangible) symbols of class oppression have largely disappeared from British society. As has been seen throughout this thesis, it is not that numerous South Asian diasporic characters are indifferent to global economic inequality, but that a paucity of viable ways of identifying with such inequality is evident throughout these texts. Unlike national, Muslim and gender identities, in which easily discernible symbols (however questionable) provide the basis for group affiliation and motivate people to take action, no such symbols are evident with respect to class. Put simply, if global economic inequality is an issue that is addressed in many of these texts, then an identifiable "enemy" responsible for this inequality is not. In its absence, Marxist

calls for forging a new global class identity amongst Pakistani sweatshop workers in London, Indian computer programmers in Silicon Valley and the British white working class appears unlikely. Around what symbol or narrative would such an identity unite? And how would it transcend the various categories of identity that have influenced the lives of numerous characters in these narratives so strongly and often proved to be socially divisive? These questions signal that a significant challenge facing global Marxist class politics today is the issue of how to frame a global economy that is so complex and diverse in a way that not only theorises it, but also provides narratives and symbols with which individuals can identify. Consequently, it is not so much that group identities represented in these texts are only concerned with 'gratification of psychic identity' as Jameson claims, but that group identities, other than class, are shown to be more emotionally resonant and intimately connected to individual's everyday lives in an age of globalisation.[618]

Second, recognition of this emotional dimension of identity indicates that Appadurai overemphasises the role that the global media plays in producing identities. The narratives considered in this thesis show that while identities are influenced by the global media, as well as the various processes of globalisation that Appadurai emphasises, just as important are more traditional influences upon identities: from Tapan's memory of his childhood in Bangladesh in *Burrow*, to Chad's sense of exclusion from Britishness in *The Black Album*, to Tahira's lack of self-esteem in *The Red Box*. In these ways, the narratives examined in this thesis temper Appadurai's claims of the chaotic flux of globalisation by revealing the continued significance of the past to identities through individual, family and collective memories. Perhaps more importantly, the processes of globalisation that Appadurai argues deterritorialise identities are shown to be experienced unevenly around the world. Such processes are centred in the metropolitan West and middle class sections of large South Asian cities and have less influence upon the lives of working class South Asian women in Britain and, to an even greater extent, the rural poor of South Asia.

Finally, this thesis shows globalisation to have had a paradoxical effect upon the political potential that identities represent. On the one hand, globalisation and migration have brought issues of identity to the foreground for many South Asian diasporic

characters, because of the extent to which these processes question received conceptions of identity. What it means to be British, Indian, Muslim, working-class, a man or woman are questions that the characters repeatedly confront throughout these texts. Identities, therefore, are not something that can be taken for granted and left unquestioned, but rather are placed under repeated scrutiny and negotiation - in many cases against the character's wishes. This process of contesting, eroding and re-inscribing traditional identities increases the importance of certain identities to the everyday lives of South Asian diasporic characters. It implies that globalisation does not so much homogenise or heterogenise identities, but rather *intensifies* national (ism), gender and Muslim identities in the affective realm. One outcome of this process of intensification is that these identities are shown to be powerful motivating factors for action (both political and otherwise) throughout these narratives.

On the other hand, despite the extent to which globalisation increases the importance of identities to people's lives, these texts often show identity politics to confuse the political and social problems that they respond to. Thus, young British-Asians chant support for the PLO to protest British racism, "Western" geopolitical policies toward Muslims are rejected in part by controlling women's bodies, and British right wing nationalism becomes one way of responding to global economic restructuring. In short, a tension is evident in these texts between the need for political alliances that transcend particularity (such as human rights and global poverty) and the power of group identities to engender political will. In this respect, these texts support Jameson's claims that identities have become delinked from material social experiences but they do so for different reasons.[619] They indicate that it is not only that group identities, other than class, have become co-opted by multinational capitalism as Jameson claims (although there is certainly partial evidence to support this claim), but also that as material social problems become more complex and globalised, individuals often respond by affirming the group identities in which they feel secure.

This tension, between an increasingly convergent socio-political world and pluralized identity politics, highlights some of the challenges that face the global 'era of transition' that Wallerstein argues we currently inhabit.[620] Wallerstein asks of this era:

> Can there be a universalism that is not European but a universal (or global) universalism? Or rather, would it take, in the twenty-first century, to arrive at a world where it was no longer the West that was giving and the rest of the world that were receive, one in which the west could wrap itself in the cloak of science and the rest were relegated to people's who had more "artistic/emotional" temperaments? How can we possibly arrive at a world in which we would all give and receive? [621]

The multiethnic and multicultural perspectives of the texts considered in this thesis represent one small but, nevertheless, well positioned way to think through these questions. This is not only because South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain is transnational in outlook and mediates between Britain's colonial past and contemporary globality, but also because fiction provides an important perspective from which to explore how 'existentially significant meaning' is produced in the affective realm. As both Tomlinson and Castells point out, this perspective is not insignificant because issues of identity, meaning and narrative are important factors that will help shape responses to the issues that Wallerstein argues the world currently faces.

Future research into South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain might take up these extremely difficult questions from different perspectives. For example, one direction might be to explore cultural models that are able to account for the epistemological differences that were raised in Chapter 3as a way to think through Wallerstein's call for a de-centring of European universalism. Another might be to consider how other South Asian diasporic literary forms such as poetry, which are part of much older literary traditions in the subcontinent, compare to the findings of this study. Employing existing and emerging theories of globalisation to undertake such research would not only continue the postcolonial project that Dipesh Chakrabarty has called, 'provincializing Europe' but also caution against new ways that globalisation might re-inscribe Eurocentrism. [622]

Beyond this, the study of South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain goes some way toward charting the sorts of global consciousness and cosmopolitan solidarity that Tomlinson and Ulrich Beck, amongst others, argue that the 'global dangers' we now face necessitate. At the very least, the study of South Asian diasporic fiction in Britain furthers Tomlinson's 'modest cosmopolitanism' by 'open[ing] the world to us' and fostering 'a

sense of 'distant others' as symbolically "significant others."'[623] This 'modest' form of transnational solidarity may be a long way from Jameson's 'global proletariat of a hitherto unimagined kind.' [624]Nevertheless, given the complexities and contradictions that this thesis has shown globalisation to represent, to dismiss it as inconsequential is I think a mistake. It is a perspective that not only provides a more positive alternative to the tension between global unification and an increasingly balkanised identity politics, but also one that offers a manageable point of departure for thinking through how we might navigate toward the more ambitious and utopian global futures that Jameson and Wallerstein envision.

ENDNOTES

Introduction

[1] Emily Apter, 'On Translation in a Global Market,' *Public Culture* 13.1 (2001):1-12: 1.
[2] Ibid: 2.
[3] Ibid: 2.
[4] David Morley and Kevin Robins, 'The National Culture in its New Global Context,' in David Morley and Kevin Robins (eds.), *British Cultural Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001): 1-7: 2.
[5] Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London & New York: Routledge, 2002): 257.
[6] Ibid: 257.
[7] Keith Green and Jill LeBihan, *Critical Theory and Practice* (London & New York: Routledge, 1996): 306.
[8] See, John Tomlinson, *Globalization and Culture* (Cambridge: Polity, 1999)
[9] For example, Hardt and Negri claim that Postcolonialism's attack on colonialism focuses on past forms of domination and fails to recognize how power operates in the present, thereby unwittingly reinforcing new forms of domination and rule. See, Michael Hart and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, Ma: Harvard University Press, 2000)
[10] Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson, *Globalization in Question* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996)
[11] Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York & London: Academic Press, 1974)
[12] Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2004): 23.
[13] More specifically, it is marked by an 'axial division of labor between core-like production processes and peripheral production processes' that has resulted in 'an unequal exchange favouring those involved in core-like production processes.' Ibid: 17.
[14] Ibid: 77.
[15] Ibid: 86. Wallerstein identifies the World Economic Forum at Davos as the symbolic centre of neoliberalism and the IMF and WTO as the 'chief enforcers' of the policies and ideas that emerge from it
[16] Robert Cox, 'Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay in Method,' in Stephen Gill (ed.) *The Global Resistance Reader* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993): 49-66.
[17] Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*: 86.
[18] Ibid: 87.
[19] As Hirst and Thompson argue, there are relatively few truly *Transnational* corporations, and *Multinational* corporations 'adapt passively to government policy rather than continually trying to undermine it.' Hirst and Thompson: 198.
[20] Of this Wallerstein writes: 'Strong states relate to weak states by pressuring them to keep their frontiers open to those flows of factors of production that are useful and profitable to firms located in strong states, while resisting demands for reciprocity in this regard. In debates on world trade, the United States and the European Union are constantly demanding that states in the rest of the world open their frontiers to flows of manufacturers and services from them. They however quite strongly resist opening fully their own frontiers to flows of agricultural products or textiles that compete with their own products from states in peripheral zones.' Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*: 55.
[21] Ibid: 71.
[22] More specifically, Wallerstein identifies three aspects of European universalism that have been used to legitimate the power of core nation-states: 'the right of those who believe they use universal values to intervene against barbarians; the essentialist particularism of Orientalism; and scientific universalism.' Immanuel Wallerstein, *European Universalism: The Rhetoric of Power* (New York & London: The New Press, 2006): 71.
[23] Frederick Jameson, *Postmodernism Or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London and New York: Verso Books, 1998): 78.
[24] Douglas Kellner and Stephen Best, *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1991): 48.
[25] For early Marxist cultural critics of globalisation the analysis of new forms of "global culture" produced through emergent global media networks did not yield comforting results. Numerous Marxist critics in the

1970's concluded that the interconnection of the world through the electronic media led to the process of "westernisation" or "Americanisation." A notable early proponent of this line of argument was Herbert Schiller, who argued that global culture was bound to capitalism on a structural level and, as such, narrowed culture to fit its own interests and parameters. Thus, for Schiller, globalisation is a process of unequal cultural exchange that has destroyed diversity and led to the ubiquity of 'homogenized North Atlantic cultural slop.' Herbert Schiller, 'Electronic Information Flows: New Basis for Global Domination', in Phillip Drummond and Richard Paterson (eds.) *Television in Transition* (London: BFI Publishing, 1986): 11-20: 12.

[26] Ziauddin Sardar, 'Christian-Muslim Relations in the Postmodern Age' in Gail Boxwell and Sohail Inayatullah (eds.) *Islam Postmodernism and Other Futures: A Ziauddin Sardar Reader* (London: Pluto Press, 2003): 175.

[27] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1996)

[28] Ibid: 46.

[29] Ibid: 46.

[30] Ibid: 46.

[31] Ibid: 34.

[32] Consequently, 'even the most complex and flexible theorists of global development that have come out of the Marxist tradition (Amin 1980; Mandel 1978; Wallerstein 1974; Wolf 1982) are inadequately quirky and have failed to come to terms with what Scott Lash and John Urry have called disorganized capitalism.' Ibid: 42.

[33] Ibid: 34.

[34] Ibid: 19.

[35] Ibid: 7.

[36] Ibid: 22.

[37] For example, globalisation has allowed globally dispersed diasporas to create transnational political networks, such as the Sikh and Kurdish separatist movements. Although non-state actors themselves, these movements directly challenge the power and control of the state, and de-link national (ist) identities from the control of the state. The proliferation of such diasporic political movements in recent years signals how domestic politics are now increasingly being influenced by movements and organisations beyond the borders of the nation-state. Ibid: 39.

[38] Ibid: 92.

[39] Ibid: 31.

[40] Tomlinson: 17.

[41] Bill Buford, 'The End of The English Novel,' *Twenty One: The Best of Granta Magazine* (London & New York: Granta Books, 2001): 27-38: 34-35.

[42] Ibid: 35.

[43] Malcolm Pearce and Geoffrey Stewart, *British Political History, 1867-1990* (London & New York, 1992): 578.

[44] Ibid: 37.

[45] John Feather, *A History Of British Publishing* (New York: Routledge, 2006): 223.

[46] Bromley describes his book as one 'informed by the assumption that it is possible to speak of a "world culture," a culture of interactive diversity shaped by what Gilroy in *The Black Atlantic* calls "intercultural and transnational formations." Emphasis is placed upon cultures of "encounter" and the possibility of belonging simultaneously, mentally, psychologically and experimentally , to a diversity of cultures. An attempt is made to theorise culture in ways which are not primarily national, and to explore identity in ways which do not bind it to nationality.' Roger Bromley, *Narratives For A New Belonging: Diasporic Cultural Fictions* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000): 7.

[47] Appadurai: 9.

[48] Bromley: 6.

[49] Ibid: 9. More specifically, drawing upon Stuart Hall, Bromley argues that diasporic fiction represents 'the third scenario:' a cultural and discursive space of 'cultural translation' that is continually subject to transformation and renewal. Such a space should not be seen a 'melting pot or mosaic, of a simple "rainbow merging,' but rather something much more ambivalent, contradictory and plural that resists

conceptualisation through oversimplified metaphors of fusion: the third scenario is 'a space beyond existing political, social and cultural binaries.' Ibid:1.

[50] Employing Bakhtin's concept of the dialogical, Bromley characterises such fiction in the following way: 'The dialogical is an inclusive, never finalised interactivity, an opening up and a breaking down; it is also a resource for communal, many voiced storying. Combined with this is also an awareness of the ways in which, although almost all texts referred to use either a coloniser's language or that of a dominant social order, this language has been dislocated, and acted upon, violated even, so that, in Marlene Nourbese Philip's terms, "the historical realities are not erased or obliterated" (Philip 1993: 85) Transformation and textual negotiation are key features of the uses of language identified in "border" writing; this is also true of narrative practice. By using concepts of syncretism and hybridisation, the book [*Narratives For a New Belonging*] examines the ways in which indeterminacy of diasporic identities is produced by a continuous process of transculturation, of cultural translation.' Ibid: 2.

[51] Ibid: 7.

[52] Ibid: 4.

[53] Ibid: 11.

[54] Appadurai: 13. Appadurai attempts to replace the term culture by the adjectival form of the word, that is, 'cultural.' By doing this he wants to move away from a concept of culture that carries associations with some kind of physical or metaphysical object or substance. He argues that such a substantialization brings culture back into the discursive realm of race - the idea that it was initially designed to combat. The concept of culture as a coherent entity privileges forms of sharing, agreement and bounding and thus neglects the facts of inequality and differences in lifestyles. The adjective cultural, to the contrary, recognizes differences, contrasts, and comparisons.

[55] Ibid: xii.

[56] Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 2005): xii.

[57] Ibid: 170.

[58] Ibid: 171.

[59] Timothy Brennan, *At Home In The World: Cosmopolitanism Now* (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997)

[60] For example, for a discussion of theories of 'hybridity' with respect to Rushdie and Kureishi's work, see Bart Moore-Gilbert, *Hanif Kureishi* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001) : 193-216.

[61] For example, Brennan argues that: 'Any study of what is variously being call multiculturalism, the rainbow curriculum, or postcolonial theory benefits from taking a privileged sort of US experience (William Appleman William's "empire as a way of life") as one of its points of departures. In its present sense, postcolonial theory has more to do with the United States than Britain or, in its customary invocation, "Europe"- in spite of the vital input and leads provided by Commonwealth studies and the early work of resident colonial intellectuals there. That centrality has to do both with the geopolitical stature of the United States and its famous, highly celebrated mixedness of population, which has created a repertoire of troping and a reason for being, often conflating the positive new alignments across borders, types, and peoples with a much less promising rhetoric of communion achieved.' Brennan: 9.

[62] Franco Moretti, 'Conjectures in World Literature' in Christopher Pendergast (ed.) *Debating World Literature* (London & New York: Verso, 2004): 148-163: 159.

[63] Ibid: 159. Specifically, following Jameson's work on Third World literature, Moretti posits a 'law of literary evolution' in which the novel has historically incorporated 'local materials' into a singular, global form. Ibid: 152.

[64] Ibid: 159.

[65] Ibid: 6.

[66] Stephen Heath , 'The Politics Of Genre,' in Christopher Pendergast (ed.) *Debating World Literature* (London & New York: Verso, 2004): 163-175 : 172

[67] Ibid: 174.

[68] Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity* (Oxford and Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1997): 360.

[69] Judith Cherni, 'Social-Local Identities,' in Tim O'Riordan (ed.) *Globalism, Localism and Identity* (London: Earthscan Publications, 2001): 61-81: 62.

[70] Of this Wallerstein writes: The concept of "race" is related to the axial division of labour in the world economy, the core-periphery antinomy. The concept of "nation" is related to the political superstructure of

this historical system, the sovereign states that form and derive from the interstate system. The concept of "ethnic group" is related to the creation of household structures that permit the maintenance of large components of non-waged labour in the accumulation of capital. Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London, New York: Verso, 1991): 79.
[71] Samir Amin, 'Globalism Or Apartheid On A Global Scale?' in Immanuel Wallerstein (ed.) *The Modern World System in Longue Duree* (Boulder & London: Paradigm Publishers, 2004): 5-31: 7
[72] Jameson: 319-331.
[73] Ibid: 406.
[74] Jameson calls for 'a global proletariat of a hitherto unimagined kind.' Ibid: 418.
[75] Similarly, Wallerstein calls for a global 'movement of movements.' Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*: 86.
[76] Ulrich Beck argues that the effect of this has been to delink identities from geographic territories, meaning that 'borders are no longer predeterminate, they can be chosen (and interpreted), but simultaneously also have to be redrawn and legitimated anew.' Beck: 19.
[77] Tomlinson: 19.
[78] Ibid: 19.
[79] Ibid: 20.
[80] Ibid: 27.
[81] Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*: 90.

Chapter 1

[82] Karl Marx, 'Strategy and Tactics the Class Struggle,' (letter from Marx to Engels, 1879) November 15th 2006: <http://www.marx.eserver.org/1879-german.reformists.txt>
[83] V.S. Naipaul, *Magic Seeds* (London: Picador, 2004): 156.
[84] For Marx, writing in the nineteenth century, conceiving of class identities was a relatively straightforward task because of the clear divisions between the consumption patterns, tastes, and income of industrial workers compared to the bourgeoisie. Marx: November 15th 2006.
<http://www.marx.eserver.org/1879-german.reformists.txt>
[85] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude* (London: Penguin, 2005): xiv.
[86] Etienne Balibar & Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London, New York: Verso, 1991): 79.
[87] Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Capitalist World-Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977): 196.
[88] Etienne Balibar & Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London, New York: Verso, 1991): 79.
[89] Ibid: 84.
[90] Ibid: 85.
[91] Indeed, from a Marxist perspective, the heterogeneity of identity politics that Gilroy and Appadurai (in particular) emphasise bespeaks a desire 'to wish class away' that Terry Eagleton diagnoses within certain poststructuralist cultural theory. As Eagleton sees it, as long as we live in a capitalist economy, class will continue to exist as an identity, because it remains central to the experience of oppression. Therefore, overemphasizing the plurality of political identities that exist today risks playing 'straight into the hands of the oppressor.' To be precise, it is not that Eagleton and as other prominent Marxists such as Jameson and Wallerstein ignore the complexity of class identities that globalisation has produced, but that they insist identity must be thought in relation to global economic production if identity is to retain any political purchase. Terry Eagleton, Frederick Jameson and Edward Said, *Nationalism, Colonialism and Literature* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1990): 23.
[92] Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2004): 86.
[93] Frederick Jameson, *Postmodernism Or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London and New York: Verso Books, 1998): 412.
[94] Ibid: 348-9.

[95] For example, Jameson views ethnicity as 'primarily a yuppie phenomenon' and by in large a function of the market and fashion, rather than as the portent of any real political resistance on the part of oppressed peoples. See Jameson, *Postmodernism*: 341.
[96] Ibid: 319.
[97] Ibid: 348.
[98] Ibid: 346.
[99] Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*: 86.
[100] Jameson: 418.
[101] Ibid: 417.
[102] For Jameson, Jesse Jackson stands as an example of how such a coalition identity might be forged around 'working-class experience'. See Jameson: 331.
[103] Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in The Union Jack* (London: Hutchinson, 1987): 30.
[104] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1996): 32.
[105] Ibid: 41.
[106] Ibid: 41.
[107] Ibid: 42.
[108] Ibid: 42.
[109] Ibid: 34.
[110] Appadurai: 38.
[111] Ibid: 197.
[112] Ibid: 42.
[113] Gilroy: 28.
[114] Ibid: 30.
[115] Naipaul: 7.
[116] Ibid: 9-10.
[117] Ibid: 9-10.
[118] Timothy Weiss, 'Tales of Two Worlds: Naipaul After 9/11', *South Asian Review* 26. 1 (2005): 74-87: 75.
[119] Naipaul: 2.
[120] Ibid: 3.
[121] Ibid: 12.
[122] Ibid: 26.
[123] Ibid: 43.
[124] Ibid: 27.
[125] Naipaul: 47.
[126] Ibid: 41.
[127] Ibid: 48.
[128] Naipaul: 9-10.
[129] Bruce King, *V.S. Naipaul* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003):182
[130] Naipaul: 12.
[131] Naipaul: 9.
[132] Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*: 86.
[133] Ibid: 73.
[134] Ibid: 116-117.
[135] Ibid: 6.
[136] Ibid: 15.
[137] Ibid: 123.
[138] Ibid: 123.
[139] Ibid: 87.
[140] More broadly, Ramchandra's comments invite to be read as a fictional response by Naipaul to his Marxist literary critics. Naipaul has reportedly said of one Marxist critique of his work that 'it's like a Christian writing about Buddhism saying, if they could only accept Christ, then they'd be saved. He wants to save me.' (Banning Eyre, 'Naipaul At Wesleyan,' *The South Carolina Review*, 14 (1982): 34-47: 46) Likewise, Ramchandra's comments reveal an equally evangelical view of Marxism in *Magic Seeds*.

Moreover, Sarojini's character offers a more pointed critique of metropolitan Marxist intellectuals. For instance, Sarojini's admonishment of Willie in West Berlin, because of what the novel eventually shows to be her misguided Marxism draws parallels to charges that critics such as Rob Nixon have brought against Naipaul. More specifically, Nixon argument that 'collective action requires binding causes, requires what Naipaul would call obsessions and others might call commitments,' echo in Sarojini's attempts to make Willie identify with a global proletariat in West Berlin. Consequently, Willie's character is central to the endorsement of Naipaul's own view that Marxist theorising of class in the Third World, from the distance of the metropolitan West, cannot account for its local and personal complexities. Rob Nixon, *London Calling: VS. Naipaul, Postcolonial Mandarin* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992): 173.

[141] Ibid: 247.

[142] Ibid: 250.

[143] Ibid: 264.

[144] Ibid: 264.

[145] Ibid: 246.

[146] Ibid: 246.

[147] Ibid: 9.

[148] Ibid: 250.

[149] Ibid: 264.

[150] Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994): 318.

[151] Ibid: 318.

[152] For example, Sidney Jacobs, 'Race, Empire and the Welfare State: Council Housing and Racism,' *Critical Social Policy* 5 (1985): 6-28.

[153] Naipaul, *Magic Seeds*: 250.

[154] Ibid: 259.

[155] Ibid: 247.

[156] Ibid: 42.

[157] Ibid: 279.

[158] For example, consider the central role the bicycle factory plays in the life and identity of Arthur Seaton in Alan Sillitoe's *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (London: Plume, 1992)

[159] Naipaul: 196.

[160] Ibid: 196.

[161] King: 195.

[162] Immanuel Wallerstein, 'The Scholarly Mainstream and Reality: Are We At A Turning Point?' in Immanuel Wallerstein (ed.) *The Modern World System in Long Duree* (Boulder & London: Paradigm Publishers, 2004): 223.

[163] Hari Kunzru, *Transmission* (New York: Plume, 2005): 122.

[164] Ibid: 170.

[165] Ibid: 20.

[166] Ibid: 21.

[167] Ibid: 110.

[168] Ibid: 102-103.

[169] Ibid: 112. The irony of course is that an interior design firm has been hired to buy all these items for Guy to ensure 'everything would be of the best possible taste.' Consequently, while for Guy his apartment might signify his own individuality and identity, we are reminded of how shaped by others these choices always remain.

[170] Ibid: 8.

[171] Ibid: 206.

[172] Ibid: 206.

[173] Ibid: 206.

[174] Ibid: 206.

[175] Paul Taylor, 'Pattern Recognition in Fast Capitalism: Literary Time on the Theorists of Flux,' *Fast Capitalism* 2.1 (2006)). February 18th 2007: <http://www.uta.edu/huma/agger/fastcapitalism/2_1/taylor.html>

[176] Ibid: < http://www.uta.edu/huma/agger/fastcapitalism/2_1/taylor.html>

[177] Kunzru: 207.

[178] Ibid: 245.
[179] Jameson: 407.
[180] For example, Coolridge argues that Dickens' has a tendency to depict wealthy entrepreneurs as wicked and self-serving embodiments of class oppression. There are numerous examples of such characters in his fiction including; Ralph Nickleby, Hawk, Squeers, Gride, Quilp, Tigg, Pecksniff, Heep, Smallweed, Krook, Merdle, Flintwich, Casby, Fledgeby, Wegg, and Hexam. Archibald Coolidge, *Charles Dickens as Serial Novelist* (Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press, 1967):189.
[181] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude* (London: Penguin, 2005): xiv.
[182] Amardeep Singh, 'A Review of Hari Kunzru's *Transmission*' August 20 2004. June 18th 2006: <http://www.lehigh.edu/~amsp/2004/08/review-of-hari-kunzrus-transmission.html>
[183] Ibid: <http://www.lehigh.edu/~amsp/2004/08/review-of-hari-kunzrus-transmission.html>
[184] Kunzru: 15.
[185] Ibid: 14.
[186] Ibid: 16.
[187] Ibid: 14.
[188] Ibid: 207.
[189] Ibid: 53.
[190] Naipaul: 9-10.
[191] Kunzru: 97.
[192] Ibid: 94.
[193] Ibid: 92.
[194] Ibid: 147.
[195] Ibid: 249.
[196] Ibid: 275.
[197] Singh: <http://www.lehigh.edu/~amsp/2004/08/review-of-hari-kunzrus-transmission.html>
[198] Manzu Islam, *Burrow* (Leeds: Peepal Tree Press, 2004): 60.
[199] Islam: 234.
[200] Ibid: 152.
[201] Ibid: 151.
[202] For example see a recent report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation: August 15th 2006.<http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/2089.asp>
[203] Islam: 220-221.
[204] Ibid: 226.
[205] Ibid: 205.
[206] Ibid: 100.
[207] Ibid: 105.
[208] Ibid: 206.
[209] Ibid: 206.
[210] Idroma Montgomery, 'Beyond Tourism: Space, Race and National Identity in London,' *Diversity Digest* 10.2 (2007): 21-22: 22.
[211] Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*: 40-41.
[212] Shelley Eversley, 'Female Iconography in Invisible Man,' in Ross Posnock (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Ralph Ellison* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005): 172-188.
[213] Islam: 188.
[214] There is also, of course, a gender bias to Soul Brother.
[215] Islam: 290.
[216] Ibid: 12.
[217] Gilroy: 30.

Chapter 2

[218] Hanif Kureishi, 'Bradford', *Granta* 20 (1986): 149-170: 168.
[219] T.S. Eliot, *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (London: Faber, 1948): 31.
[220] Ibid: 91.

[221] Immanuel Wallerstein, 'The National and The Universal: Can There Be Such a Thing as World Culture?' in Anthony King, ed., *Culture, Globalization and The World-System* and Immanuel Wallerstein *Contemporary Conditions For The Representation of Identity.* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997): 91-107.: 92.
[222] Ibid: 91.
[223] Ibid: 91.
[224] Ibid: 98.
[225] Ibid: 98.
[226] Ibid: 98.
[227] Ibid: 98.
[228] Ibid: 98-99.
[229] Ibid: 99.
[230] Ibid: 99.
[231] Ibid: 99.
[232] Ibid: 98.
[233] Ulrich Beck, 'The Cosmopolitan Society and its Enemies,' *Theory Culture and Society* 19 (2003):17-44: 34.
[234] Livingstone writes: 'But, as the united response to the bombings showed, London's model of multiculturalism works. Its cornerstone is the simple economic reality that in the age of globalisation the world's great cities will become more and more diverse. We want any company, anywhere in the world, looking to invest here to know that their staff will find a community to welcome them and help them be themselves.' For Livingstone this call to celebrate and tolerate increasing diversity within Britain does not signal a postnational future, but rather represents a British national identity that he regards as crucial to the state's economic prosperity. Put simply, multinational capitalism for Livingstone, does not erode national identity, but demands its pluralisation if the state is to remain economically competitive within the world-system. Ken Livingstone, 'Multiculturalism Works For London' *The Londoner*, Dec., 2005. January 21st 2005: < http://www.london.gov.uk/londoner/05dec/mayors-message.jsp>
[235] Timothy Brennan, *At Home In The World: Cosmopolitanism Now* (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997): 1.
[236] Ibid: 1.
[237] Ibid: 4.
[238] Ibid: 9.
[239] Indeed Brennan argues that 'pluralism is the slogan of American [identity] 'in which the immigrant has become a fetish, and the images of immigration as heroic survival have become the new mixed-race, intercultural products of the American crucible seen as a source of American strength.' Therefore in understanding globalisation as a reconstituted form of imperialism centred in America rather than Britain, Brennan argues that the rise of pluralist identities in contemporary cultural production further the political and economic project of American led neoliberal globalisation. Ibid: 204-5.
[240] Ibid: 40.
[241] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization.* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1996)
[242] See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (Verso: London, 2003). Anderson's *Imagined Communities* remains a seminal text in understanding national identity as an 'imagined' construct. By 'imagined' Anderson is referring to the fact that any community larger than one in which every inhabitant is personally familiar with each other must be "imagined' in order to extend a collective identity beyond face- to-face exchange. To this end, Anderson sees the emergence of print capitalism as central to the development of the nation through its role as 'a new way of linking fraternity, power and time meaningfully together.' Anderson conception of national identity contrasts to nineteenth century German romantic understandings of national identity, such as Herder's, which regards the nation as some kind of organic, natural order that connects a people to a particular land.
[243] Ibid: 22.
[244] Appadurai: 34.
[245] Ibid: 19.
[246] Ibid: 169.

[247] Ibid: 169.
[248] Ibid: 169.
[249] Ibid: 41.
[250] Ibid: 39.
[251] Ibid: 39.
[252] Ibid: 35.
[253] John Tomlinson, *Globalisation and Culture* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999): 200.
[254] Ibid: 200.
[255] Garcia Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies For Entering and Leaving Modernity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995): 229.
[256] Ibid: 15.
[257] See Appadurai: 12-15.
[258] Bart Moore-Gilbert, *Hanif Kureishi* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002): 81.
[259] 'Raj Revival' refers to renewed interest in the British Raj evident in several films of the 1980's, including *Gandhi* and *A passage to India*. For a more detailed discussion see: Moore-Gilbert: 72-97.
[260] Kureishi, *My Beautiful Laundrette*: 78.
[261] Ibid: 82.
[262] Ibid: 82.
[263] Ibid: 62.
[264] Ibid: 98-99.
[265] Ibid: 62.
[266] Kureishi, *My Beautiful Laundrette*: 107.
[267] Hanif Kureishi, *The Black Album* (New York: Scribner, 1995): 63.
[268] Appadurai: 169.
[269] Kureishi, *My Beautiful Laundrette*: 66.
[270] Ibid: 88.
[271] David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990): 302.
[272] Kureishi, *My Beautiful Laundrette*: 60
[273] Ibid: 60
[274] Ibid: 60
[275] Ibid: 64.
[276] Kristin Bluemel, '"Suburbs Are Not So Bad I Think": Stevie Smith's Problem of Place in 1930s and '40s London.' *Iowa Journal Of Cultural Studies* 3 (2003). January 23rd 2005: < http://www.uiowa.edu/~ijcs/suburbia/bluemel.htm>
[277] George Orwell, *Coming Up for Air* 1939. (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1950): 214.
[278] Ibid: 84.
[279] Ibid: 66.
[280] Kureishi, *My Beautiful Laundrette*: 70.
[281] Ibid: 71.
[282] Ibid: 72.
[283] Ibid: 94.
[284] Ibid: 74
[285] Ibid: 80-81.
[286] Ibid: 77.
[287] Alexandria Barron, 'Fantasies of Union: The Queer National Romance in *My Beautiful Laundrette*,' *Genders Online Journal* 45 (2007). May 7th 2008 : < http://www.genders.org/g45/g45_barron.html>: 11.
[288] Hanif Kureishi, *My Beautiful Laundrette*: 13.
[289] Ibid: 1.
[290] Ibid: 13.
[291] Ibid: 98.
[292] For example, Thatcher famously commented in a television interview: 'Well now, look, let us try and start with a few figures as far as we know them, and I am the first to admit it is not easy to get clear figures from the Home Office about immigration, but there was a committee which looked at it and said that if we went on as we are then by the end of the century there would be four million people of the new Commonwealth or Pakistan here. Now, that is an awful lot and I think it means that people are really rather

afraid that this country might be rather swamped by people with a different culture and, you know, the British character has done so much for democracy, for law and done so much throughout the world that if there is any fear that it might be swamped people are going to react and be rather hostile to those coming in.' Quoted from the *Margret Thatcher Foundation* website. 6th January, 2009: <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/speeches/displaydocument.asp?docid=103485>

[293] Ibid: 78.

[294] Randhawa, *The Corral Strand*: (London: House of Strauss, 2001): 259.

[295] Ibid: 259.

[296] Ibid: 3.

[297] Steven Connor, *The English Novel in History, 1950-1995* (London: Routledge, 1996): 1.

[298] Randhawa: 200-201

[299] Ibid: 103.

[300] Ibid: 136.

[301] Ibid: 102.

[302] Ibid: 134.

[303] Garcia Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies For Entering and Leaving Modernity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995): 229.

[304] Randhawa: 88.

[305] Ibid: 167.

[306] Ibid: 243.

[307] Ibid: 181.

[308] Ibid: 181.

[309] Ibid: 194.

[310] Ibid: 68.

[311] Ibid: 68.

[312] Ibid: 85.

[313] Ibid: 68.

[314] Ibid: 23.

[315] Ibid: 25.

[316] Ibid: 18.

[317] Ibid: 38

[318] Ibid: 21.

[319] Ibid: 298.

[320] Ibid: 298.

[321] Ibid: 302.

[322] Ibid: 298.

[323] Ibid: 299.

[324] Salman Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses* (London, New York: Vintage, 1998): 353.

[325] Randhawa: 88.

[326] Ibid: 163.

[327] Ibid: 164.

[328] John Clement Ball, *Imagining London* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2004): 265.

[329] Ibid: 235.

[330] Ibid: 285.

[331] Ibid: 310.

[332] Brennan: 204-5.

[333] Salman Rushdie, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (London: Vintage, 2000):146

[334] For example, Rushdie writes: 'Earthquakes, scientists say, are common phenomena. Globally speaking there are around fifteen thousand tremors a decade. Stability is what is rare.' Ibid: 500. Also, VTO's first album is called 'Quakershaker.' Ibid: 402.

[335] Gillian Gane, 'Migrancy, The Cosmopolitan Intellectual, and The Global City in *The Satanic Verses*,' *Modern Fiction Studies* 48.1 (2002): 18-49 :20.

[336] Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses*: 367.

[337] Rushdie, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*: 7.

[338] Ibid: 17.

[339] Ibid: 399.
[340] Ibid: 407.
[341] Ibid: 200.
[342] Ibid: 130.
[343] Ibid: 352.
[344] Ibid: 480.
[345] Ibid: 480.
[346] Ibid: 480.
[347] Ibid: 480.
[348] Ibid: 481.
[349] Ibid: 480.
[350] Ibid: 481.
[351] Ibid: 183.
[352] Ibid: 482.
[353] Ibid: 482.
[354] Ibid: 480.
[355] Anshuman Mondal, 'The Ground Beneath her Feet and Fury: The Reinvention of Location,' in Abdulrazak Gurnah (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Salman Rushdie* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 169-183: 181.
[356] Rushdie, *The Ground Beneath her Feet*: 395.
[357] Ibid: 331.
[358] Ibid: 419.
[359] Ibid: 378.
[360] Ibid: 379.
[361] Ibid: 379.
[362] Ibid: 379.
[363] The history of rock music is, however, is centred in Anglo-American artists and locations in the novel , including: 'Dylan, Lennon, Joplin, Joni, Country Joe Fish' as well as Muscle Shoals in Alabama and The Fillmore in San Francisco. Ibid: 402.
[364] Ibid: 333.
[365] Ibid: 200.
[366] Ibid: 204-5.
[367] Ibid: 480.
[368] Brennan: 204-5.
[369] Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London & New York: Routledge, 2002): 257.
[370] See for example: Kanishka Chowdhury, 'Its All Within Your Reach: Globalization and the Ideologies of Postnationalism and Hybridity,' *Cultural Logic: An Electronic Journal of Marxist Theory and Practice*, 5 (2002). March 3rd 2004: http://eserver.org/clogic/2002/chowdhury.html, 2002

Chapter 3

[371] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1996): 8.
[372] Huntington's work has emerged in recent years as the most cited and controversial models of the relationship between Muslim identity and globalisation. Within this model, the West is understood as the dominant 'civilisation' in the world and globalisation is regarded as the most recent attempt of the West to universalise its values and cultural identity. Samuel Huntington, *The Clash Of Civilizations And The Remaking of The World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003)
[373] Sardar is also distrustful of Huntington's alternative political strategy to neoliberal globalisation and America's neo-conservative agenda, which he sees a strategy for the West to maintain its hegemonic position. For a more detailed discussion see: Ziauddin Sardar *Postmodernism And The Other* (London: Pluto Press, 1997) 82-84.
[374] According to Mohammadi ideology is a process of persuasion, whereas tradition is a process of compulsion. See Ali Mohammadi, 'Tradition Versus Ideology As A Mode Of Political Communication In

Iran' in Ali Mohammadi (ed.) *Islam Encountering Globalization* (London & New York: Routledge Curzon, 2002): 212.
[375] Akbar Ahmed, *Postmodernism and Islam: Predicament and Promise* (London & New York: Routledge, 1992): 98.
[376] While Ahmed concedes that certain aspects of westernization, such as democracy, are of value to the world, he also argues that a number of aspects are particularly problematic for Muslims. Of these he cites the erosion of family values, individualism, consumerism, overt sexuality, and a general moral degeneration of the West. Ibid: 98-99.
[377] Ibid: 257-258.
[378] Ibid: 145.
[379] See Sardar, *Postmodernism and the Other*: 38-43.
[380] Sardar distinguishes between an ossified approach to tradition that is evident in Islamic fundamentalism and traditionalism, which he argues is dynamic and open to change. See Sardar, *Postmodernism and The Other*: 272-291.
[381] The result of this global appropriation is to invalidate non-secular cultures and strip them of religious meaning in the West's postmodern vision of pluralism. Thus for Sardar, globalisation is 'the most pathological of all creeds of domination, the final solution of the cultural logic of secularism – the acquired inhuman domination syndrome (AIDS) of our time.' Ziauddin Sardar, 'Christian-Muslim Relations in the Postmodern Age' in Gail Boxwell and Sohail Inayatullah (eds.) *Islam Postmodernism and Other Futures: A Ziauddin Sardar Reader* (London: Pluto Press, 2003): 175.
[382] Ibid: 145.
[383] Ibid: 144.
[384] Ibid: 145.
[385] Ibid: 279.
[386] Ibid: 175.
[387] Ibid: 181
[388] Ibid: 181. Also see Sardar, *Postmodernism And The Other*: 175 – 176.
[389] Sardar, *Postmodernism and The Other*: 192.
[390] Paul Wolfowitz, 'Bridging the Dangerous Gap between the West and the Muslim World,' May 3rd 2002. Febuary 16th 2005: < http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=210>
[391] Ibid: < http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=210>
[392] Ibid: < http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=210>
[393] Sardar, *Postmodernism And The Other*: 78.
[394] Ibid: 78.
[395] Ibid: 81.
[396] Ibid: 23.
[397] Olivier Roy, *Global Islam: In Search of the New Ummah* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004): 197.
[398] Ibid: 23.
[399] Ibid: 23-24.
[400] Bobby Sayyid, *A Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism* (London & New York: Zed Books Ltd, 2003): 38.
[401] Ibid: 47.
[402] Ibid: 46.
[403] Ibid: 60.
[404] Roy: 197.
[405] Ibid: 21.
[406] Ibid: 21.
[407] Ibid: 164.
[408] Ibid: 148
[409] Ibid: 165.
[410] Ibid. 148. Roy comments that whereas traditional religious identity was embedded in the cultural and institutional frameworks that one was born into, religious identity is now ensconced by a dominant secular world. The result of this shift is that religious identities are now primarily concerned with defending their

values against secularism. This has led to the increasing centrality of individual belief to religious identities, or what Roy calls religiosity.

[411] For example, Roy's own study, *Globalised Islam* draws upon a vast range of Islamic Internet sites that have emerged in recent years to promote a global 'virtual Ummah.' The predominance of English as a lingua franca on these sites shows how new approaches to Muslim identity do not always conflict with the hegemony of Anglo-American globalisation. Indeed, according to Roy, English has become as important to Muslim identity as Arabic because of the central role London now plays as a hub of neofundamentalist activity and its promotion through new media. Roy: 183.

[412] Ibid: 49.

[413] Ibid: 165.

[414] Sayyid: xx.

[415] Ibid: 129.

[416] Ibid: xx. For Sayyid, the Muslim Ummah represents a significant challenge to the Westphalian state system, because it imagines a civic community that rejects national boundaries and defines its borders through religious faith. Hence for Sayyid, Islamism and the Ummah herald 'another paradigm of what lies beyond the nation-state.'

[417] Ibid: 148.

[418] Gerald Marzorati, Fiction's Embattled Infidel,' *New York Times Magazine*, 29 Jan. 1989. April 4th 2006: < http://www.nytimes.com/1989/01/29/magazine/salman-rushdie-fiction-s-embattled-infidel.html>:7.

[419] Salman Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses* (London, New York: Vintage, 1998): 81

[420] For example, according to Gaytri Spivak, *The Satanic Verses* is a novel about the condition of migrancy, and more specifically about how 'the postcolonial is divided between two identities: migrant and national.' For critics such as Spivak, a central concern of the novel is the act of cultural translation between these two identities that postcolonial migration necessitates. Gayatri Spivak, 'Reading *The Satanic Verses*,' *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (New York: Routledge, 1993): 217-42.

[421] Ruvani Ranasinha, 'The Fatwa and its Aftermath,' in Abdulrazak Gurnah, *The Cambridge Companion to Salman Rushdie* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 45-61: 47.

[422] Salman Rushdie, 'In Good Faith,' *Imaginary Homelands* (London: Penguin, 1992): 393-415: 394.

[423] For a discussion of Rushdie's conception of hybridity and globalisation see John Tomlinson, *Globalisation and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999): 141-144.

[424] Ibid: 117.

[425] Ibid: 117.

[426] Ibid: 117.

[427] Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses*: 108.

[428] Sardar, *Postmodernism and The Other*: 192 & 198.

[429] Roy: 148.

[430] Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses*: 108

[431] Mark Currie, *Postmodern Narrative Theory* (London, St Martins Press, 1998): 23.

[432] Ibid: 28-29.

[433] Ibid: 28-29.

[434] Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses*: 102.

[435] Ibid: 102

[436] Ibid: 101.

[437] Ibid: 106.

[438] Ibid: 211.

[439] In *Brick Lane*, the cohesiveness of 'The Bengal Tigers' as an Islamic organization is seen to be entirely dependent upon responding to the hostility of 'The British Lions'. Hence Ali writes: the trouble was a lack of trouble. The Lion Hearts' press had stopped rolling. The Bengal Tigers put out a couple more leaflets (one entitled Ten Ways to Taqwa, and the other designed as a fold-out poster of Islamic Jihad with the words emblazoned across and AK-47 rifle) but without the spark of the Lion Hearts the fire had gone out. Ibid: 249.

[440] Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses*: 210.

[441] Ibid: 211.

[442] Ibid: 210.

[443] Salman Rushdie, 'In Good Faith,' *Imaginary Homelands* (London: Penguin, 1992): 393-414: 405.

[444] Ibid: 193.
[445] Sardar: 193
[446] Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses*: 382.
[447] Sardar: 193
[448] Ibid: 193
[449] Sardar, *Postmodernism And The Other*: 175.
[450] Rushdie's decision to represent Islam exclusively through Gibreel's character, an actor who has played God in numerous Bollywood movies, suggests religion to be an illusion, a spectacle much like film. Rushdie makes specific reference to this connection between film and religion throughout the novel. For instance, early in the novel he describes Gibreel's film career as one in which, 'for over a decade and a half he had represented to hundreds of millions of believers in that country in which, to this day, the human population outnumbers the divine by less than three to one, the most acceptable, and instantly recognisable face of the Supreme. For many of his fans, the boundary separating the performer and his roles had longago ceased to exist.' So close is the connection between Gibreel's cinematic representation of the Supreme and actual religion, that when Gibreel leaves South Asia, Rushdie comments that it 'was the death of God. Or something like that.' The suggestion here is that it is not God that has died, but the illusion of God that Gibreel's cinematic representation of the Supreme is a metaphor for. Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses*: 16-17.
[451] Ibid: 546-547.
[452] Ibid: 546-547.
[453] The complex question of who reserves the right to narrate Islam was brought into sharp relief during the events that followed the publication of *The Satanic Verses*. Steven Connor notes similar contradictions by Rushdie and his supporters in defending the novel to those previously highlighted in the text itself. Connor comments that 'paradoxically, the doctrine offered by the novel of the necessary openness of all texts to historical rewritings, and misreadings, can only be maintained by protecting the novel against just this kind of historical process.' Therefore, although the novel may challenge the authoritarian approach to identity that Mahound represents in the text, one of the consequences of this is to also open the novel itself to the sort of "misreadings" or "non readings" that defenders of *The Satanic Verses* accused many Muslims of in their responses to the novel. Steven Connor, *The English Novel in History 1950-1995* (London: Routledge, 1996): 117.
[454] Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses*: 16.
[455] Ibid: 16.
[456] Ray Deonandan 'The Source of the Rage' *India Currents Magazine* (interview with Kureishi) February, 1996. June 21st 2004: < http://podium.deonandan.com/kureishi.html>
[457] Hanif Kureishi, *The Black Album* (New York: Scribner, 1995): 19
[458] Ibid: 19.
[459] Ibid: 138.
[460] Ibid: 139.
[461] For example, see Deedee's account of Chad's reinvention from Trevor to Muhammad Shahabuddin Ali-Shah. Kureishi, *The Black Album*: 116-121.
[462] Ibid: 120.
[463] Ibid: 100.
[464] Also see Kureishi's representation of Rudder's support for the eggplant 'miracle.' Kureishi, *The Black Album*: 188-189.
[465] A good example of this is Chad, who cut off from all traditional Muslim networks in his own background seeks to construct a Muslim identity through a rejection of certain western lifestyle practices because of their perceived immorality. Kureishi, *The Black Album*: 139.
[466] Ibid: 90.
[467] Ibid: 90.
[468] Ibid: 90.
[469] Ibid: 90.
[470] Ibid: 254.
[471] Kureishi's rendering of Riaz closely echoes Giles Kepel's assessment of Siddiqui, of whom Kepel comments, 'soon became a sought after speaker on radio and television, because the former journalist knew the tricks of the trade and performed well in debates, unlike the apparatchiks of the Islamic foundation, who came across as rather dry and uninteresting, and the often self-educated leaders of the Islamic associations,

who spoke English with difficulty.' See Giles Kepel *Allah in the West: Islamic Movements in America and Europe* (Stanford University Press: Stanford, California, 1997): 141-42.
[472] Ibid: 235.
[473] Ibid: 241.
[474] Ibid: 237.
[475] Bart Moore-Gilbert, *Hanif Kureishi* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002) :135
[476] Kureishi, *The Black Album:* 277.
[477] Ibid: 109.
[478] Ibid: 222.
[479] Ibid: 223.
[480] Ibid: 28.
[481] Ibid: 144.
[482] Ibid: 114.
[483] Bart Moore-Gilbert notes that Prince's music 'symbolises those trends in the contemporary world that Kureishi most prizes.' As such both Kureishi and Deedee's enthusiasm for Prince closely reflect Kureishi's own views. Moore-Gilbert: 117-118.
[484] Ibid: 287.
[485] Kureishi, *The Black Album*: 88.
[486] The world of modernity is characterised by Weber as rationalised. The passage to modernity transforms that which previously had appeared as chance into predicable and calculable phenomena. Much of Weber's work demonstrates how the rationalization of religious life has led to a displacement of magical procedure by *wertrational* systemizations of man's relation to the divine. For a discussion of Weber's work in general, and in particular with respect to Islam, see Bryan S Turner, *Max Weber: From History to Modernity* (London: Routledge, 1994): 41-56.
[487] Kureishi, *The Black Album*: 143.
[488] Ibid: 220.
[489] Hanif Kureishi quoted in interview with Maya Jaggi, *The Guardian Online* (Interview with Kureishi) March 1st 1995. October 28th 2004.
< http://books.guardian.co.uk/reviews/generalfiction/0,,9910,00.html#article_continue>
[490] Kureishi's representation of Islam as a form of primitive voodoo in *My Beautiful Laundrette* is similarly disparaging and problematic.
[491] Kureishi, *The Black Album*: 221.
[492] Sardar argues that both Enlightenment thinking and Christianity were used to destroy non-western religions and belief systems, and establish the superiority of the rational colonialists over the irrational, superstitious colonized. The compatibility of Christianity with rationale thought was because within Christianity 'the nearest thing in the physical universes that reflects the miraculous is man. Holiness then exists only in the manmade environment: In the Christian view, it was not emanation from the earth but ritual that consecrated the site; man not nature bore the image of God and man's work, the hallowed edifice, symbolized the cosmos. Nature, so devoid of God's presence and grace, may then be "tortured"; it may justifiably be subjected to scientific experimentation. In short, Christianity achieves a genuine desacralisation and disenchantment of the world. Sardar, *Postmodernism and the Other*: 239.
[493] Ibid: 240.
[494] Ibid: 240.
[495] Kureishi, *The Black Album*: 14.
[496] Monica Ali, *Brick Lane* (London: Doubleday, 2003): 312
[497] Ibid: 231.
[498] Radha Radhakrishnan, 'Postcoloniality and the Boundaries of Identity,' in Linda Alcoff, Martin Alcoff, Eduardo Mendieta (eds.) *Identities: Race, Class, Gender, and Nationality* (London: Blackwell, 2003): 312-331: 316.
[499] Ibid: 215.
[500] Ibid: 207.
[501] Ibid: 305.
[502] Ibid: 338.
[503] Ibid: 86.
[504] Wolfowitz, < http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=210>

[505] Ibid: 413.
[506] Ibid: 124.
[507] Sebastain Groes, 'A Kind of Translation: Reading Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* as Enactment of New Labour's Model of Britishness,' *British American and Canadian Studies* 8 (2006) March 2nd 2008. <http://www.abcjournal.ulbsibiu.ro/Download/Groes_ABC8.pdf>: 127.
[508] Ibid: 128.
[509] Natasha Walter, 'Citrus Scent of Inexorable Desire,' *The Guardian*, Saturday June 14th 2003. December 12th 2007: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2003/jun/14/featuresreviews.guardianreview20>
[510] Mitra Rastegar, 'Reading Nafisi In The West: Authenticity, Orientalism, and "Liberating" Iranian Women.' *Women Studies Quarterly* 34, 2006: 108-128: 116.

Chapter 4

[511] Rumina Sethi, 'To Veil or Not to Veil,' *The Hindu Times Online Edition*, Sunday September 7th 2007. September 23rd 2008: <http://www.hindu.com/lr/2008/09/07/stories/2008090750130300.htm>
[512] Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2004): 38.
[513] Ibid: 39.
[514] Ibid: 40-41.
[515] Ibid: 41.
[516] Maria Mies, *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale (London:* Zed Books, 1986)
[517] Further, seventy percent of the 1.3 billion people who live in absolute poverty are women. See, Martha Gimenez, 'Connecting Marx and Feminism in the Era of Globalization: A Preliminary Investigation' *Socialism and Democracy* 23.2 (2002): < http://www.sdonline.org/35/connectingmarxandfeminism.htm>
[518] Aníbal Quijano, 'Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America,' *Nepantla: Views from South*. 1.3 (2000): 533-580: 535.
[519] Ibid: 535.
[520] Nevertheless, the intersection of the categories of race and gender within the world-system does not mean they are interchangeable concepts. Quijano articulates their distinction in the following way: ' The feminist movement and the debate on the question of "gender" have led increasing numbers of people to admit that "gender" is a mental construct grounded in sexual differences, which expresses patriarchal relations of domination and serves to legitimate them. And some now suggest, analogously, that we should also think of "race" as a mental construct -- based in this case on skin-color. Thus "color" would be to "race" as sex is to "gender."

But the two links are not at all equivalent. In the first place, sex and sexual differences are real; they are a subsystem within the overall system known as the human organism -- comparable to blood-circulation, respiration, digestion, etc. That is, they are part of the biological dimension of the whole person. Moreover, because of this, they entail differences in biological behavior between people of different sexes. Thirdly, this differentiated biological behavior is inked above all to a vital matter: the reproduction of the species. One of the sexes fertilizes, and the other ovulates, and can conceive, gestate, give birth, and nurse the newborn. In sum, sexual difference entails distinct biological roles and behaviors. And although this in no way exhausts -- let alone legitimates -- the category of "gender," it at least shows that the intersubjective construct of "gender" has a biological point of departure. No such thing can be said of the link between "color" and "race." Aníbal Quijano, 'Questioning Race,' *Socialism and Democracy*, 22.3 (2007): 45-53. 51.
[521] Marianne H. Marchand & Anne Sisson Runyan (eds.), *Gender and Global Restructuring* (London & New York: Routledge, 2000): 16.
[522] Ibid: 16-17.
[523] Charlotte Hooper, 'Hegemonic Masculinities in Transition: The Case of Globalization,' in Mariane Marchand and Anne Sisson Runyan (eds.), *Gender and Global Restructuring*. (London: Routledge, 2000): 87.
[524] Ibid: 62.
[525] Ibid: 62.
[526] Ibid: 64.

[527] Ibid: 64.
[528] Ibid: 64.
[529] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1996): 44.
[530] Ibid: 44.
[531] Ibid: 45.
[532] Ibid: 37.
[533] See, Naila Kabeer, *The Power to Choose: Bangladeshi Women and Labour Market Decisions in London and Dhaka* (London: Verso, 2000)
[534] Saskia Sassen, *Globalization and Its Discontents: Essays On The New Mobility of People and Money*. (New York: The New York Press, 1998): 93.
[535] Ibid: 91.
[536] Ibid: 92.
[537] Ibid: 99.
[538] Ibid: 97.
[539] Jacqui True, *Gender, Globalization, and Postsocialism: The Czech Republic After Communism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003): 76.
[540] Ibid: 76.
[541] Sean Nixon, 'Resignifying Masculinity: From "New Man" to "New Lad"' In David Morley and Kevin Robins (eds.) *British Cultural Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001): 373-387: 375.
[542] Ibid: 384.
[543] Inderpal Grewal, *Transnational America: Feminisms, Diasporas, Neoliberalisms* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005)
[544] Farhana Sheikh, *The Red Box* (London: The Women's Press, 1991): 44.
[545] Ibid: 128-129.
[546] Ibid: 215.
[547] Ibid: 128-129.
[548] Ibid: 217.
[549] Ibid: 217.
[550] Ibid: 215.
[551] Ibid: 40.
[552] Ibid: 40.
[553] Ibid: 40.
[554] Ibid: 46.
[555] Ibid: 142.
[556] Ibid: 142.
[557] Ibid: 142.
[558] Ibid: 218.
[559] Ibid: 212.
[560] Yasmin Hussain, *Writing Diaspora: South Asian Woman, Culture and Ethnicity* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing, 2005): 65.
[561] Ibid: 164.
[562] Ibid: 166.
[563] Ibid: 161.
[564] Ibid: 146.
[565] Ibid: 162.
[566] Even bleaker are the economic opportunities for women in the depressed northern town in *Maps For Lost Lovers*. Those who are both willing and able to leave the Pakistani diasporic community, such as Mah-Jabin, do but for those who choose to stay, or unable to leave, the chance to somehow gain economic independence appears almost impossible.
[567] Ibid: 146.
[568] Tania, for example, recalls how after her break from her affair with Deepak she threw his passport into the Thames in an act of catharsis while she 'had the Verve playing on my car CD' and which 'sounded too much like a soundtrack' Meera Syal, *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* (London: Transworld Publishers, 2000): 132.

[569] Ibid: 82.
[570] Ibid: 82.
[571] Ibid: 79.
[572] Ibid: 250.
[573] Ibid: 255.
[574] Ibid: 255.
[575] Ibid: 110.
[576] Ibid: 255.
[577] Ibid: 110.
[578] Ibid: 35.
[579] Ibid: 204.
[580] Ibid: 210.
[581] Ibid: 217.
[582] Gaytri Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' in Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (eds.) *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader.* (New York: Columbia Press, 1994): 66-112.
[583] Syal: 188.
[584] Ibid: 61.
[585] Ibid: 144.
[586] Ibid: 144.
[587] Meera Syal, Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee (New York: Picador, 2001): Hardcover edition, dustcover.
[588] Nadeem Aslam, *Maps For Lost Lovers* (London: Faber & Faber, 2004): 302.
[589] Aslam: 93.
[590] Ibid: 323.
[591] Ibid: 293.
[592] Ibid: 318.
[593] Ibid: 322.
[594] Ibid: 178.
[595] Ibid: 178.
[596] In contrast to Chanda's mother, the 'white passenger's continue to look out of the window', as if these implications are lost on all but South Asian women. Ibid: 178.
[597] Roger Caillois, *The Mystery Novel*, Trans. By Roberto Yahini and A.W. Sadler (Bronxville, NY: Laughing Buddha Press, 1984): 3.
[598] Official United Nations Website: < http://www.un.org/events/humanrights/2007/udhr.shtml>
[599] Aslam: 19.
[600] Ibid: 348.
[601] Ibid: 348.
[602] Ibid: 347.
[603] Ibid: 349.
[604] Ibid: 200.
[605] Ibid: 183-194.
[606] Ibid: 192.
[607] Ibid: 191.
[608] Quijano, 'Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America': 535.
[609] Sheikh: 215.

Conclusion

[610] Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London & New York: Routledge, 2002):257
[611] Etienne Balibar & Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London, New York: Verso, 1991): 79.
[612] Roger Bromley, *Narratives For A New Belonging: Diasporic Cultural Fictions* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000): 6.
[613] Ibid: 14.
[614] Ibid: 15.

[615] Loomba: 256.
[616] Ibid: 257.
[617] Ibid: 257.
[618] Frederick Jameson, *Postmodernism Or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London and New York: Verso Books, 1998): 341.
[619] Ibid: 406.
[620] Immanuel Wallerstein, *European Universalism: The Rhetoric of Power* (New York & London: The New Press, 2006): 81.
[621] Ibid: 80.
[622] Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'Poscoloniality and the Artifice of History, Who speaks for "Indian" Pasts?', *Representations* 37.4 (1992): 1-24.
[623] John Tomlinson, *Globalization and Culture* (Cambridge: Polity, 1999): 207.
[624] Jameson: 418.

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