LOCATING THE POSTCOLONIAL GOTHIC: A STUDY OF SELECTED WORKS OF KAMILA SHAMSIE AND NADEEM ASLAM

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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PH.D. REGN. NO. MZU/Ph.D./1098 of 26.04.2018

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMANITIES
NOVEMBER, 2021

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MIZORAM UNIVERSITY

NOVEMBER, 2021

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled "Locating the Postcolonial Gothic: A Study of Selected Works of Kamila Shamsie and Nadeem Aslam" written by Hannah Lalhlanpuii for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in English has been written under my supervision.

She has fulfilled all the required norms laid down under the Ph.D. regulations of Mizoram University. The thesis incorporates the student's bona fide research and that these have not been submitted for award of any degree in this or any other University or Institute of Learning.

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DECLARATION

I, Hannah Lalhlanpuii, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of the work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form the basis of the award of my previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge, to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University or Institute.

This thesis is being submitted to Mizoram University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I thank God for his guidance throughout the course of my research work.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Thongam Dhanajit Singh, for his invaluable guidance throughout the research period. I am grateful for the suggested readings, comments and corrections during the guide meetings, discussions and through the research work as a whole. I am also deeply thankful for his patience and constant encouragement during my research.

I express my sincere thanks to the faculty and office staffs of the Department of English for their help and support. I would also like to thank my friends and fellow research scholars who have extended their support during the course of my study.

Lastly, I am deeply thankful to my family for their endless support and prayer. They have been my pillar of strength through the course of my study.

Dated: (HANNAH LALHLANPUII)

Place: Aizawl, Mizoram

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Gothic tradition, particularly as a literary genre, has developed massively and accrued multiple layers of meaning and interpretation since its inception in the eighteenth century. It has evolved into a multidisciplinary and multifaceted form as it seeped its way into different literary genres and cultural forms like music, movies and fashion. Catherine Spooner rightly observes that the Gothic has progressed beyond literature and dominated the landscape of contemporary Western culture in the form of "media, from fashion and advertising to the way contemporary events are constructed in mass culture" (8).

Looking at the literary tradition, it is evident that the Gothic is a highly versatile form that has been constantly employed by writers as a mode to view and analyse individual fears, cultural anxieties and social concerns prevalent in different ages of history. The language of terror and horror that characterizes the Gothic enables the marginalized, the unspeakable and silenced voices to come to the surface in many ways that appeal to the public sentiment and fascinate readers. This observation runs parallel to Gina Wisker's definition of the Gothic as "a cultural connection and critical comment, essentially political and personal" (235).

The role and impact of the Gothic in contemporary culture are not only still significant as it was during its golden days in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, but more comprehensive and inclusive today. It has become a mode well suited to critique prevailing social evils, discrimination, violence, environmental decay and political unrest that have become inevitable part of the contemporary global landscape. Haunting has also manifested itself in the form of "capitalist oppression, racism, colonial legacies, terrorist attack, vampirism, possessed software" (Williams 415). Moreover, popular culture, in the twenty-first century, is populated with myriad forms of new Gothic tropes like zombies, bionic men, cyborgs and aliens to name a few. Thus, the Gothic is undeniably one of the most popular literary modes in the contemporary times and tales of horror and haunting have utilized different Gothic tropes to address the most complex issues and concerns of today.

Within the contemporary literary arena, the widespread popularity and usage of Gothic tropes have led to the expansion of Gothic literature with new genres such as postmodern Gothic, postcolonial Gothic and other sub- genres. However, it is important to note that even with the development of new Gothic tropes and manifestations of haunting, there are intrinsic characteristics of the Gothic which are still employed by writers today. The classical pattern of the return of repressed histories, an excessive obsession with the past, turbulent landscape and haunted houses still feature in contemporary Gothic narratives.

On account of their wide- ranging scope, versatility and their curious appeal to the reading public, Gothic narratives have always been convenient mediums to address cultural anxieties and social issues of different ages in history. This is evident in classical Gothic narratives of Horace Walpole, Bram Stoker, Charlotte Bronte and Charles Dickens whose writings challenged the patriarchal system, question capitalist ideologies and class discrimination that dominated English society and culture during the eighteenth and nineteenth century. In this manner, the Gothic continued to develop into "a form which is generated in different genres as well as national and social contexts" (Smith 3). The Gothic, then, is "a site where fears and anxieties returned to the present" and these anxieties, in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, are "political revolution, industrialization, urbanization, shifts in sexual and domestic organization and scientific discovery" (Botting 3).

As the genre progresses with time, in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the anxieties that the Gothic addresses have become more varied and ideological as it deals with racisms, class, social structures and political issues. Moreover, new and emerging cultural studies and theories have also continuously widened the scope of the Gothic, thereby, giving rise to new sub- genres and forms. For instance, the genre of the American Gothic serves as convenient mode to critique racial politics and its consequences after the Civil War. Similarly, the postcolonial Gothic is employed to critique colonial discourse and address issues and concerns that haunt postcolonial subjects and societies.

The engagement of the Gothic with repressed histories and its transgressive trait of defying pre-established borders and conventions ultimately relate the genre to

the postcolonial. David Punter argues that the experience of the postcolonial subject is constantly haunted by a colonial past. He opines that the word 'post' "conjure up, make uncannily appear before us, the very phenomena they have, in a different sense, surpassed" (62). In this manner the postcolonial Gothic signals a return of the repressed where "legacy of silence, pain, humiliation, and dispossession reappear in spectral figures" (Wisker 173).

Looking from a historical perspective, the Gothic has always maintained close affiliation with colonial and postcolonial discourse. This is evident in its dealings with repressed memories, subaltern identity, the Self and the Other. Within the paradigm of contemporary literary theories, it can be safe to say that it is with postcolonialism that the Gothic tradition has the closest literary alliance with. According to Meghan Carlton, the Gothic serves as the convenient form that caters to the need of the postcolonial writer. She argues that the Gothic is "a form that does not require an answer to unanswerable questions" and "could be an attractive means through which to engage the postcolonial state of being" (142).

The postcolonial Gothic, thus, becomes fertile ground for postcolonial writers who are engaged in the act of 'writing back'. The trauma and sufferings engendered by colonialism often requires the language of the irrational and the fantastic in order to bring out the uncensored truth and the real nature of the past. The terror, fear, anxiety and dread that plague the postcolonial subject in the present are often complex and multifaceted which render them impossible to be expressed through logical and rational narratives. The Gothic is, then, readily adopted by postcolonial writers as it is a mode which conveniently accommodates a critique on colonial discourse. In her attempt to define the postcolonial Gothic, Sarah Illot opines that the Gothic "provides a language suited to horror and trauma" and the postcolonial Gothic "writes back to the body of imperial Gothic literature that supported the colonial project through the othering of colonized peoples; and it recognizes that 'boomerang effect' that renders the Frankensteinian monster-makers themselves monstrous (19). Both the Gothic and the postcolonial are characterized by the act of writing back to dominant discourses— the Enlightenment in the case of the Gothic and colonialism for the postcolonial

It is discernable from Illot's statement that the Gothic enables the rebounding of monstrosity for postcolonial writers. This becomes particularly suitable for marginalized communities, silenced histories and cultures oppressed and sidelined by dominant cultures. Hence, postcolonial Gothic is frequently employed by writers belonging to South Asia, West Indies and the Carribean. In fact, the Domincan writer Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) is often considered to be the mother text of postcolonial Gothic fiction. Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, Beth Yahp and Catherine Lim are some of the prominent writers of South Asia whose texts have been widely read as postcolonial Gothic.

In his analysis of Rushdie's *Shame* (1983), Punter looks at the ways in which the protagonist Sufiya Zenobia is presented as a monster, created out of the shame and violent histories of Pakistan. She becomes "the ultimate metaphor for political and social contamination" and "in her body emerge all the crimes and violences of her society, but they have no way out, they are isolated in her, and they add up to her own force for self- destruction" (112). Punter further argues that Sufiya's monstrous body "is part of the image that Rushdie offers us of contemporary postcolonial Pakistan" (112). In his reading of *The Crocodile Fury* (1992) by Malaysian writer Beth Yahp, Andrew Smith argues that "the novel represents a postcolonial world which comes to symbolize the decline of colonial power" (179) and that the novel employs the Gothic mode in order to "make political points about history, oppression and gender" (183). Also, what is remarkable about the postcolonial Gothic is how these writers belonging to postcolonial nations have employed a mode and form of writing which has always been firmly established as part of a Western literary tradition.

The thesis will examine how the postcolonial Gothic acts as the convenient framework to address the contemporary issues in postcolonial society, particularly those related to religious identity, migration and diaspora in the contemporary times. The study will focus on four selected fictional narratives—*Kartography* (2002) and *A God in Every Stone* (2014) by Kamila Shamsie and *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004) and *The Wasted Vigil* (2008) by Nadeem Aslam. These recent works by Pakistani writers have been chosen for the study not only because Pakistani literature

constitutes significant portion of South Asian literature but also because Pakistani identities have garnered critical interest in the present times on account of terrorism, large scale migration and other political issues.

Pakistani writing in English has always been marked by a national dynamic and a distinct history of colonialism. But what gives it its unique characteristics is the inevitable connection to the religious aspect, particularly Islam and its status in global politics today. It is within this context that this introductory chapter will attempt to locate the two authors in focus, Kamila Shamsie and Nadeem Aslam, within the wider framework of Pakistani writings in English. The four texts which have been selected for the study will be read as postcolonial Gothic texts by identifying the Gothic tropes within the narratives.

With Muslim identity being at the centre of the global geopolitical arena in the twenty-first century and the emergence of Islamophobia, Pakistani writers have engaged extensively with the issue of religion in order to interrogate the increasing Western representation of the Muslim community. Madeline Clements writes that the "literature produced by South Asian Muslim authors today reflects both the complicated nature of contemporary global Muslim experiences of connection, and the concerns held about them by the (largely Western) world for which they write" (14). In the current global landscape, the othering of the Muslim subject and the marginalization of the community at large have rendered them as the monstrous Other who could pose dangerous threat to society and the nation. The reason for this perception of the Pakistani Muslim subject as the site of fear and terror can be seen as the continuing legacy of colonialism and a product of neo-imperialism. However, one cannot simply ignore the violence and atrocities committed by fundamentalists and faith-based terrorist groups. In fact, it is one of the factors which inevitably contribute to the construction of the Muslim Other, thus opening up spaces and fissures for the West to categorize the Pakistani Muslim identity as a negative entity, the monstrous Other. Hence, the Gothic provides the trope and language suited to address the postcolonial subject's experience in the twenty-first century and this forms the crux of the writings of the second-generation diasporic Pakistani writers like Shamsie and Aslam.

Looking at the history of Pakistani writings in English, even in pre- 9/11, the genre has always maintained a consistent flow of literary production since the Partition. When one traces the trend in Pakistani writing in English, it can be asserted that life under the British Raj during pre-Partition and the political history surrounding the events of 1947 cast a strong influence on the literary works of many first-generation Pakistani writers like Ahmed Ali, Shahid Soharwardi, Mumtaz Shahnawaz, among others. Ahmed Ali's *Twilight in Delhi* (1940) is set in colonial Delhi and addresses the changing political climate under British colonial rule and the tragic plight of the Muslim community. *The Heart Divided* (1957) is another Partition novel written by Mumtaz Shahnawaz which portrays the waning of Muslim culture in colonial India. The narrative chronicles the social and political upheavals of pre-independence India and focuses on women's condition in Indian colonial history. Another significant literary work is Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice CandyMan* published in 1980. In this novel, Sidhwa explores the civil war which took place during the 1947 Partition. The narrative highlights the religious intolerance generated by the Partition which further led to large scale slaughter of children, violence and the displacement of thousands of refugees. The artistic inputs of these writers contribute to an understanding of the complex and traumatic experience of the Partition, particularly in the case of the Pakistani Muslim community. However, many of the first-generation writers are plagued by a strong and fixed bond with the past and conservative nationalism. Commenting on this aspect of first-generation Pakistani writers, Aroosa Kanwal argues:

> Sectarian and ethnic conflicts in 1980s Karachi-which have their roots in both the 1947 partition and the 1971 Partition- divided that first generation on the basis of limited territory determined concepts of culture and identity, such as differences in ethnicity, caste, ancestry and language. (12)

With the emergence of the second-generation Pakistani writers, the literary landscape has undergone a change where the new writers challenge the kind of monolithic views and reductive nationalisms that characterized the works of the previous generation of writers. These emerging writers have taken a more comprehensive and inclusive approach in terms of themes and subject matter. Their works are largely marked by a sense of cosmopolitanism and an attempt to

familiarize the cultural practices of Pakistani Muslim and integrate it with the global scene. For instance, Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows* (2009) tells the story of a Japanese woman named Hiroko who moves with fluidity through different cultures as she moves from Japan to Delhi and Pakistan and then to America. In the narrative, Shamsie portrays how extreme nationalism and political acts like the dropping of the atomic bomb on Nagasaki and Hiroshima to save American lives and the attack on the Twin Tower engendered unending physical and psychological trauma that continue to haunt individual lives. Like Shamsie, Hanif Kureshi is another celebrated Pakistani writer whose writings celebrate cultural diversity and embrace the fluidity of cultures.

The majority of these writers grew up in a postcolonial nation state where riots, conflicts and violence were rampant. Thus, it comes as no surprise that these writers have chosen to use literature as a means to make political statements, address important national issues and revisit the turbulent history of their country. Like their predecessors, their writings serve as the mouth-piece for Pakistani Muslims but they differ in terms of cultural inclusivity and they do not hesitate to highlight the problems related to conservatism and religious fundamentalism within the Muslim community and the Islamic faith. Commenting on the dual role of these writers, Madeline Clements observes that the second-generation Pakistani writers do not limit their writings to simply addressing "Western conceptions of a monolithic Islamic identity" but they also "offer subtle attempts to revise both Western imperialist and political Islamist maps of the Muslim world which would attempt to identify a single 'centre' or focus for Islamic subjectivity and identity" (15).

However, the popularity of Pakistani writing in the global literary scene in the recent years is largely on account of the events of 9/11 after which the West became preoccupied with the Islamic world and the Middle East. This fixation is instigated by a mixture of fear and fascination about the Muslim subject, characterized by the yearning to gain knowledge about the community and the threat that they could pose. The manner in which the West is simultaneously attracted to and frightened by the Pakistani Muslim subject is significantly similar to the attitude of readers towards Gothic monsters. It is not just the human subject who is othered but countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan have been firmly established in Western

perception as the breeding ground of terrorism. The term ‘terrorism’ has become conflated and too often associated with the idea of Pakistan and Islam. Arjun Appadurai argues that the Western public’s perspective on Muslim has changed from a “terrorized minority to a terrifying majority” (111).

As aforementioned, the postcolonial Muslim identity, in the twenty-first century has acquired new critical dimensions and perspectives. In the current political climate, an increasingly complex debate is emerging about the reified figure and cultural category of the “Muslim”, a term heavily charged with religious connotations, political identity, nation, nationalism, ethnicity and race. Since the events of 9/11, the Muslim identity has always been the focus of cultural fear and anxiety. The Muslim identity is proving to be increasingly useful for understanding texts dealing with the Muslim issues since a series of pivotal events between 1989 and 2005, including the Rushdie affair, the two Gulf Wars, 9/11 and the American War on Terror.

Within the literary sphere, Pakistani writers like Kamila Shamsie, Mohammad Hanif, Ali Sethi and many others have played significant role in addressing these cultural issues. The focus on the postcolonial Muslim identity simultaneously affects the national identity of the postcolonial subject and the postcolonial nation state. Pakistanis are easily stereotyped as terrorists, suicide bombers or fundamentalists and Pakistan is seen as violent country where people live in inhumane conditions. Hence, Pakistani writers have taken up the task of reimagining and reconfiguring Pakistani national, cultural and religious identities in their writings.

What is also interesting in these fictional narratives is the honest representation of the postcolonial condition of Pakistan. This may have been due to the fact that Pakistan is burdened by a history marked with turbulence and turmoil which is a distinct characteristic of the postcolonial Gothic landscape. The literary contributions of Pakistani writers like Shamsie, Aslam, Hanif and others are invaluable because they deliver a critique of European ideology from an Asian perspective on account of their diasporic identity. Their works navigate through moments of decolonization and seek to negotiate the relationship between Europe and Asia in the contemporary times. Seen in this light, it is not surprising that

Pakistani writing in English is often marked by a streak of anti-European sentiment. The history of Partition is partly responsible for the turbulent landscape and complexity of the postcolonial Pakistani Muslim identity as compared to other Muslims of colonized nations; moreover, the complexity is further intensified because "Pakistan has concerns in, and links to, the Middle East, Central Asia, east Africa and beyond" that contributes to its Muslim identity (Chambers 125). The historical landscape of Pakistan is, therefore, a conflict-ridden scene with uncertainty, violence and instability threatening the smooth functioning of a postcolonial state. Within the scope of Pakistani writings, such drastic events develop room for horror, atrocity and monstrosity, associated with racial difference.

In examining the representation of Muslims in Western history, Sophia Rose Arjana argues that "the pre- modern Muslim is always presented in stark contrast to the modern and civilized European and American. Muslims are "camel-riding, terroristic, hook-nosed, venal lechers" while the white Christian is "unlike the Oriental, a true human being" (152) thus, providing a contrast to normative humanity. The Muslim, in the Western imagination, is perceived as a "frightening adversary, an outside enemy that doesn't belong in modernity, who, due to an intrinsic alterity, must be excluded from the American and European landscapes" (2) However, it has to be noted that this Western perception of the Muslim as the monstrous figure does not point to the recent phenomenon of political Islamophobia, which is a generalized anxiety about Islam and Muslims. Rose Arjana further argues that Muslims are "monsters of the present, phantasms that result from an imaginary Islam that has been shaped over many centuries" (3) and are seen by the West as "monsters that disturb the calm of white Christianity" (4). As a result, texts dealing with the Muslim predicament are embedded with anxieties surrounding religious and racial identity.

Orientalism, as posited by scholars like Said, plays significant role in the shaping of the present-day Muslim identity as one that is monstrous because it authenticates and legitimises the Western imagination about Islam. Orientalism, therefore, serves as the medium through which the ludicrous is rendered believable. It would be wrong to simply state that such kind of identity is generated by Orientalism. In examining the role of Orientalism in shaping the Muslim identity,

Rose Arjana asserts that it was with the age of orientalism that an academic approach was taken towards Islam in the West in the eighteenth century and that it "was deeply imbedded in the unabashed white male supremacy of eighteenth and nineteenth century colonialism" (8). Following Said's powerful polemic, Rose Arjana further argues that the Orient was "created by and for the West" (9). The Orient, thus, was constructed, defined and narrated according to the perspectives of the West. Though the scope of Orientalism extends far beyond Islam, the majority of Oriental scholarship focuses on Muslim cultures more than other ethnic or religious groups.

Such a process constitutes the Muslim as a non-human subject, rather than a human individual, formulating a stagnant character devoid of progress and incapable, unlike the white man, of adapting to modernity. This further allowed the placement of Muslims in a time and space removed from the West's normative human community. Therefore, the colonial period and its ideology in alignment with Orientalism and the Enlightenment become the dominant forces that contribute in shaping the Muslim identity as a monstrous entity. The postcolonial Muslim identity, then, becomes one that is heavily marked with the Gothic trope of 'Otherness'. The complexity, ambivalence and doubts surrounding the Muslim engender a kind of Gothic identity where "closure is (always) partial" and "a sense of loss and uncertainty remains" (Botting 134).

Postcolonial literature offers counter narratives to undo the Orient as imagined and represented in Western scholarship. Pakistani writers play fundamental role in their attempt to reshape and reconsider the Western projection of the postcolonial Muslim subject. In Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007), the author refuses to categorize Muslim identity as a fixed religious concept and instead forced the readers to consider established assumptions regarding the protagonist's Muslim identity in a post-9/11 climate. Writers like Kamila Shamsie and Nadeem Aslam often turn to Gothic tropes and themes to draw out the most intricate and complex issues concerning race, identity, culture and nationalism.

The literary works of Kamila Shamsie and Nadeem Aslam are strongly rooted in their diasporic identity. As a result, their fictional writings constitute a

cosmopolitan and borderless landscape where they address the politics of home, displacement and migrancy. In addition to this, as writers belonging to a postcolonial society whose culture and literature have gradually advanced with the idea of the nation, their views and perspectives are extensively informed by their conception of the nation. The troubled political climate, the ethnic violence and unrest that plague Pakistan as a nation form the crux of their writings. Similar themes and subject matter can be found in the works of their contemporaries like Mohammad Hanif, Uzma Aslam Khan and Mohsin Hamid. Therefore, the works of these contemporary Pakistani writers in English become powerful political and social commentaries.

Commenting on the position of contemporary Pakistani writers, Mushtaq Bilal states that on account of the geopolitical status that Pakistan holds today "it has become virtually impossible to write about Pakistan without making it a political statement" and that "particularly in post 9/11, it has become increasingly difficult for writers to address the Muslim issue" (2). Commentaries and statements about Pakistan, be it in fiction or non-fiction, have become sensitive and complex topics which could easily generate debates, conflicts and misunderstandings. This is largely due to the unstable internal affairs and domestic political climate of Pakistan and its uncertain international relations with other countries in the present times. Hence, it becomes necessary for writers to engage with these issues using frameworks and modes that can provide the language and tropes "to address new racisms emerging from neo- imperial and nationalistic movements, and to repurpose new monsters suited to systemic critique" (Illot 23).

The literary works of Kamila Shamsie and Nadeem Aslam are marked by the desire to narrativize individual traumatic experiences and transform it into a shared collective memory through their fiction. Their works can be seen as an attempt to destabilize Western narratives on the postcolonial Pakistani subjects and reconstruct Pakistani identity. For Shamsie and Aslam, the sub-genre of the postcolonial Gothic offers the tropes and language suitable to address and counter the growing issues and questions that have loomed large within the postcolonial domestic space. The close literary alliance that the Gothic shares with the postcolonial enables postcolonial writers to engage with prevailing issues in postcolonial societies.

In examining the status of writers like Shamsie and Aslam in the post 9/11 era, Catherine Perry argues that in the hands of Muslim writers "literature becomes a form of resistance to power…and the role of Muslim-born writers in the West is to inform public opinion which is often misinformed or distorted by the media" (123) and that they voice "the necessity to perceive Muslims as individuals rather than as belonging to the abstract and potentially reductive category of Islam" (126). Hence, the issue of Pakistani Muslim identity has become significant aspect of postcolonial studies.

The selected primary texts of Shamsie and Aslam are significantly Gothic in the sense that the narratives incorporate the aspects of excess and transgression set in a turbulent landscape or setting which Botting identifies as the fundamental aspects of the Gothic. According to Botting, "Gothic signifies a writing of excess," (1) which explores anxieties and transgressions across cultural boundaries and limits. Excess signifies the alteration of rationality and rational behavior, thereby giving freedom to the fantastical, the grotesque and the unfamiliar. In the novels of Shamsie and Aslam, the Gothic excess abounds through the portrayal of the Muslim subject as the monstrous or ghostly Other. In their narratives, the Muslim body becomes a repository of cultural hatred, racism, anxieties, and violence. In particular, the marginalization of the immigrant subject becomes the site of the Gothic excess characterized by alienation, violence, loss and most significantly, otherness. Moreover, these texts are preoccupied with the objection to the dominant discourse and are, therefore, transgressive in nature which runs parallel to the fact that the Gothic is a boundary-breaker, one that transgresses established norms and conventions.

Kamila Shamsie is a Pakistani-British writer with a dual nationality of the UK and Pakistan. Her works include *In the City by the Sea* (1998), *Salt and Saffron* (2000), *Kartography* (2002), *Broken Verses* (2005), *Offence: The Muslim Case* (2009), *Burnt Shadows* (2009) and *A God in Every Stone* (2014). Shamsie was born in 1973, just two years after the Civil War between East and West Pakistan and her childhood in post-war Karachi has a significant impact on her literary works. She completed her B.A in Creative Writing from Hamilton College in New York and

finished her MFA in the University of Massachusetts. She studied creative writing under the mentorship of the Kashmiri poet, Agha Shahid Ali. Shamsie's first novel *In the City by the Sea,* published in 1998, won her the Prime Minister's Award for Literature in Pakistan. She also won the Patras Bokhari Award, a prestigious award given by the Academy of Letters in Pakistan, for her two novels *Kartography* and *Broken Verses.* In 2018, her latest novel, *Home Fire* won the Women's Prize for Fiction and was also longlisted for the Booker Prize. Shamsie grew up during a turbulent age in the history of Pakistan when the then Prime Minister of Pakistan Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's nuclear programme was the talk of the nation. This was followed by General Zia-ul- Haq's radicalization of Islam and his controversial involvement in the Afghan war against the Soviets. These political climate of the time shaped Shamsie's "decentred perspective on Pakistani and world politics" (Clements 125).

In an interview with *The Hindu* in November 2019, Shamsie claims that she identifies herself as "a Pakistani writer, a woman writer, a Muslim writer and a British- Pakistani writer" while terms such as 'transnational' and 'diaspora' do not have any resonance for her (Shamsie). This is not surprising in the case of writers like Shamsie because "the diasporic artist or writer is burdened with the imposition of a great number of ready-made identities circulating through cultural and institutional discourses" (Mersal 1581). This seems to be the shared sentiments of many South Asian writers who chose to "remain indifferent to labels like 'postcolonial literature' or 'commonwealth literature' that are frequently used to categorize their works not only within academia but also by literary prize juries", particularly for Pakistani writers like Shamsie who "recognizes that these labels represent a kind of colonial gaze, which is still used to look at Pakistani literature" (Bilal 16). In the same interview with *The Hindu,* Shamsie mentioned that the aim of writing, for her, is "to write novels that will work for those who are Muslim and for those to whom Muslims are the 'other'" (Shamsie*).* Her writings, therefore, are often populated by Muslim characters and their experiences in foreign countries or non-Muslim characters in Delhi, Karachi and Peshawar. Over the years, Shamsie has become a notable voice of the Muslim community in the West through her writings

where she engages herself with the concepts of migration, cultural identity and the politics of representation.

As a writer born and brought up in the city of Karachi, the political conflict and social unrest that took place in the city cast a deep impact on the subject matter of Shamsie's writings. Her childhood memories of post-war society of the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971, in particular, seem to inform almost all her works. Shamsie tends to choose the most violent of histories as the backdrop to her novel. Her narratives are often situated in the midst of political turmoil, unrest and war- *Kartography* in post-war Karachi and the Partition, *Burnt Shadows* in Word War II in Japan and post 9/11 New York, *A God in Every Stone* in colonial Peshawar and *Home Fire* in war torn Syria terrorized by the ISIS. Such settings open up spaces and fissures for her novels to reflect an active engagement with ethnic conflict, political turmoil, war and violence and explore how these pervade individual history, family structure, community life and the nation. The majority of her novels explore the life and worldview of the upper-middle class of Pakistan, particularly Karachi. On account of being a Pakistani writer residing in London, it is not surprising that Shamsie's characters and their stories often move between two worlds or find themselves in a cosmopolitan setting. Though she refuses to be labelled as a diasporic writer, her literary works can be regarded as diasporic in nature and they present a captivating amalgamation of Western and Pakistani culture.

In his study of Shamsie's fiction, Bruce King observes that her stories are marked by "the emotional discomfort that results from leaving the security of the past, a past represented by home, family, friendships and Karachi" (King 147). This critical observation rightly aligns with the theme and subject matter of *Kartography,* Shamsie's third novel and one among the many set in Karachi. In this novel, Shamsie posits the need for an inevitable confrontation with the past in order to make sense of the present reality. With the 1947 Partition and the 1971 Civil War as backdrops, *Kartography* (2002) tells the story of two friends, Raheen and Karim who were inseparable childhood friends. They share a secret language and love to talk in anagrams. Like Shamsie, Raheen and Karim grew up in an upper- class family in Karachi, raised by parents who are also best friends. Shamsie presents a

realistic picture of the Karachi elite life in her portrayal of the two friends. However, things took a different turn when they reach their adolescence phase and a barricade of silence falls between them. As ethnic conflict becomes rampant in Karachi, the past and the truth about the "fiancée swap" of their parents came to light which widened the gap between them. Karim is then sent to London where he tries to find comfort and peace in the art of map making which signifies his longing for logic, reason and rationality. Raheen, on the other hand, goes off to Boston and uncovers the dark secrets of their parents' past as well as the turbulent history of Pakistan. She found out that her parents and Karim's parents, who are all best friends, were married to their present spouses not because of love but because the husbands had swapped fiancée during the 1971 Civil War. The reason for the swap was because Maheen, Karim's mother, was a Bengali. Zafar, Raheen's father, could not marry her because of his strong anti- Bengali sentiments. The 1991 ethnic violence in Karachi as the subsequent ripple effect of the 1971 Civil Waris projected in the characters' lives as the truth about the past eventually brought about disintegration in familial relationships and friendships.

In *Kartography,* Shamsie paints the picture of Karachi as a hauntingly beautiful city overflowing with violent histories, particularly the Partition of India in 1947 and the 1971 Civil War and how they consequently affect individual and social life. The individual lives of the characters are tangled in a web of history weaved by excess nationalism and politics. The Gothic excess manifests itself in Raheen's obsession with the 1971 Civil War which further leads to the disintegration of familial structures of the present. Excess, therefore, signals the return of the repressed which disrupts the present. Through the story of Raheen and Karim, their parents and the Karachi society, Shamsie throws light on how the history of violence of the Partition fosters the Civil War which led to communal conflict, thus, creating a long chain of bloodshed and violence in the same way the inherited trauma is passed on from one generation to the next.

Shamsie's fourth novel *A God in Every Stone* is set in Peshawar and London and includes a wide range of characters from different nationalities. The timeline of the novel spans from the First World War in 1914 to the eve of the Indian freedom

movement in 1930 when the Khudai Khidmatgar occurred, an event often regarded as similar to the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in 1919 at Amritsar. *A God in Every Stone* presents a set of characters whose lives are affected by colonialism, the World War and later the Indian Freedom Movement at the Street of Storytellers. Through the perspectives of the two protagonists, an English woman named Vivian Spencer Rose and a Pathan soldier named Qayyum, Shamsie focuses on the forgotten histories and stories which have been pushed to the margins by dominant narratives. It is interesting to note that the title of the novel is a reference to the ancient past of Peshawar which was once the capital of the Buddhist kingdom of Gandhara and this ancient history of the city plays a central role in the narrative.

The novel tells the story of Vivian Spencer Rose, an English archaeologist who comes to colonial Peshawar looking for an ancient artifact, the Circlet of Scylax. Shamsie shares Ondaatje's anti-colonial sentiments in her depiction of the colonization of northern India. She draws parallel narratives between the imperialism of the ancient world of the Greeks and the Persians and colonialism of the modern world. In Peshawar, Viv befriends a local boy named Najeeb who eventually becomes her student. Viv teaches world history to Najeeb and takes him to visits at the Peshawar Museum. Here, the Gothic trope of excess plays out in the form of desire; Vivian and Najeeb's excessive desire to know about the past and the thirst for knowledge, in a Faustian manner, generates fear and terror that haunts the novel. Meanwhile, the sub plot tells the story of Najeeb's older brother, a Pathan soldier named Qayyum, who returns to Peshawar after fighting for Britain in the First World War. Shamsie presents a vivid picture of life in colonial Peshawar where the colonial masters lead a high and extravagant lifestyle with dinner parties, brunches and other social gatherings. The locals, on the other hand, populate the market in the Streets of Storytellers and the Street of Carpet-sellers. When Qayyum returns to Peshawar, he is unhappy with the mentoring of Najeeb by the Englishwoman. The narrative moves forward to 1930 when Vivian has gone back to England. Qayyum joins the Pashtun non-violent resistance movement called the Khudai Khidmatgar and Najeeb successfully digs up the Circlet of Scylax but only after he seeks help from Vivian. What is of significance here is that, Najeeb, as a colonial subject, does not have

access to his own history and requires the permission of the English who are in control of the production of history. It is also noteworthy that the Peshawar Museum is administered and managed by the British who decides what artifacts should be displayed and hidden. The turbulent setting, which is an integral part of Gothic writing, figures prominently in these selected texts. In *A God in Every Stone*, Shamsie paints a morbid picture of the World War and she situates Qayyum in the middle of the Battle of Ypres. As the narrative progresses, the blood- covered streets of Peshawar during the Partition are shown to have drastic effects on the actions and psyche of the characters. The horrific landscape of the war scenes, the bloodshed and violence in Peshawar, the inhumane treatment of dead bodies constitute the turbulent setting of Shamsie's novel.

As postcolonial Gothic texts, Shamsie's novels employ the Gothic to traverse and highlight the inconsistencies within the social structures and the curtailment of human rights, particularly those of women. In the Karachi tales and Peshawar stories, accounts of the supernatural and mystical correspond to the realistic accounts of everyday life so as to throw light on the contradictions and restraints brough about by the existence of colonial history.

Nadeem Aslam, like Shamsie, is a British Pakistani writer residing in UK. His major works include *Season of the Rainbirds* (1993), *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004), *The Wasted Vigil* (2008), *The Blind Man's Garden* (2013). His first novel, *Season of the Rainbirds*, won him the Betty Trask and Author's Club First Novel Award. *Maps for Lost Lovers* won the Encore's Award and was also shortlisted for the International Dublin Literary Award in 2005. In his novels, Aslam frequently employs magic realism where elements of the fantastic and supernatural intertwine with the realistic; this gives Gothic overtones to his narratives.

Aslam was born in Pakistan in 1966 and spent his childhood in Gujranwala. His family migrated to the UK when he was fourteen years old during the presidency of General Muhammad Zia-ul- Haq due to his father's communist affiliations. The abrupt move from an Urdu speaking community in Gujranwala to the industrial town of Yorkshire in the UK had a significant impact on Aslam's life. He found himself

"struggling with a lost homeland, language and culture, a college dropout with fewchoices" and he "withdrew into an inner world, living on very little money and often draping his room with black cloth to be able to write" (Sethi 348). The isolation and alienation that he experienced as an immigrant in Britain informed many of his writings where he narrates the Muslim immigrant experience and the struggles that come with it. During his first few years in Britain, Aslam worked tirelessly to hone his writing skills and educated himself with any English books that he could find. With the poetic talent he inherited from his father, he was able to translate his immigrant experiences into fiction and emerged as one of the most significant voices in Pakistani literature. His language is lyrical in nature and his writings project his keen attention to details.

Apart from negotiating the legacies of colonialism and the political status of Muslims in the global scene, Aslam also provides strong criticism against religious fundamentalism, the concept of jihad and women's status under the Islamic faith. His narratives are often characterized by his resentment against the political corruption, religious hypocrisy and the brutality of the military in Pakistan. In an interview with *The Hindu*, Aslam talks about the suicide bombing in his latest novel *The Golden Legend:*

> Given our military, our politicians, our mullahs- I knew such a thing was a possibility. Many of the things that happened in the aftermath of the Sehwan massacre also happened in my novel… To some people, dancing in the name of Islam is a bigger affront than massacring in the name of Islam. And it is all engineered and manipulated by the politicians, by the mullahs and the military. (Aslam)

Maps for Lost Lovers (2004) is Aslam's second novel and tells the story of a Pakistanni immigrant community who have settled in a fictional English town called Dasht-i- Tanhaii and the narrative revolves around the murder of a pair of lovers and tells the horrors of the immigrant experience in England. Aslam took eleven years to complete the novel and it later won the Kiriyama Pacific Rim Book Prize 2005.

Aslam's fictional community in *Maps for Lost Lovers* lives in a perpetual state of fear and desperately cling on to the memory of their homeland in order to recreate a sense of home in the foreign country. Kaukab, the wife of Shamas, is a conservative and devout Muslim who is "born and bred in a mosque" (*Maps* 79) and resents everything related to the West as she constantly struggles to come to terms with the foreign culture into which her children are immersed. With her limited knowledge in the English language and her fear and suspicions about Western culture, Kaukab is portrayed as someone who is "trapped within the cage of permitted thinking" (*Maps* 113). Her attempts to uphold Islamic practices in the family splintered her relationship with her husband and children. While characters like Kaukab and the women in the community refuse to conform to English culture and lifestyle, Aslam also showcases how these characters have to deal with racism in their daily lives. While talking about the "white racist thugs" who beat up Shamas, one of the women exclaims, "We are stranded in a foreign country where no one likes us" (*Maps* 388). Hence, it can be argued that their inability to conform to foreign culture is largely driven by the racist remarks and treatment that they encountered every day. Shamas, on the other hand, is a liberal Muslim who even goes to the extent of having a secret affair with a Hindu woman. With his fluency in English and his broad- minded nature, he is able to act as the intermediary between the different religious communities in Dasht-e-Tanhaii. At the heart of the narrative is the investigation of the murder of the two lovers, Shamas' brother and his lover, who were killed by the girl's brothers for living out of wedlock.

Transgression, identified by Botting, is central to Gothic narratives. In *Maps for Lost Lovers*, the foreign setting enables the couple to indulge themselves in transgressive acts that are prohibited in their homeland. According to Islamic law, the lovers Jugnu and Chanda are sinners on account of the fact that they live together under the same roof out of wedlock. Shamas is another character who transgresses Islamic religious law with his liberal views. According to Botting, transgression, "by crossing the social and aesthetic limits," enables writers to interrogate and question pre-established boundaries and categories within society (7). By employing transgression as the driving force of the narrative in *Maps for Lost Lovers*, the

narrative becomes a Gothic tale which dissolves normative cultural and societal boundaries. Within this context, the novel can also be read as a critique on the religious practices under Islamic culture such as honour- killing. The community is also tainted by "holy men… the kind who are aiding the white people to blacken Islam's name" (267).

As the ghosts of the dead lovers haunt the immigrant community, the residents find themselves in an 'unhomely' state. The ghosts of Jugnu and Chanda become the manifestation of the fear and terror lurking beneath the surface in the community. In the early chapters of the novel, Dasht-i-Tanhaii is described as a quiet neighbourhood that "hoards its secrets, unwilling to let on the pain in its breast. Shame, guilt, honour and fear are like padlocks hanging from moths" (*Maps* 63). Even after 30 years, the residents live in fear of the foreign and "no one makes a sound in case it draws attention. No one speaks. No one breathes. The place is bumpy with buried secrets and problems swept under the carpets" (*Maps* 63). The turbulent landscape of the novel marks the narrative as a Gothic text. Aslam paints a dark picture of the torture of Muslim women, the immoral sexual practices of the Muslim clerics with the mysterious murder of two characters at the centre of the narrative. He also employed the concept of magical realism as he situates the supernatural elements in a realistic setting in order to draw attention to the postcolonial aspect of the narrative. In Aslam's postcolonial writings, the figures are constantly haunted by terror of the unknown, lending his works the Gothic overtones. He presents the hostile and haunted landscape of a foreign land where the immigrant Muslim community resides with a sense of unease. He lays emphasis on the diasporic experience of the Muslim characters by constructing the concept of 'home' and its residents as entirely Other.

Set in war- torn Afghanistan, *The Wasted Vigil* (2008) tells multiple stories of characters from different nationalities whose lives are weaved into the fabric of the narrative on account of war and violence. The novel explores the manifold ways in which religious fundamentalism, political ambitions and decades of war affect individual lives, personal and national histories. The narrative begins with the story of an English doctor, Marcus who resides in a small town in Afghanistan called

Usha. Aslam draws a dark yet realistic picture of this Afghan town as a space haunted by the friction between the unwanted presence of foreigners from different countries and the religious history of Afghanistan. The author's sentiment is expressed by Marcus when he says, "But you see, the west is involved in the ruining of this place… There would have been no downfall if this country had been left to itself by those others" (*Vigil* 84). Marcus is married to an Afghan woman who is also a doctor, and after their daughter died in the hands of the Soviet soldiers, his wife Qatrina was brutally murdered by the Taliban because of her progressive ideas and methods. The transgressive acts of Marcus and his wife led to the murder of his wife by the Taliban. The ghosts of his wife and his daughter become an embodiment of the Gothic excess which haunts the house. Later, a Russian woman named Lara ends up in Marcus' home when she arrived in Afghanistan to search for her brother, Benedikt, who served as a soldier during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan ten years ago. Marcus and Lara are joined by David, an American CIA spy and former Cold War soldier who has been living in Afghanistan for twenty- five years. Meanwhile, Casa, a young Afghan ends up with the group in Marcus' house while fleeing from a shoot-out. Casa is a young jihadi who is left as an orphan on account of the Soviet invasion and brought up in the jihadi training camps by extremists in the borders of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Casa's character can be seen as the embodiment of Afghanistan's continuing national trauma as a postcolonial state occupied by foreign forces.

In this story, Aslam presents a global gallery of characters as he intertwines the lives of different characters who belong to diverse nationalities. Afghanistan, in this manner, is presented as the playground for power and dominance by global superpowers. The narrative constantly moves between two time- frames: the Soviet invasion in the early 1980s and the post 9/11 US occupied Afghanistan. These timelines are connected by the violence, invasion and war that have become part of the historical landscape of Afghanistan. Lara has come to Marcus' house to learn the truth about her brother's death. After a long stay with Marcus, she finds out the truth about Benedikt from David and James, the two Americans. The 1980s timeline in the narrative tells the story of Benedikt and Zameen, Marcus' daughter. Benedikt is

a defect soldier who freed Zameen when she was captured by the Russian soldiers and eventually ran away with her. They were captured by the two local warlords, Nabi Khan and Gul Rasool after which Benedikt was tortured to death in an inhumane manner. Meanwhile, Zameen, carrying Benedikt's child, escaped and gave birth to a boy named Bihzad. Years later, James Palentine, the American fell in love with Zameen and offered her protection as she moves from one house to another with her son. As Marcus goes in search of his grandson, he finds out that he had died in a local bomb blast. Emphasizing on the continuous interference of outside forces in the historical and political development of the country, Aslam says, "pull a thread here and you'll find that it's attached to the rest of the world" (*Vigil* 426).

In the narrative, Marcus' house and the old perfume factory in his garden are haunted by the ghosts of his deceased wife and daughter. The haunted statue of the Buddha in the perfume factory functions as an object of fear and terror for the Taliban and the Soviet soldiers. However, the fallen statue of the Buddha becomes a source of peace and comfort for characters like Casa and the young Afghan teacher. The ghosts and haunted statues in the narrative, therefore, can be interpreted as manifestations of the history, culture and beliefs of Afghanistan. The haunted Buddha becomes central to the narrative and Aslam attempts to deconstruct the idea of Afghanistan in the popular imagination as a land marked by Islamic fundamentalism. He lays emphasis on the idea of Afghanistan as a land of multiplicity and diversity in terms of religion, culture and people. The portrayal of the fallen statue of the Buddha echoes the ancient sandstone carvings of the Buddha in the Bamiyan valley in Afghanistan which were once considered to be the tallest Buddhas in the world before the Taliban blew them up twenty years ago. These statues are said to have been carved out from the cliff during the early sixth and seventh century when Buddhism was the major religion in the region. In an interview, Aslam expresses his desire to explore and throw light on the silenced history of Afghanistan. He says:

> I wanted to write about Afghanistan because I thought Afghanistan had been forgotten. That sounds like a strange statement because Afghanistan is in the

> news every day, how can it have been forgotten? But it is in the news everyday for what it is doing to the rest of the world… what the world did to Afghanistan over the past thirty years doesn't seem to be at the forefront of people's mind… I wanted to write a novel which went back thirty years and explained how we have arrived at the current political and moral chaos that we see every time we pick up the newspaper. (Aslam 350)

Like Shamsie's *Kartography, The Wasted Vigil* stresses on how national and individual history inform one another and how repressed histories of the past severe the present. While writing the novel, Aslam interviewed more than 200 Afghan refugees in the UK about their experiences of loss and memories of Afghanistan. For Sarah O' Brien, the novel is "an example of world literature that gives voice to marginalized perspectives, countering those reductive representations of Afghanistan in particular and Islam mire generally that dominate western media" (1). She further argues that Aslam "reveals the continuities of history that continue to scar remote corners of the world, like Afghanistan" (1). *The Wasted Vigil* is set against the grim backdrop of oppressive fundamentalism and global political wars. In one of the many horrific scenes, a group of child soldiers pours petrol on a frozen grave and hack at it with improvised tools. The turbulent Gothic landscape is consistent in both the two timelines of the narrative. Nadeem Aslam utilizes the haunted wilderness of war-torn Afghanistan as settings for encounters with the Other and for contestation grounds of power and individual and cultural identity.

The major characters in Shamsie and Aslam's novels are individuals driven by an excessive desire to transgress the boundaries of the existing social, racial and religious structures. Almost all the novels of Shamsie have strong female characters who embody different modes of femininity as they move against conventional norms of a strong patriarchal system infused in religious and cultural practices.

The writings of the second-generation Pakistani writers look at the dynamics of the postcolonial Muslim identity with an attempt to reconstruct and refigure history, culture and the idea of a nation. Hence, interrogating Western perception of the Muslim subject in an attempt to reconstruct identity becomes a significant feature

of their works. In an age where Muslims continue to be in the spotlight of growing fervent political, cultural and academic discussions, the Muslim identity has become one that is heavily charged with religious connotation, political identity, nationalism, ethnicity and race. The Rushdie affair, 9/11 and the US War on Terror further intensified the discourse on postcolonial Muslim identity in the contemporary times. Also, with individual and cultural identity intrinsically linked to the concept of home, the immigrant/ migrant Muslim identity has further garnered critical attention in the recent years. As Pakistani writers residing in the UK and the US, Shamsie and Aslam are attentive to the ways in which the Muslim identity is fabricated using the familiar terms and tropes of the West, and their works engage with the search for identity, home and selfhood. Their diasporic identity also extensively informs their writings. In their fiction, they try to negotiate with the postcolonial Muslim identity and their perspectives are largely defined by their personal experience as second-generation Pakistanis growing up in a conflict-ridden postcolonial state and their eventual move to Western metropolis.

In the selected works of Shamsie and Aslam, the authors present the postcolonial Muslim identity as one that is marked by dispossession of homeland, migration, diaspora, and cultural misrepresentation and most significantly, Islamophobia. It looks at the ways in which the Muslims have become the object of fear and terror in the West, an irrational fear that fosters the 'othering' of the Muslims in the global arena. Khair suggests that it is important to note how new racisms and the prevailing attitude of the West towards the Muslims have "reconstructed and revivified some colonial and even postcolonial notions of racial and religious Otherness" (Khair 3). Hence, the works of Shamsie and Aslam can be read as postcolonial Gothic texts which reference the continuity of colonial violence and its legacies in the twenty first century.

The study will also rely extensively on Homi Bhabha's concept of the Unhomely or Unhomeliness. This concept will be used as theoretical tool to read the texts as postcolonial Gothic. Closely related to the concept of the Unhomely is the Freudian concept of the Uncanny, a distinctive characteristic of the postcolonial Gothic, which will also be examined for a closer analysis of the selected narratives.

The study will look at the ways in which the Muslim identity has assumed the role of the Other on account of the different forms of representation in literary works, Western media and cultural narratives. The role of history, memory and nostalgia in the four selected texts as agencies that create the sense of the haunting will also be examined.

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CHAPTER 2

THE POSTCOLONIAL GOTHIC

This chapter attempts to provide an understanding of the postcolonial Gothic as a framework which accommodates the fears and anxieties of the contemporary times. By tracing the historical development of the Gothic from an eighteenth-century literary form to the Victorian Gothic and the Imperial Gothic, the chapter examines the relationship between the Gothic and empire and how this laid the foundation of the postcolonial Gothic. It also looks at several critical observations and existing definitions of the postcolonial Gothic. The chapter will also foreground and highlight the conceptual tools and theoretical frameworks which will be utilized to examine the four selected texts in the preceding chapters.

The term 'Gothic' is versatile in nature and tends to acquire different meanings when placed in different contexts. Etymologically, the word owes its origin to the Germanic tribe called the 'Goths' who settled in Europe between the third and the fifth centuries. Nick Groom observes that identifying the Goths as non-Roman "implied that their civilization was devoid of all the refinements and accoutrements of classical Rome, and so 'Gothic' became a synonym for everything crude, ignorant, vulgar, brutish and ferine" (xi). The word then morphed into an architectural term when, in the 1750s, the revival in architecture came to be known as Gothic architecture in which pointed arches, stained glass windows, domes and ribbed vaults were identified as characteristics of Gothic architecture. The style and design of these structures appeared monstrous, barbaric and terrifying as compared the familiar architecture during the fifteenth century. This perception was largely informed by the Italian Renaissance, a time of revival of classical taste and learning. On account of the Renaissance, "commentators were quick to condemn any fashions of art and architecture of the past thousand years that were non-classical" (Groom xi). Hence, the new architectural style was dismissed as 'Gothic'. The Gothic further seeped into the political life of England in the early eighteenth century as the Goths came to be associated with "abundance and freedom, exemplifying a different but credible model of society" (xii). By the early eighteenth century, the Gothic form of

administration was widely accepted as the "driving force of social advancement" (xii) and it greatly influenced the political beliefs and ideology of the Whig Party in opposition to the Tories who supported the monarchy.

On account of the complex tapestry of architectural and political context associated with it, the Gothic gradually dominated the literary form in the eighteenth century. From castles, mansions and cathedrals, the Gothic, as an art form, continued to expand to literature. Maggie Kilgour rightly points out that the form is "a Frankenstein's monster, assembled out of the bits and pieces of the past" (4). Looking at the literary tradition of the Gothic, it is difficult to situate the origin of the first Gothic text as the term is inclusive of histories, romances, tragedies and travel accounts. This corresponds to Botting's remark that "changing features, emphases and meanings disclose Gothic writing as a mode which exceeds genres and categories" (14). Hence, it is difficult to confine Gothic writing to a particular genre or to a specific period in history. However, scholars in Gothic studies like E.J Clery asserts that the 'Gothic novel', as a specific literary genre, is a twentieth century coinage (21). According to the general consensus, Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) is considered to be the first Gothic novel but it was only in its second publication in 1765 that the word "Gothic" was added to the title, *The Castle of Otranto: A Gothic Story.*

The emergence of Gothic literature is also often considered to be a reaction to Enlightenment rationality and scientific thinking. Even before the publication of Walpole's ground-breaking novel, "fantastic medievalism" was often disregarded as "a lunatic dreamworld" which was "antithetical to enlightenment rationality" (Groom xxv). Richard Devetak observes that the Enlightenment intended "to banish monsters born of myth, superstition and religion" (623). However, these "monsters" targeted by the Age of Reason refused to disappear and "they fled from the Enlightenment's illuminated spaces into the darks shadows it cast" (623). They became monsters in exile who continuously haunt established conventions and structures.

Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* and other popular writings of this age are often interpreted as negotiation of a series of anti- Enlightenment themes in their construction of the debate between medieval and modern elements. The characters, setting and plot of these early Gothic novels splintered Enlightenment ideologies of rationality, order and stability, thus characterizing the Gothic as a boundary-breaker. In the following years, the 1790s witnessed an immense increase in the publication and consumption of Gothic fiction and is often rightly called "the decade of Gothic fiction" (Botting 62). With the publication of more canonical texts like *Vathek* (1786) by William Beckford, Anne Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and *The Italian* (1797) and Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* (1796), Gothic fiction rose to prominence and eventually dominated the British literary scene. It is interesting to note that the common factor that links these canonical texts is the setting which all took place in countries outside England, specifically European countries like Spain, Italy and France. Hence, it can be argued that the earliest Gothic novels display interest in the foreign and the unknow distant. Lizabeth Paravisini- Gebert notes that by the 1790s "Gothic writers were quick to realize that Britain's growing empire could prove a vast source of frightening "others" who would… bring freshness and variety to the genre" (229). This inclusion of foreign setting and elements into the genre and the dissemination of Gothic features across different historical and literary periods point to the Gothic as "a hybrid form, incorporating and transforming other literary forms as well as changing its own conventions in relation to newer modes of writing" (Botting 14). Even as the genre continued to develop into different sub-genres and acquire new tropes, an uneasy negotiation with the foreign continues to occupy a central place in almost every Gothic narrative till the present day.

What is of significance to the present study is the development of the Gothic during the Victorian period and the subsequent emergence of the Imperial Gothic. This development proves to be a crucial step in the making of the postcolonial Gothic as a literary genre. In the nineteenth century, the Gothic began to be strongly associated with the idea of empire which, as previously mentioned, is a way of engaging with the foreign. However, the Gothic landscape, in the Victorian period, shifts from the major European countries to the colonies of Britain. In fact, one of

the earliest Victorian Gothic stories, *The Story of Henrietta* (1880) by Charlotte Smith is set in a haunting landscape in the Jamaican mountains. Jamaica was under British colonial rule from 1655 with a long history of slavery.

However, popular Gothic texts of the Victorian period displayed an engagement with the foreign in a reversal direction i.e the foreign is internalized into the home or domestic setting. Roger Luckhurst argues that the Gothic is marked by "a topographic obsession" and that "terror comes from the breach of boundaries" (62). This is manifested more clearly in the Victorian Gothic than in any previous Gothic narratives. An important characteristic of the Victorian Gothic is that the haunting shifts from the outside or foreign territories to the inner circle of home, hence, signaling the crossing of the boundaries between inside and outside, home and the foreign, margin and the centre. This clear 'breach of boundaries,' as Luckhurst puts, also solidifies the Gothic's status as a genre which breaks boundaries. During the Victorian period, the Gothic developed from just being tales of terror and horror and took on an imperial worldview which, undoubtedly, was a political influence of the growing colonial power of Britain. From the early nineteenth century, the Gothic imagination was extensively transformed by the social phenomena of urbanization, industrial and economic boom in the towns and cities, and most significantly, the concept of empire. As a result of this development, popular Gothic landscapes and settings like desolate castles and the vast wilderness were replaced by the urban and homely settings. Luckhurst notes that from the 1940s "hauntings took place on railway lines, spirits hovered around new-fangled telegraph wires and ancestral things survived and flourished in the basements of suburban houses or terraces" (63). It is in this domestic space that the foreign or external element is brought in to instigate fear. Botting identifies the early Victorian Gothic writing as "Homely Gothic" where the horror and terror are "much closer to home" characterized by "uncanny disruptions of the boundaries between inside and outside, reality and delusion, propriety and corruption, materialism and spirituality" (113).

As cultural forms are always shaped and informed by the social, political and economic climate of the times, literary production and consumption in Victorian England was also largely informed by the consolidation of British colonial powers

and the rapid growth of the industrial enterprise. During the nineteenth century, England maintained an open- door policy regarding immigration and it was only in 1905 that certain restrictions were outlined to control the entry of outsiders into Britain. The influx of immigrants further led to the rise of ghetto communities in big cities like London, and for the English this meant that the horror and the haunting from the margins were brought home to the centre. As a literary form, the Gothic became more aware and conscious of these political and social changes which paved way for the emergence of the Imperial Gothic. Within this context, authors increasingly incorporated Gothic and imperial elements into their writings which led to the birth of the Imperial Gothic. Ken Gelder defines the Imperial Gothic as those Gothic narratives produced by the colonizers where the central characteristic is "the horror of going native, or being possessed and transformed by local customs and beliefs to the extent that one is no longer recognizable as civilized" (191). Similar to Gelder's observation, Brantlinger also points out that the fears inherent in the Imperial Gothic include the fear of "individual regression or going native" and "an invasion of civilization by the forces of barbarianism or demonism" (*Rule* 230). In defining the Imperial Gothic, he identifies that the genre refers to those narratives which "typically follow a quest romance pattern that takes European characters to exotic, mysterious, faraway places" (153). These narratives also "often mirrors the last, great geographical explorations and mappings of the globe and especially of central Africa. Imperial Gothic is related to, and in part an offshoot of, the explosion of imperialist adventure fiction… in the second half of the nineteenth century (154).

Another important aspect of the Imperial Gothic is its adherence to the colonial rhetoric in order to justify the subjugation of colonial subjects in the empire. It provides a normative framework within which the concept of otherness and the binary between the colonizer and the native are standardized. Sarah Illot rightly argues that Imperial Gothic "made monstrous that which was nationally or racially Other" (20). Therefore, the narratives within this genre cater to the need for validation and justification of the colonial project. Punter also asserts that empire came to be "Gothicized" and "the racial or national 'other' comes to be seen from a Gothic perspective, endowed with diabolical, monstrous or merely melodramatically

powerful qualities" (45). This construction of the foreign as monstrous and barbaric was a necessity to justify the colonial project as a civilizing mission. Hence, the Imperial Gothic provides the mode and framework to eliminate the guilt of the colonizers. Howard Malchow locates Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) in the context of prevalent racism in nineteenth century England. Commenting on the creature in the novel, he argues that Frankenstein's creature is "larger and more powerful than his maker" and "dark and sinister in appearance." (18). Malchow further identifies that this description fits "the standard description of the black man in both the literature of the West Indies and that of unfolding West African exploration" (18).

Hence, Frankenstein's creature is presented as the racial Other whose physical features spell horror and fear. Malchow further observes that the creature's eating habit correspond to the racial otherness; the fact that the creature is a vegetarian is based on "a long European tradition that imagined wild men or natural men of the woods as… colossal vegetarians" (19). Hence, the foreigner or outsider is labelled as the source of fear and horror which is also evident in popular texts like Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847). In Bronte's narrative, the character of the Creole, Bertha Mason, the wife of the Englishman Mr. Rochester, is presented as the instigator of fear and terror in Thornfield Hall. After their return from Jamaica, the couple brought home to England a fortune which they have acquired from slave labor in the colonies. Along with this fortune, Bertha Mason, then, becomes the ill-curse from the colonies that Rochester brought to England, creating fear and chaos. She is described by the English protagonist, Jane, as "a savage face" which reminds her of "the foul German spectre-the Vampyre" (317). The fear expressed by Jane is the fear of "individual regression or going native" which Brantlinger identifies as a defining characteristic of the Imperial Gothic.

We can also see this imperial geopolitical aspect of Britain being brought into context in other popular Victorian texts like Stoker's *Dracula* (1897). Dracula's entry into the heart of London, his supernatural ability to move through crowds while remaining invisible and the many secret lairs that he built within the city signify the entry of the foreign into the heart of home. Thus, the figure of Count

Dracula becomes an embodiment of the fear of foreigners migrating to England during the Victorian period and "the source of threatened invasion of the metropole by the barbarians" (Brantlinger *Victorian* 46). The fear is instigated by the Count as he transgresses the border between the periphery and the centre and brings death and horror. Like Bronte's Bertha Mason, the Count, a native of Eastern Europe, disrupts the peace and comfort of home. Moreover, what is interesting is the manner in which Stoker's texts narrativizes the decline of British political power in late nineteenth century. Stephen Arata observes that Stoker's *Dracula* is a narrative of reverse colonization which reflects the socio-economic and political climate of Britain during the time. According to his analysis, the contexts of Stoker's narrative points to "the decline of Britain as a world power at the close of the nineteenth century…The decay of British global influence, the loss of overseas markets for British goods, the economic and political rise of Germany and the United States, the increasing unrest in British colonies" (622). This was further intensified by "the growing domestic uneasiness over the morality of imperialism" and all these fears "combined to erode Victorian confidence in the inevitability of British progress and hegemony" (622).

Similar pattern is visible in the works of novelists like Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins who write about "those colonial and racial Others who had, by the eighteenth century, started arriving in and even settling down in England" (Khair 8). Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* (1868) is a novel about a supernatural stone from India which is brought back to England by an English colonel named John Herncastle. The stone is said to possess mystical powers and is protected by three Brahmin priests. The moonstone symbolizes the curse, the disease and the dark powers of the East and once it is brought back to the heart of England, it causes chaos and disturbance. *The Moonstone* rightly fits into Punter's definition of the Imperial Gothic as "that genre of stories in which something from the empire- some artefact, or some half- suppressed memory, or some deed whose consequences have not been felt- returns from the far corners of the earth to pursue the adventurer" (48). These popular Gothic texts are characterized by an uneasy negotiation with the foreign and fear of objects and people from the peripheries. Commenting on the

Gothic's relation to the Empire, Patrick Brantlinger argues that "after the mid-Victorian years, the British found it increasingly difficult to think of themselves as inevitably progressive… [they] began worrying about the degeneration of their institutions, their culture, their racial "stock" (*Rule* 230).

This realization of the deterioration of English culture for which the entry of the racial Other was considered to be responsible, generate fear and anxiety in English society. The construction of the Other as the cause of contamination and racial deterioration was necessary to assert the racial superiority of the English. Howard Malchow argues that the Gothic is employed by the majority of nineteenth century British writers to address the racial Other (4). This fear of racial degeneration manifests itself in canonical texts like R.L Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* published in 1886. In this novella which Brantlinger identifies as "a morality tale about the barbarian within the civilized man" (*Victorian* 50), the Self and the Other are diffused in one physical body which signifies the contamination and invasion of the host body by external evil forces. He also argues that "Hyde's behaviour is an urban version of 'going native'" (232). The boundary between inside and outside or good and evil is breached, thus, signifying contamination and infection. More importantly, the border which demarcates the 'savage' and the 'civilized' becomes blurred. It is due to this feeling being invaded and subsequently contaminated by the foreign that England no longer possesses the strong sense of racial superiority and starts to lose the authoritarian gaze with which it views Europe and the East. This fear of going native is also addressed in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899). As the trader Kurtz ventures into the heart of the Congo Basin with a mission to 'civilize' the 'savages', he is plagued by the disintegration of his own Self. He finds himself gradually immersed in the culture and lifestyle of the natives or in other words, consumed by the identity of the Other. Kurtz's absorption into native culture is largely interpreted in colonial discourse as the disruption of the Self or a contamination of his racial purity. At the same time, the narrative also reinforces the "Western constructions of the savagery and otherness of Africa's dark continent" (Botting 104). Marlow's description of the African woman highlights the colonial gaze with which the woman is perceived:

> She had brass leggings to the knees, brass wire gaunlets to the elbow…bizarre things, charms, gifts of witch-men, that hung about her, glittered and trembled at every step. She must have had the value of several elephant tusks upon her. She was savage and superb, wide-eyed and magnificent; there was something ominous and stately in her deliberate progress. (76)

The dehumanized description of the external features of the native contributes to the colonial construction of the identity of the colonized. On the surface, colonialism appeared to function as a blessing in disguise for the natives through 'civilizing' projects of education, health care, language, etc., all of which were instrumental in asserting dominance. Structures and forms of colonial domination were executed in such a way that the native talk, behave and look like the colonizers but will always be the Other located at the margins. Hence, there was the need to distinguish 'us' and 'them' which is becomes one of the primary objectives of the colonial fictional narratives. The Imperial Gothic, therefore, provides the required assertion of the racial superiority of the British by situating the monstrosity on the racial Other. In this manner, the genre becomes a healing remedy to cure Britain's fear of racial degradation. However, Philip Holden argues that many Victorian texts "excavate Victorian insecurities regarding Empire only to ultimately contain them" (353).

Another important aspect of the Imperial Gothic, apart from 'monstering' the racial Other, is transgression, identified by Botting as an intrinsic characteristic of the Gothic; it is played out through the female characters in the narratives. David Punter notes that "the women tend to assume the roles of both heroine and monster" and "provoke anxieties about the instability of identity and the breakdown of gender roles" (123). During the Victorian period, the idealized conception of womanhood as established by the patriarchal system dictated what was considered as the acceptable behaviour of women. Hence, the figure of the female monster in Victorian Gothic fiction symbolizes the fallen woman in Victorian society whose 'inappropriate' behaviour was always quickly linked to insanity and psychological derangement.

Such depiction of the fallen woman is evident in texts like Charlotte Darcre's *Zufloya* (1805) and Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847).

We see this gender othering in many other canonical Gothic texts where the female character is always presented as either the helpless victim or the perpetrator of violence. The female Other is seen as a threat to the patriarchal structure of English society. In texts like LeFanu's *Carmilla* and Stoker's *Dracula,* the vampires are engaged in a disturbing relationship with the female characters. In these narratives, the women are simultaneously drawn and repulsed by the figure of the vampire. In the nineteenth century, Victorian society witnessed the emergence of the New Woman who was educated and financially independent; she eventually became a threat to the patriarchal system. Carol Senf observes that the New woman was open "to initiate sexual relationships to explore alternatives to marriage and motherhood, and to discuss sexual matters such as conception and venereal disease" (35). In Stoker's *Dracula,* the character of Mina Harker is endowed with several qualities of the New Woman, particularly in her display of wit and intelligence when she provided assistance to the men while hunting the Count. Mina becomes the victim of Count Dracula thus signifying the fate of independent women. After being bitten by Dracula, Mina is marked on her forehead with a burning wafer: "Unclean! Unclean! Even the almighty shuns my polluted flesh! I must bear this mark of shame upon my forehead until the judgement day" (Stoker 314). Hence, the concept of 'othering' or 'monstering' is employed not just in the context of race but also within the context of gender. Assigning the fixed role of either the victim or the predator to the female characters in Gothic writing also reflects the strong patriarchal structure of Victorian society.

The postcolonial Gothic, on the other hand, signifies an "act of writing back" (Illot 19) as it deconstructs the fears addressed in the Imperial Gothic by "displacing the central concerns of Imperial Gothic by centralizing those who were once marginalized and made monstrous" (20). Within the postcolonial paradigm, we find that it is not uncommon for postcolonial texts to make use of Gothic tropes to throw light on the complex issues and anxieties that haunts postcolonial societies. This is further affirmed by Kristy Butler's remark that Gothic transgressions and anxieties

"manifest themselves in frighteningly familiar contexts when applied to the evolutions of empire since the eighteenth century" (41). The Gothic, therefore, functions as a convenient conceptual tool which reflects the reality of postcolonialism.

Coming into prominence in the 1980s, the postcolonial Gothic aims to subvert the pattern of monstrosity laid out by the Imperial Gothic in order to reveal the ambivalences and incongruities intrinsic to colonial discourse. The Gothic also supplies writers of the postcolonial with a framework for reimagining repressed histories, silenced voices and the trauma inflicted by colonial oppression. Hence, it is only suitable that the Gothic is taken into the postcolonial context as they share certain similar narrative patterns, tropes and concepts. Thus, Punter argues:

> Just as the original Gothic explored psychic damage in relation to forms of a domestic class struggle, so we can expect the legacy of empire to throw up too its unassuageable images from the past, to remind us of the damage done and to try to find symbols for this damage and for its consequences in the labyrinth of text and psyche. (173)

Following this line of argument, Tabish Khair also opines that postcolonialism and the Gothic have always been linked by multiple concepts and ideas, particularly their engagement with Otherness which will be later examined in detail in the succeeding chapter. It can be argued that it is with postcolonial literature that the Gothic has the closest literary alliance with. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, writers of the postcolonial often employ the Gothic as a literary mode because of its suitability as a critique to colonial discourse. As a form that addresses the unspeakable and the irrational, the Gothic offers a language appropriate for articulating tales of terror, fear and trauma. Commenting on the close relationship between postcolonial writing and the language of the Gothic, Pramod Nayar points out that "the postcolonial itself…has been consistently interested in hauntings, the ghostly and the violence of memories" (*Munnu* 2). The language of horror, fear and terror is required to successfully register tales and experiences of colonial violence and oppression.

Early postcolonial Gothic novels engage with the act of writing back as a response to canonized Gothic novels. Gelder also identifies that postcolonial Gothic narrative revisit English and European canonical texts to expose and dramatize the "relations of dominion" buried within them (192). It is true that postcolonial writings are in themselves counter narratives which offer critiques and responses to colonial discourse. In fact, Gothic literature, as previously stated, also emerged as a counter response to the Enlightenment ideals. Perhaps, this preoccupation with the notion of writing back also contributes to the compatibility of the two fields.

Within the realm of the postcolonial Gothic, particular in the early writings of the sub-genre, the act of writing back is employed both in the literal and metaphorical sense as writers re-imagine, reconfigure and rework those texts from the Imperial Gothic which support colonial discourse. These writers offer direct counter- narratives to those canonical Gothic texts that narrativizes empire in the nineteenth century. For instance, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) by West Indies writer Jean Rhys is a reconfiguration of Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847) where the character of Bertha Mason, portrayed as the mad woman in the attic in Bronte's narrative, is given the space and medium to voice her story as the protagonist. Many critics have found "Rhys' challenge of such a canonical text as *Jane Eyre* in the service of redressing a 'wrong' in the narrative of/about the colonial as an endlessly fascinating exercise" (Gebert 253). In Rhys' novel, Bronte's demonic Bertha Mason is projected as the beautiful Antoinette Cosway whose madness is the product of patriarchal and imperial domination. In *Jane Eyre,* Bertha Mason is the Other who causes chaos and disturbance within the English household and Rhys subverts this Otherness in her narrative by situating the source of Bertha's madness in colonial suppression and in the male English figure, her husband. *Wide Sargasso Sea* lays emphasis on the subversion of the construction of the racial Other as the monstrous. For instance, the character of Bronte's Bertha Mason is given a new name, history and most importantly, a voice while her English husband, the Mr. Rochester of *JaneEyre* is presented as nameless villain and the source of Antoinette's madness. The monstrous 'mad woman in the attic' is portrayed as the victim of both patriarchal and colonial oppression. On the other hand, the character of Rochester is portrayed as

villainous, monstrous, cruel and often inhumane. When speaking of his wife, he says:

> Very soon she'll join all the others who know the secret and will not tell it. Or cannot. Or try and fail because they do not know enough… She's one of them. I too can wait- for the day when she is only a memory to be avoided, locked away, and like all memories, a legend. Or a lie." (Rhys 172)

Thus, Rhys lays emphasis on the dark and monstrous side of Rochester and as a result the English man becomes the racial Other, the source of the horror and the madness. In Part Three of the narrative, while being locked up in the attic in Thornfield Hall, Antoinette exclaims:

> There is no looking glass here and I don't know what I am like now. I remember watching myself brush my hair and how my eyes looked back at me. The girl I saw was myself yet not quite myself. Long ago when I was a child and very lonely, I tried to kiss her. But the glass was between us- hard, cold and misted over with my breath. Now they have taken everything away. What am I doing in this place and who am I? (180)

It is through such powerful and emotional passages that the colonized, who was locked up as 'the mad woman in the attic' in Bronte's novel, is given a voice to express her anger and the reason for her madness. By centering the narrative on the character of the Creole, Rhys explores the prospects of the untold side of *Jane Eyre* as she shifts the 'centre' from a fixated English perspective. In the novel, Antoinette tells her husband, "There is always the other side, always" (116) which echoes the possibility of voices and stories from the margins, hence, becoming the medium through which the history of oppression and colonization in the West Indies is articulated. In the process of understanding the postcolonial Gothic, it is imperative to examine the different aspects of Rhys' text as it is widely considered as the "mother text" of postcolonial Gothic narratives.

Similarly, Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) is reimagined in J.M Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980). Coetzee employs *Dracula* as an intertext in order to "make visible what Stoker's text leaves aside and out of sight" (Asempasah 95).

These canonical Imperial Gothic writings function as the source text against which postcolonial writers 'write back' to the Empire in order to disrupt colonial discourse. This act of writing back relates to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin's "strategies of appropriation" where they propose "seizing the language of the centre and replacing it in a discourse fully adapted to the colonized place" (37). In engaging with the 'act of writing back', the use of the Gothic, a form that is deeply rooted in the British literary tradition, as a mode of writing also becomes significant. The postcolonial Gothic, therefore, questions and subverts colonial or Imperial Gothic narratives in order to address the legacies of colonialism and emerging new imperialism. Emphasizing on the importance of narratives and narration, Homi Bhabha argues that the struggle for power and dominance takes place at a narrative level, and that the ones who weave the narratives of other communities, culture or nation exert authority over them by conceptualizing within the theoretical context of the narrative (Bhabha 1-8). This corresponds to Said's argument in *Orientalism* that dominant narratives are generated by the West through different forms such as literary works, media narratives and painting in order to construct the image of the Orient. Stressing on the importance of fictional narratives, Said also rightly argues that "the power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism, and constitutes one of the main connections between them" (xiii). Thus, the function of the postcolonial Gothic, as a literary sub-genre, is "to display the Gothic's other face, subverting and calling into question narratives, patterns of thought, and modes of origin that have their origin in colonialism and imperialism" (Holden 353).

Critics and scholars in Gothic studies, today, have looked at the genre as one that is associated with the "dark side of culture" (Wester and Reyes 1). Looking at the terrain of the contemporary postcolonial Gothic, the same language of fear and terror used in classical Gothic narratives is utilized to re-engage with "the political realities of the post/neo-colonial present, speaking truths that are structurally repressed elsewhere" (Illot22). While still staying true to anti-colonial sentiments, contemporary postcolonial Gothic also addresses epistemic violence of neo-imperialism which constantly haunts the contemporary scene. It aims to deconstruct

established structures of knowledge which defines the postcolonial subject as evil, grotesque and monstrous; it acts as the convenient framework for addressing new racisms, political conflicts, systemic violence and marginalization which are all part of the twenty first century global scene. As the Gothic itself functions as a mode of writing which registers the fears and anxieties of its own specific times, the contemporary postcolonial Gothic lends itself as form of writing which addresses the individual and cultural fears of the twentieth and twenty-first century. Also, contemporary narratives no longer 'write back' against Imperial Gothic texts or engage with the simple subversion of otherness as seen in early postcolonial Gothic narrative like Rhys' novel. Hence, the postcolonial Gothic in the twentieth and twenty-first century, functions as a reaction to colonial historical, political and social conditions while emphasizing on "the unsolvable nature of political and historical conflicts" (Azzam 34). In relation to this, an important characteristic of the postcolonial Gothic is its willingness to "remain open" and "ambiguous", without any narrative closure (33). For instance, in *Shalimar the Clown* (2005), Rushdie refuses to provide a solid conclusion and the narrative disrupts traditional concepts of nationalism, love and betrayal. The story blurs the line between conventional notions of good and bad, past and present and emphasizes on the idea of interconnected individuals. Rushdie presents the ambiguous nature of human experience and the uncertainty of the future in the conversation between Kashmira and Yuvraj in the novel:

> Our human tragedy is that we are unable to comprehend our experience, it slips through our fingers, we can't hold on to it, and the more time passes, the harder it gets… we are given life but must accept that it is unattainable and rejoice in what can be held in the eye, the memory, the mind. (358)

Similarly in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (1999), the narrative ends with a love scene between Ammu and Velutha, a touchable and an untouchable, which proves to be quite controversial in the Indian context of caste. The final scene ends with a single word "Tomorrow" uttered by Ammu. In reading Roy's novel as a postcolonial Gothic text, Azzam argues that caste and gender uncannily "return" in the form of Ammu's and Velutha's romantic love affair, which undermines the logic

of caste superiority as well as sensibilities of propriety for the bourgeois Christian Indian woman" (132).

It is important to note that the postcolonial Gothic still shares several features with the classical Gothic. For instance, Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* and many postcolonial Gothic texts are concerned with "legitimacy, authenticity, usurpation, and the return of the sins of the father" (Azzam 14). However, new ideologies, perspectives and contexts require new forms of haunting in order to address emerging issues and trends. Sarah Illot argues that recent postcolonial Gothic fiction "bears witness to the changing world of the twenty first century" as it addresses "the aftershocks of European colonialism" (23). She further identifies that these aftershocks include "the unequal experience of the financial crisis of 2007-8, the impact of climate change…in generating war and human migrations, 9/11, the consequent 'War on Terror'…and resurgent nationalisms with their literal and ideological fortification of border and associated 'refugee crises'. (23)

It is within these new contexts and climate that postcolonial Gothic writers engage with the complex ghosts and spectres that haunt the postcolonial nation in the twenty first century. What is significant about the contemporary postcolonial Gothic is that it does not strictly adhere to the concept of 'writing back' which has always been one of the defining characteristics of postcolonial literature and criticism. Early postcolonial Gothic texts like *Wide Sargasso Sea*, as mentioned previously, are direct counter narratives to Imperial Gothic narratives and the 'us' and 'them' binary still features prominently. Instead, the postcolonial Gothic lends itself to a "more multi-valent critique of a world irreparably changed by colonial violence and plundering" (Illot 23). In his analysis of Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* as a postcolonial Gothic text, Pramod K. Nayar focuses on the politics of dispossession within the novel. Nayar further states that in postcolonial societies like India "postcolonial modernization results in the loss of home and homelands because of India's lack of national rehabilitation policy" (*Uncanny* 89*).* Her further argues that the function of the Postcolonial Gothic text is to "offer a humanist critique of dispossession in the postcolonial world" as it deals with people who are "out of place" and seeking a "home" (89).

Postcolonial Gothic, in this way, aids the reader by gazing, not only at the then colonies and their issues, but also at the hegemonistic aspects of imperialism. It is in this same hegemony that the Rochester of Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* experiences within the novel which is represented by a system of succession that was intrinsic to imperialism called primogeniture; this system necessitates that the family's firstborn sons to inherit all property while non-firstborns were denied inheritance of family property, hence forcing them to seek fortune in the colonies.

This points to certain problematics in the Self-Other dichotomy which has become a fundamental aspect in postcolonial Gothic reading and it moves beyond the simplistic insider/outsider dichotomy. The disruption of racial and cultural binaries evolved into a much more complex narrative of hybridity. Ashis Nandy, in *The Intimate Enemy* (1983), offers a less popular interpretation of colonialism where he views colonialism as a two- way process where both the colonizer and the colonized suffer different kind of losses. Nandy further argues that the internal culture of Great Britain suffered an indirect effect as a result of colonization and that "the colonizers are at least as much affected by the ideology of colonialism, that their degradation, too, can sometimes be terrifying" (30). On a similar note, Fanon talks about a police officer who developed a violent attitude towards his own family after brutalizing the Algerian freedom fighters (215). This description echoes what Aime Cesaire refers to as the 'decivilization' of the colonial masters. Cesaire believes that colonialism transformed the colonizer into a beast, something violent and barbaric. In fact, Nandy believes that the deteriorating impact of colonialism was much greater than it was in many colonies such as India. He writes:

> In spite of the presence of a paramount power which acted as the central authority, the country was culturally fragmented and politically heterogeneous. It could, thus, partly confine the cultural impact of imperialism to its urban centres, to its Westernized and semi- Westernized upper and middle classes… That was not the case for the rulers from a relatively more homogeneous small island. They were overwhelmed by the experience of being colonial rulers. As a result, the long- term cultural damage colonialism did to the British society was greater. (31-32)

This signals a paradigm shift in the colonizer/colonized or Self/Other dichotomy which, in the past, had been fundamental in associating any negative value to the colonized alone; moreover, this runs parallel to one of the most crucial aspects of Gothic literature, i.e., transgression. In postcolonial Gothic literature, the horror, the madness and the disease permeate both spheres hence, making it difficult in identifying the Other. This further asserts the ambivalence and ambiguous nature of both the Gothic and the postcolonial. The complexity of Otherness also echoes the Gothic liminality, instability of boundaries and incoherent identities, thus providing an opening for the emergence of the Gothic double. In this manner, the multiplicity of Otherness creates a problem for the Self to define itself. This was a mechanism employed by the colonizers in order to assert their racial superiority and position themselves worthy of subjugating the colonized. Therefore, the need to consolidate the Other into one monolithic entity brings about a consolidation of the self in the process. The self sees in the Other that which it does not desire to see in itself. Therefore, the creation of the entity of the Other becomes a prime method for the Self to understand itself.

When we come to the twenty-first century, we see the legacies of colonialism and the consequences of neo-imperialism have gendered forms of otherness in new political, global and racial context. One of the most important issues or the legacies of colonialism and neo imperialism with which contemporary postcolonial Gothic strongly engages with is the politics of discrimination. Sarah Illot observes that in the early 2000s, “there was a significant shift in modes of discrimination from race to religion” (25). Ensuing the tragedy of 9/11, there was a change in the dynamics of racial discrimination where Islam came into focus. The figure of the Muslim was seen as a threat who pose as danger to the West, which further reinforces “the threatening strangeness of the Muslim Other” (Morey and Yaqin 3). In post 9/11, the figure of the Muslim is, hence, identified by the West not only as the racial Other but the religious Other. The second- generation writers of Pakistani writing in English have taken up the task of addressing the problematics of race, religion and identity in relation to the Muslim subject in their works. The novels of contemporary Pakistani writers engage with narratives of nationhood, diasporic and displaced Muslim

identities, reimagining of home and nation and an attempt to dismantle the East/West binary. The postcolonial Gothic offers the mode and language to address the condoning of anti- Muslim violence and portrayal of Muslims as perpetrators of violence and fear. In her seminal work *Muslims in the Western Imagination* (2015), Sophia Arjana Rose takes on a historical approach to trace how for 1300 years, Muslims have been dehumanized in Western philosophical and literary tradition. Paintings, literary works, movies and other cultural forms of the West contribute to the popular perception on the figure of the Muslim. Rose argues that the Muslims are viewed "as interruptions that disturb normative humanity, civilization, and modernity" (3).

Alison Rudd also observes that the Gothic provides "a means in narrative idiom, to expose and subvert past and continuing regimes of power and exploitation, and to reinscribe histories that have been both violent and repressed" (2). This becomes especially necessary in the contemporary times when globalization, multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism have blurred boundaries between established categories. On account of these global phenomena, the language and mode of the Gothic becomes a necessity. Thus, Sarah Ilott points out the function of the postcolonial Gothic as "critical reading and mode of writing" which "combines an anti- colonial politics with the Gothic mode to render visible the mechanisms of colonial and neo-imperial violence" (30).

The postcolonial is often described in terms of horror and haunting, thus, signalling its close affinity with the Gothic. Postcolonial writings "reveal how the experience and history of postcolonial populations reeks of the elements of horror" (Wester and Reyes 12). This is affirmed by the presence of "silencing, hauntings of repressed past histories, ghosts, abjection and the split self, colluding with the rule" (12) in postcolonial narratives. Emily S. Davis also argues that such texts "written… from the perspective of the abject, the monster, the unheimlich, of a new global economic and cultural order… build upon versions of the gothic as a reaction against emerging capitalist system by deploying Gothic tropes to represent imperialism, neocolonialism and globalization" (104). It is apparent that the identification of the Muslim Other in the contemporary times is largely driven by the terrorism endorsed

and executed by extremists and fundamentalists. However, there is also a political agenda behind the 'othering' of the Muslim subject which makes it a result of the aforementioned emerging capitalist system. Illott argues, "What this framing of Muslims attempts to disguise through the language of cultural difference is the neo-imperial effort to control oil in the Middle East: military intervention is then justified as a response to 'their' hatred of 'us'" (25). Hence, the prevalent prejudices against the Muslim community are directly linked to the racial, the religious and the political. In their study of postcolonial Gothic narratives, Wester and Reyes identifies globalization as the "force of material and psychic invasion, a force of contamination and dominance as the new world order threatens to reproduce old colonial systems (12). Hence, it can be argued that within the context of twenty-first century neo-imperialism, the Muslim subject is characterized by a new form of otherness, one that is marked by terrorism, Islamophobia, lack of cultural progress and religious fundamentalism in the eyes of the West.

While it can be easily argued that the Other has always been an intrinsic feature of the Gothic right from its inception as a literary form in the early eighteenth century, the Imperial and the postcolonial Gothic's engagement with otherness is specifically related to the idea of race and the nation. In classical Gothic narratives of the eighteenth century, the binary at play is usually grounded in the Christian morality of good and evil. These forces are set off against one another which control the dynamics of haunting in the narratives. From the nineteenth century onwards, the question of race that comes into play as Imperial Gothic fiction is concerned with the racial Other as well as the female Other. Hence, it can be argued that modern Gothic and colonial history is both marked by a strong presence of the foreign 'Other'.

The Gothic and the postcolonial are linked with multiple concepts and ideas, particularly in their dealings with the concept of the 'Other' and 'Otherness'. Tabish Khair has argued that both the Gothic and postcolonialism address "the problematics of narrating the 'Other'" (1). Gothic narratives from the nineteenth century emphasized on the portrayal of the monstrous, the grotesque and the diseased on the 'Other' and it is the presence of the 'Other' that instigates the horror and terror. In almost every Gothic writing, "the 'Other' remains the lynchpin of all perceptibly

'Gothic' action" (Khair 1). A close reading of Imperial Gothic texts such as Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) deals with the projection of the monstrous and the grotesque as a foreigner, an outsider i.e. the 'Other'. The settings of seminal texts of eighteenth- century Gothic such as Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* and Radcliffe's *The Monk* took place in countries that were foreign to England. These popular Gothic texts are marked with an apprehensive negotiation with the foreign, which can be regarded as one of the primary characteristics of the Gothic. Similarly, postcolonial theory is largely based on its preoccupation with the idea of the 'Other' and the aspect of 'Otherness'. Texts within the postcolonial vicinity deal with cultural, national and individual identity in relation to the Self and the 'Other'.

A Gothic reading of colonial texts like Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* (1847) and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) throws light on how the racial 'Other' is established as the cause of terror and fear, conforming to what Khair calls an "obvious pattern in colonial literature" (3). The Other is cast as the purely negative image of the English 'self', or the obverse of the Self. Khair also points out the unpredictability of the Other saying that "the racial/colonial Other is not predictable or fully legible because he comes from elsewhere, he speaks another language, he is another Self" (106). This reference to the Other as 'another Self' echoes the trope of the Gothic double as is employed in Stevenson's *Jekyll and Hyde.* The reference is also suggestive of the mirroring between the identity of the colonizer and the colonized. Hence, the racial Other becomes the mirror reflection of the colonizer. The racial Other is also seen in Gothic text like Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) which is marked by "a mysterious entry of the Other" into the dominant sphere where Count Dracula is presented as the dark terrifying Other. Nick Groom points out the significance of Transylvania, the home of the Count, saying that Transylvania is "at the centre of the 'Eastern Question'- the complex set of relations between East-European states that became a diplomatic sideshow for the major European powers and which eventually precipitated the Great War in 1914" (99).

Postcolonial Gothic narratives look at the ways in which the Other is framed in colonial discourse as the undesirable, grotesque and savage, the antithesis to the civilized identity of the colonizer. The Other comes into play as the return of the

repressed which haunts the present scene and time. As the Other is something that transgresses and moves across established boundaries and borders, between home and the foreign, past and present, savage and civilized, it is inherently marked by the *unheimlich* or the uncanny. In fact, the historical sensibility of the Gothic, be it Imperial or postcolonial, extensively relies on the Freudian *unheimlich* or the Uncanny.

Like other Gothic writings, the postcolonial Gothic is strongly characterized by the concept of the Uncanny. As a concept intricately linked to the Gothic and postcolonial writing, the postcolonial Gothic is concerned with the representation of the *unheimlich* or the Uncanny within the context of home as both dwelling and nation. In his influential essay 'The Uncanny' published in 1919, Sigmund Freud defines the Uncanny as something "what was once familiar. The negative prefix *un-* is the indicator of the repression" (151). Freud develops the idea of the Uncanny from the German word *unheimlich* which he defines as "that species of the frightening that goes back to what was once well known and had long been familiar" (124). The nature of the uncanny is captured by the words and phrases like 'frightening' 'goes back' and 'familiar'. The Freudian *unheimlich* or the uncanny, hence, emphasizes on the fusion of the familiar and the unfamiliar which creates fear and discomfort. This is instigated by "repetition, doubling, coincidence, or an eerie feeling of déjà vu" (Azzam 15). Nicholas Royle defines the Uncanny as "a crisis of the proper" and "a peculiar commingling of the familiar and unfamiliar" (1). It often manifests itself as familiar forms emerging in unfamiliar contexts, "something that should have remained secret and hidden but has come to light" (2).

It can be safe to say that the Uncanny is always at play in Gothic writing right from the earliest classical texts to the contemporary narratives of horror and ghost stories. In one of the earliest Gothic novels, *Castle of Otranto*, Theodore, the grandson of Alphonso, is an embodiment of an uncanny presence which haunts the labyrinthian corridors of Manfred's castle, thus rendering the domestic space of home as strangely unfamiliar and terrifying. This asserts the fact that the Uncanny has always been an integral part of Gothic narratives since the early eighteenth century. In fact, if we look at the history of Western philosophical tradition, the

unheimlich or the Uncanny exists in a variety of forms and manifestations. For instance, the dramatic opening line of Marx and Engels' *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) reads, "A spectre is haunting Europe- the spectre of communism. All the powers of Old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre" (55). Matthew Beaumont notes that Marx's *Manifesto* "brings to light what ought to have remained secret and hidden" (232). He further states that "by demonstrating that the only force able to destroy capitalist society is the force that materially reproduces it, it reveals that the future is concealed in the present" (232). This signals the uncanny nature of Marxist ideology and we see that the Uncanny is employed in the construction of Marx's ideas of revolution, production and alienation. Azzam also observes that the Uncanny is "intensely cultural and bound up with the Enlightenment" (15). Though Freud can be credited to theorizing the Uncanny, it is important to note that the Uncanny, as a concept, has a complex history which dates back to the Enlightenment period. Nicholas Royle traces the emergence of the Uncanny as a feeling and a concept and argues that "its haunting presence defines the very project of the Enlightenment" (22). Hence, it becomes apparent that the Uncanny is not something which is confined only to the Gothic tradition but a concept which traverses through different disciplines, ideologies, thoughts and historical ages.

As a concept which moves across different disciplines and genres, the Uncanny also fits rightly into the postcolonial terrain on account of its close affiliation to home, spaces, geography and location. The spatial aspect of the Uncanny is asserted by Ken Gelder who observes that Freud's essay is about "one's sense of place in a modern, changing environment, and it attends to anxieties which are symptomatic of an ongoing process of realignment in the post-war modern world" (23). Hence, the experience of the postcolonial subject may be identified as uncanny when the subject's territory or home is reduced to an unfamiliar space. Therefore, the subject has a simultaneous sense of being 'in place' and 'out of place'. However, what is noteworthy is the significance of the simultaneity since, according to Freud, the unfamiliar alone cannot engender the effect of the Uncanny; the conflation of the two binaries, the familiar and the unfamiliar, is indispensable to the

Uncanny as one seems to constantly inhabit the other. Though Freud describes the Uncanny in relation to castration anxiety, his critical insights of the uncanny as the return of the repressed marked by uncertainty and ambiguity offer possibilities of linking the concept with identity, politics and institutions. Gina Wisker argues that the postcolonial Gothic is uncanny because "it takes received, formally legitimated versions of histories, cartographies and lives and opens them up…revealing an ostensibly calm landscape interlaced with livid scars and putrid with hidden, historical violence" (105). She further states that postcolonial Gothic narratives disrupt "the calm surface of received and accredited versions of events, offers alternative versions, recovers and retells stories" (105). This also points to the idea of transgression, subversion and disruption of established boundaries which are all inherent to the Gothic tradition.

When looking at the postcolonial landscape, the idea of home is always disrupted by the shadows of the foreigner who were once occupants of 'home' or the residue of colonialism, thereby laying foundation for the emergence of the Uncanny; this distorts boundaries, disrupts identities and incites the feeling of fear and terror. David Punter argues that within colonial context, home is "foreign territory" and boundaries become distorted which further prevents "the possibility of language, to erode meaning" (30). In this manner, home, within the postcolonial context, becomes the haunted ground, a once familiar space which has been defamiliarized by the presence of the foreign 'Other'. Kristy Butler argues that during the formation of colonies, as native cultures adopt colonial customs "the colony emerged as an uncanny presence that took on the full significance of empire." (36). The colony then becomes the uncanny double, "an uncanny community that reflects the values and contradictions of those who created it" (36).

In the twenty-first century, the foreign, in postcolonial societies, manifests itself in different forms which embody the legacies of colonialism such as language, political system, capitalism and other Western cultural practices. Gelder further states that "in the moment of decolonization, what is 'ours' is also potentially, or even always already, 'theirs': the one is becoming the other, the familiar is becoming strange" (23). Hence, the concept of home in the postcolonial is inevitably uncanny

in nature. Even today, cities and urban spaces in postcolonial nations are haunted by the residue of colonialism present in the material spaces of the cities in the forms of buildings, streets, etc.

In the contemporary context, one can argue that the postcolonial uncanny is best encapsulated in the diasporic experience of migrants, immigrants, exiles and refugees. Here, the Uncanny moves "beyond the realm of the merely psychic into cultural and geographical contexts where dispossession-repossession, locational perceptions and epistemology inform the uncanny" (Nayar *Uncanny* 90). Migrants, immigrants, exiles and refugees are, to a certain extent, the product of colonial violence and oppression. The postcolonial uncanny, therefore, haunts the migrant condition or their diasporic experience. The postcolonial migrant/immigrant is situated in the liminal space between two cultures, that of home and the foreign, and it is in this liminal space that the Uncanny is invoked. The subject is dispossessed of land, home and identity. For refugees, migrants and immigrants belonging to postcolonial nations, "the sight of a particular place or event invokes uncanny dread because the perceiver hesitates to classify, define and identify the ambiguity in the place or event" (89). The postcolonial Uncanny is at play in the simultaneous invasion of home and invention of homes across boundaries. This further affirms the stance of the postcolonial subject who is possessed by instability and uncertainty, thus leaving him/her in a liminal state, in the 'in-between' where boundaries dissolve and fixed identities are disrupted. Oscillating between home and the foreign, past and present, the subject is constantly engaged with the two worlds through history, memory and nostalgia.

South Asian diaspora is said to be the world's largest and most widespread in the world as it continues to show exponential growth till the present day. More than three million South Asians are currently residing in the UK and the same figure can be applied to places like North America. In particular, Muslim diaspora has generated attention from scholars and cultural theorists since the increased flow of Muslim immigration from the 1960s. These immigrants move to new territories in search of better living conditions, economic opportunities or to flee from the religious pressure, war, famine or political violence of their home country. In a

statistical study of Muslim diaspora, Jawad Syed and Edwina Pio observe that in the process of migration, "immigrants bring their faith with them" (1109) which becomes an important aspect of the Muslim diaspora. Muslims living in the diaspora, particularly in post 9/11, are inevitably bound to their homeland on account of the growing negative perception on Muslim and increasing Islamophobia. It can be argued that these global phenomena related to the Muslim community have fostered the stranger/outsider feeling for the Muslim immigrants. Samir Dayal argues that the diasporic subject is plagued by a "double consciousness" which points less to a "both/and" and more a "neither just this/nor just that" (47). This doubleness aptly corresponds to the Muslims in diaspora. He further opines that doubleness "explodes the positive and equilibristic constructions of diaspora around the desire for belonging ideally to two or more places or cultures" (47). As opposed to Bhabha's view on cultural hybridity as a productive force, the in-between spaces created by cultural encounters are uncanny spaces, a present continually haunted by the past. Dayal writes that doubleness "is often laced with nostalgia, filial piety, and credulity. It is hardly a space within which a salutary rhetoric of suspicion about official narratives of nation or about race, gender, sexuality or class can flourish" (47). He also adds that doubleness "denies the subject's sovereignty and stresses the performativity of the subject (48). Hence, the migrant condition or the diasporic experience can be seen as one that is marked by the Freudian uncanny, a coming together of the familiar and the unfamiliar.

In Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers*, the Uncanny in the narrative situates the characters in a liminal space between Pakistan and England as the story takes place in an immigrant community in the northern parts of England. A strong sense of the Uncanny pervades the community which is represented by the ghosts of the dead lovers. In Shamsie's *Kartography*, the Uncanny plays out in the disintegration of Raheen and Karim's families by the return of the violent history of Karachi. Similarly, in *The Wasted Vigil,* the house of Marcus, situated in the middle of war-torn Afghanistan, is haunted by the ghosts of his wife and daughter who were victims of the war between Russia and the Taliban. In these narratives, the familiar alone cannot engender the effect of the uncanny which is the reason why the play of

the uncanny always takes place within the confines of home and domestic spaces. This echoes the aforementioned definition of the Uncanny by Nicholas Royle that "the Uncanny is not simply an experience of strangeness or alienation…it is a peculiar commingling of the familiar and unfamiliar" (1). Hence, the conflation of binary, the familiar and the unfamiliar, is indispensable to the working of the Uncanny. The Uncanny is not necessarily something entirely alien or being in an alien space that gives one a feeling of terror but it is when there is a sense of the home being invaded that one feels fear and uncertainly looms large. Therefore, it is closely associated to the idea of spaces, particularly domestic and private spaces. Thus, the Uncanny is closely linked to the concept of the Unhomely because it is set in motion by the realization that domesticity loses its comfort and familiarity and is instead replaced by the strange and the foreign.

The postcolonial space is one that is inhabited by a people that were once subjects of an empire. With the familiar domestic space of home being invaded by the colonizer, a foreign element, the idea of home is marked with uncertainty and unfamiliarity. On account of assimilation imposed by the colonizers, identities and cultural boundaries are blurred. This, in turn, internalizes Otherness and situates it within familiar and intimate spaces of home. It is within this context that Homi Bhabha's concept of the Unhomely is intrinsically linked to the Uncanny. Bhabha, in "The World and Home", lays much stress on the concept of the 'unhomely' or the state of 'unhomeliness' which is also the foundation of his central idea, i.e., the notion of cultural hybridity in his seminal work *The Location of Culture* (1992).

The Bhabhain Unhomeliness is stimulated by the Freudian concept of the Uncanny. Bhabha argues that the Unhomely is something "that captures something of the estranging sense of the relocation of the home and the world in an unhallowed place" and that "to be unhomely is not to be homeless, nor can the "unhomely" be easily accommodated in that familiar division of social life into private and the public spheres" (*The World* 141). This further affirms the necessity of the dual conflation in the Uncanny- home and foreign, self and other, external and internal. The Unhomely, according to Bhabha, "creeps up on you stealthily as your own shadow" and lands one in a state of "incredulous terror" (141). This signals the

double perception that characterizes the Uncanny. Bhabha himself asserts that "the unhomely is a paradigmatic postcolonial experience" (142). It is, therefore, safe to say that the postcolonial uncanny surfaces from the sense of home and unhomeliness. Bhabha's theory, therefore, plays a fundamental role in the postcolonial understanding of colonial experience and identity.

The concept of home, in relation to immigration and diaspora, have become contested topics in recent times on account of the prevalent dispersal of people, ideas and capital around the globe. Pakistani writing in English engages with these contested notions within the framework of the postcolonial Gothic. The contemporary age is marked by commodity culture and globalism which gives rise to an increase in the intermingling of people and cultures around the globe. This brings about a change in the discourse on diaspora where the term becomes more comprehensive and inclusive than ever. In this context, the idea of home, culture and identity have come to be perceived as heterogenous, fluid and unstable. Commenting on the status of diasporic writer, Anindyo Roy argues that for "many of them hailing from the former colonies and empires of Europe, home is a problematic site, since the reality of home as well as its imaginative projection are vulnerably linked to an entire network of personal, national, social, and cultural identification" (104). Bhabha also argues that "To be unhomed is not to be homeless, nor can the 'unhomely' be easily accommodated in that familiar division of social life into private and public spheres" (*The World* 141). Hence, the Unhomely is central to the diasporic, refugee, migrant/immigrant experience.

In considering the Freudian Uncanny and Bhabha's concept of the Unhomely as defining characteristics of the postcolonial Gothic, the common thread which binds them is the return of the repressed. Since 'return' signifies the act of coming back, it automatically points to the return of the past. The colonial past is represented in the many contemporary landscapes— war-torn countries, cities in ruins, polluted industrial sites, strange immigrant communities, etc. These are the Gothic landscape of the twenty-first century that Gothic narratives are set in. From the haunted castles, mansions and alienated wilderness that we find in eighteenth century Gothic, the landscape and setting are replaced with spaces haunted by the legacies of colonialism

and neo- imperialism. Anuparna Mukherjee observes that “colonial spectres” return as “embodied presence and as memories entrenched in physical or material space of the metropolis” (271).

In Shamsie’s narratives, traumatic legacies of the colonial past are manifested in the unmapped city of Karachi which is marked by uncertainty, instability and the unpredictable. Similarly, Aslam presents war-torn Afghanistan, a country where global powers collide, as the backdrop for his narrative in *The Wasted Vigil*. The eerie silence in Marcus’ house where different nationalities came together and the ruined old perfume factory which housed the head of the haunted Buddha became the haunted geographic site which represents the foreign infested Afghanistan and the eventual return of repressed histories. Hence, the colonial past, in the form of material spaces and landscapes, returns to haunt the present with a surplus of meaning. These backdrops and landscapes function as the turbulent landscape which Botting identifies as one of the defining characteristics of the Gothic. They are strongly marked by the Uncanny which renders them Unhomely on account of the traces and residues of the past in them. Azzam argues that “in postcolonial Gothic, homes and dwellings are the geographic sites in which larger, political, historical and national allegories are cast” (4). Hence, the unhomely sites and spaces in the postcolonial Gothic function as powerful allegories which reflect distorted boundaries and disrupted identities in the postcolonial nation.

Alongside the turbulent landscape, in many postcolonial Gothic texts, the return of violent histories exposes the damage inflicted by colonialism and other contemporary forms of repression. Thus, the postcolonial Gothic is preoccupied with revisiting history and the past returns to generate fear and terror in the present. The past is presented as the temporal ‘Other’ which is characterized by oppression and violence. The postcolonial Gothic, as unpleasant and traumatic as it may be, calls for a revisit to the colonial past in order to reclaim what is lost. What is significant to the present study is the uncanny relationship between national history and individual history. The postcolonial Gothic is largely preoccupied with the notion of the national allegory where the personal becomes the political and vice versa. The history of the nation state is inevitably bound to those of its people who become the

victims of the failure of the postcolonial national project on account of being altered by the past.

Prior to colonization, every colonized society has a distinct culture and history of its own. This pre-colonial and the colonial states are vividly depicted by Achebe in *Things Fall Apart* (1958) in the character of Okonkwo. Okonkwo's exile made sure that he noticed, outright, the changes that were brought upon Umuofia by the Christian missionaries. This clash of traditions is intensely dealt with in the literature that emerged from these postcolonial societies. These "imagined communities", as termed by Anderson, had to undergo intense changes and processes to find an identity of their own after the colonizers had departed, an identity that would no longer owe anything to their colonizers. These ruins are what we are faced with postcolonial literature. On the other hand, these texts deal with something far more in-depth than just stories of nations and people. They deal with psyches that are bent, broken and splintered because of the impact of the tumultuous age. In a way, the psyches of postcolonial individuals are ruined just as their political, economic and social set ups are. The Gothic lens sensitises the readers of the postcolonial to the horrors that lurk within it and the darkness that throbs within the minds of each psyche. It is no wonder that such trends become useful tools in the postcolonial novel, especially how history affects the trajectory of the postcolonial nation. Through the agency of memory, nostalgia and historical re-reading, the postcolonial state attempts to shed the narrative and identity framed for them by the colonizers which require constant engagement with their own cultural past prior to colonization as well as the colonial history.

As previously mentioned, the Gothic imagination has always been strongly characterized by the inescapability of the past. The recurrence of figures from the past generates the feeling of fear and terror, which creates an opening for Gothic concepts like excess, transgression and turbulence to thrive. David Punter notes that "the process of mutual postcolonial abjection is…one that confronts us every day in the ambiguous form of a series of uncanny returns" (iv). This takes us back to the aforementioned reimagination and reconfiguration of Imperial Gothic texts by postcolonial Gothic writers like Jean Rhys, J.M Coetzee, Margaret Atwood and

others. To provide counter narratives to texts in the past simultaneously involves the act of revisiting the past for both the writers and the readers. In this process "the narratives of empire become unstable sites for re-reading even the most familiar texts…what has become familiar is also strange" (Butler 35). Here, the uncanny comes into play as what was once a familiar narrative, after reimagining and reconfiguring, is rendered unfamiliar. The engagement with the past is, therefore, necessary to interrogate, question and rewrite colonial discourse. Taking this into the context of contemporary times, Sophia Rose Arjana's notion of the 'Muslim monster' can be interpreted as a return of the repressed. Arajana points out that the fears and anxieties generated by the Muslim subject are not only consequences of recent terrorist attacks around the globe or the increased Muslim immigration to the West. She opines:

> These concerns represent old anxieties that lie within a multiplicity of times and spaces on the pages of manuscripts and canvases of paintings, in works of great drama, poetry, and fiction, within travel diaries and government documents, and on the screens of movie theatres…we find a vision of Islam that is both familiar and unsettling. Within it, we must seek what is common. What is common is the Muslim monster. (1)

Here, we see that Western perception of the Muslim is marked by the Uncanny as it is simultaneously strange and familiar. It signals a return of the repressed as the figure of the 'Muslim monster' is something from the past which re-emerges in Western discourse in the twenty first century. What unifies the postcolonial and the Gothic is that at their core center rest the possibility of an alternate historical account or interpretation. Gina Wisker connects these two spheres, commenting that "Postcolonial writing is a form of ghosting, the repressed hidden histories of the past lingering alongside those of the present" (108). This is very much related to Jerrold E. Hogle's observation that in Gothic fiction, characters in positions of power (aristocrats, priests, etc.) are both drawn to and repelled by 'attractions of the past', that they reject but by which they are nevertheless held (Hogle 3).

The ‘return of the repressed’ offers alternate histories, new interpretations, revised meanings to both the colonizers and the colonized by haunting the present. Within postcolonial literature, the historical aspect plays crucial role in “interrogating the effects of colonialism, especially in terms of cultural alienation” and addressing “the appropriation of history by the colonial master” and attempts “to retrieve and rewrite their own histories by the formerly colonized cultures and the modes of representation” (Nayar *Postcolonial* 37). Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* (1958) is marked by a strong sense of cultural alienation where the author presents a critique of the false image of the colonizer under the mask of benevolent colonialism. Similarly, the loss of local cultural values and practices under the influence of colonialism looms large in his other novel *Arrow of God* (1967). Within the cultural realm colonialism subverted established traditions by interfering with local customs, setting up norms of conduct, rejecting native beliefs as superstitions and finally ensuring that the native himself believed all this through the medium of Western education. This creates a certain kind of cultural haunting which haunts the postcolonial states and reminds readers of a silenced and destructive past and present, through haunted houses, spaces and people. Gina Wisker writes:

> But these ghosts will not lie down, and must be heard and lived with in a way which moves beyond the self- devouring and re- victimization of a continues resentment, and beyond mere retribution. In this trajectory of revival and reclaiming a positive narrative, the ghost, the revenant, the returned, is a catalytic figure. (93)

All postcolonial spaces are characterized by a past which can be retrieved and rewritten through negotiation with remnants and traces of history which still haunt the present. The postcolonial Gothic has this rereading and revitalization as a core purpose. In ways more than one, traces of empire haunt the everyday spaces of the postcolonial. Thus, a familiar practice that often occurs within the home is, in a sense, made unhomely, familiar yet strange because the exchange between cultures during periods of colonization can impact the very food one eats as much as it determines what one reads or where one works.

Within the postcolonial vicinity, the revisiting of history and reconsidering of meanings and interpretations are possible through different agencies such as memory, nostalgia and confrontation of the traumatic colonial past. Svetlana Boym defines nostalgia as "a rebellion against the modern idea of time, the time of history and progress. The nostalgic desires to obliterate history and turn it into a private or collective mythology, to revisit time like space, refusing to surrender to the irreversibility of time that plagues the human condition" (42). In postcolonial Gothic texts, "the presence of the Gothic allows a space for the unspeakable and the haunted past to force its way to the surface, particularly in a culture characterized by loss and transgression" (Wisker 10). The nostalgic self of the postcolonial subject is positioned in a kind of liminal zone, between history and memory. Hence, postcolonial nostalgia negotiates these two spheres, creating a zone where memory and history refract each other.

The past haunting the present in postcolonial Gothic is also primarily executed through history, memory and nostalgia. Postcolonial societies and nations are, to a great extent, marked by spectrality where the memories and remnants of the past influence the present, "giving them the status of spirits haunting the apparently purged landscapes of the contemporary" (Punter 62). David Punter emphasizes that postcolonial contexts and postcolonial texts inevitably express the ghostings of versions of the past which have been largely expressed but which are all around us, in a form of cultural haunting (126). Toni Morrison's *Beloved* uses cultural haunting, through the legacy of a history of pain and silencing written onto the homes and landscapes and a ghost, beloved. The ghost represents the hidden torturous legacy of slavery written on the body of Sethe, whose back is covered with a tree of life cut from the slave own's brutal whipping. The history of colonialism and imperialism was in many ways one of displacement, brutality, renaming, disenfranchisement and deliberate reconfiguration and reimagining of places, spaces and lives, which preceded its violent rupture. A recollection and reflection of the colonial past enables the colonial subjects to reimagine, rewrite and reinterpret their own history, and to discard the historical narratives constructed for them by the colonizers.

Postcolonial Gothic narratives also address question of gender and sexuality. They provide counter narratives to the western tendency to project and highlight the sexual discrimination and gender inequality as inherent markers of postcolonial nations. Within the context of Pakistani writing in English, writers perform a dual function in critiquing Pakistan's patriarchal society and the position of women, while attempting to "deconstruct the reductive tropes of burqa-clad Muslim women that have been used by the US to justify the war on terror" (Kanwal 16). Particularly in Shamsie's narratives we see empowered women who break free from patriarchal dominance and social expectations. When reading her texts as postcolonial Gothic, her female characters are never constructed as the helpless victim or the monstrous predator. Instead, they are the sites and agencies which shed light on haunting legacies of colonialism, thus dismantling the monolithic perspectives on women in postcolonial societies. Rushdie too is another notable name in addressing gender stereotyping of postcolonial women. Aroosa Kanwal opines that Rushdie, in almost all his fictional narratives, seems to suggest that "the inclusion of women in a political narrative serves to deconstruct the confinement and marginalization of women within domestic spaces" (25). In *Shame,* Rushdie uses authorial intervention and writes:

> I had thought, before I began, that what I had in my hands was an almost excessively masculine tale, a saga of sexual rivalry, ambition, power, patronage, betrayal, death, revenge. But the women seem to have taken over, they marched in from the peripheries of the story to demand inclusion of their own tragedies, histories and comedies. (173)

It is discernable from this statement that the portrayal of women as the gender Other prevalent in Imperial Gothic texts is eliminated in postcolonial Gothic narratives. This is evident in the earliest postcolonial Gothic narratives like Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea.* Jennifer Gilchrist analyzes the text as a counter narrative to Bronte's *Jane Eyre* in the context of gender. She argues, thus:

> In her unbridled sexuality, propensity for gazing in the mirror, disregard for facts and abstract principles…Antoinette is virtually composite of the women

> Wollstonecraft warns against and against whom Bronte created her plain, independent, morally- virtuous heroine… *Wide Sargasso Sea* privileges the very qualities that Bronte and Wollstonecraft denigrates. (463)

The construction of the Rhys' female heroine is an embodiment of the Gothic transgression which violates social and cultural norms. Antoinette does not conform to Western patriarchal notions of what a woman should be as a wife and a daughter, and most significantly, in the context of the novel, a slave. We find similar construction of female identities in the texts selected for the present study— women who transgress the borders of gender roles assigned by their faith, culture, and patriarchal structures of imperialism. In fact, the female Muslim characters in Shamsie and Aslam's narratives perform multiple transgression as they defy existing categories and borders within the contexts of colonial discourse, gender and religion.

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CHAPTER 3

LOCATING THE OTHER

This chapter attempts to study the dynamics of otherness in the postcolonial Gothic. It will look at the engagement of the Other in the four selected texts and how it renders them as postcolonial Gothic narratives. The different concepts related to the idea of the Other foregrounded in the preceding chapter will be used to examine the narratives selected for the study. The chapter will examine how Shamsie and Aslam negotiate with the perception of the Pakistani Muslim subjects as the racial and religious Other and how they have been marked as monstrous figures in social discourses and how the selected texts provide counter narratives to the construction of the 'Muslim Other'.

Since the eighteenth century, Gothic narratives have always displayed strong engagement with otherness though the degrees and contexts in which they collide may vary. When the earliest writings of Gothic fiction began to enter the literary scene, the narratives were heavily informed by the concept of dualism in Christianity, as is evident in *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) by Horace Walpole and *The Monk* (1796) by Matthew Gregory Lewis. In such narratives, the plot is often driven by the clash between good and evil, the pure and the diseased or the fight between the devil and the saint. Hence, exploring the dichotomy between good and evil within the context of Christian morality became a conventional thematic pattern in Gothic narratives. Significantly, in the Gothic tradition, the portrayal of the monstrous, the grotesque and the diseased is always centered on the 'Other' and it is the presence of the 'Other' that contaminates the landscape of the narrative and initiates the horror and terror in all Gothic narratives. However, otherness was not popularly dealt with in the context of race and nation in the early Gothic texts. Tabish Khair observes before the emergence of the colonial Other, the figure of the Other has figured prominently in early Gothic fiction in the form of "culturally familiar signposts" such as "ghosts, spectres, wizards, demons" (42). Khair further argues that among these familiar figures of otherness "the greatest and original 'Other' in the European Christian context was Satan in his various forms. (42)

It can be rightly stated that in almost all the early Gothic novels, the figure of the Devil appears in different forms as the perpetrator of fear. He is presented as the antithesis of goodness and purity, the negative Other which instigates horror in Gothic narratives. He is often depicted as half- animal with horns, fangs, or wings with the overall physical features deformed and disfigured. In popular Gothic texts of early nineteenth century such as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), the creature is often referred to as the Devil: "Devil… do you dare approach me?" (133), "Abhorred monster! Fiend that thou art!... Wretched Devil" (185).

Since the act of creation features as a significant theme in the novel, the reference to the creature as 'Devil' can be read in the light of the Christian theory of creationism. However, the figure of the Devil as the Other was also subtly linked to the notion of race even before the eighteenth century. Khair points out that the employment of the Devil as the negative Other has also been studied "in the context of anti-Semitism" where scholars and critics have shown "the 'wandering Jew' as the disciple of the Devil and an impossible-to-assimilate entity in the early periods of nation formation" (42). Though this subtle affiliation of the Devil to anti- Semitism offers little to the present study, it opens up further possibilities in the construction of the racial Other in the nineteenth century. H.A Kelly observes that during the Middle Ages, the popular books which features the figure of the Devil or the demon always described the Devil as "an Ethiopian blacker than soot" (227). He also adds that in many Euro- Christian tales "the Devil and his Demons can appear in any shape they want to" but "when Demons appear in their own form, they are often… characterized as Ethiopians, that is, Black Africans" (285). Hence, it is discernable from this observation that the figure of the Devil in the English imagination is largely informed by racist discourse and their engagement with slavery. There is also the tendency to associate gods and deities of religion other than Christianity with devil and idol-worship. This is evident in colonial Gothic texts like H.G Wells' novel titled *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896). In Wells' description of the natives, we see that Otherness comes into play in the intermingling of the racial and the diabolical. What is apparent is that the Other has always been associated with religious and racial connotations through the course of the English Gothic tradition.

In the nineteenth century, we see that the Devil does not feature vividly as the Other in Gothic narratives. As foregrounded in the previous chapter, British imperialism affected all cultural forms of the society during this time which led to the emergence of the Imperial Gothic and the engagement with Otherness took a fully racial turn. Instead of the figure of the Devil as an embodiment of anti-Christian sentiments, we have "diabolical foreigners" and "racial Others" (Khair 48). The popular pattern in Imperial Gothic texts is the portrayal of the native or the colonized as the undesirable 'Other'— the barbaric, the diseased, the ghostly. This echoes Said's view on Orientalism as a field which engages with "disregarding, essentializing, denuding the humanity of another culture, people, or geographical region" (108). This literary pattern can be traced to the socio-economic setting of the British society of the eighteenth century, during which the idea of 'Empire' has started to haunt the center and became a social reality in Britain. 'Empire' has ceased to be an external impression but something that has managed to find its way into the center i.e the notion of Empire was eventually internalized. With the expansion of British colonies and the growing cultural and intellectual engagement with Empire, the discourse on otherness was largely informed by what lies beyond the territorial borders of Britain. Myths, artefacts, tales and people from the colonies gradually seeped into England where they were perceived and received as strange, mysterious, exotic and other worldly. In fact, the immigration process was already in motion as early as the mid-eighteenth century when the population of non-English people— Arabs, Jews, Indians, etc— became increasingly noticeable in England. Furthermore, there were Englishmen who returned from the 'Empire' with souvenirs of the colonies in the form of goods. Tabish Khair notes that during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, canonised literature in England refused to address "this presence of the imperial periphery in the center of empire" (8). On the other hand, popular literary worksby writers like Kipling, William Beckford and Conrad"narrated the life and experiences, real and fictional, of the English in the empire, about the stories of 'us' dealing with 'them'" (8).

The concept of associating the idea of Empire to the Gothic started with the Imperial Gothic which Brantlinger identifies as a Gothic genre intrinsic to the

Victorian period. He further argues that the Imperial Gothic reflects “an increasing emphasis on and anxiety about the British Empire” (156). Hence, the concept of Otherness, race and Empire became the defining characteristics of the Imperial Gothic. As foregrounded in the previous chapter, it addresses the fears and anxieties of going native and racial degeneration. This was largely on account of the influx of foreign immigration into England. By constructing the racial Other in the Gothic narratives, the colonial project was justified as a necessary civilizing mission which must be carried out in order to ‘civilize’ the native.

Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897) and other Imperial Gothic narratives show that these texts deal with the projection of the monstrous and the grotesque as a foreigner, an outsider i.e the ‘Other’ which is often located in the periphery of culture and civilization. Hence, otherness is equated with the barbaric, savage, disease and impure, and most significantly with the non- English identity. In *Dracula*, Khair notes the unwelcomed “abrupt” and “mysterious” entry of the “racial Other into London” (107). He further argues that the entry of this Other is considered to be abrupt “because the Other is not welcomed within dominant discourses in Europe” andthe mysteriousness accounts for the fact that “the Other comes from elsewhere and arrives, always arrives, in the heart of selfhood no matter what defenses might be erected to keep Otherness out” (107).

In this observation, it is noteworthy that Otherness is perceived as something inevitable, an unavoidable presence which must be encountered no matter what the attitude of the Self might be. The character of Count Dracula, the foreigner, is projected as an unwanted intruder who brought fear and chaos into the heart of London. The Other, is then, presented as a negative force which incites disturbance and disorder. These popular Gothic texts are characterized by an uneasy negotiation with the foreign, which can be further regarded as one of the primary characteristics of the Gothic. Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert associates this preoccupation with foreignness to colonialism and argues that the Gothic “was, from its earliest history in England and Europe, fundamentally linked to colonial settings, characters and realities as frequent embodiments of the forbidding and frightening” (229). This is evident in the aforementioned Gothic text of Bram Stoker.

However, the geographical movement related to Empire also takes place in another direction. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, Britain witnessed the expansion of empire and this in turn increased the number of English people moving out of the country to the colonies, thereby paving way for an increase in English diasporic identities. This further led to political conflict in Ireland and different European countries which ushered in chaos and disruption to the established structure of English identity. Hence, countries outside England, the foreign territories and the English colonies were often perceived as threat to the national integrity and cultural stability of Britain. This is evident in many classical Gothic texts by William Beckford, Mary Shelley, Ann Radcliffe and others. Moreover, these foreign territories and colonies were regarded to be politically unstable with depraved economic condition and in this sense, they become uneasy reminders of Britain's own primitive past.

Imperial Gothic texts like Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* and Bronte's *Jane Eyre* accommodate the racial Other into their narratives in the form of mysterious Indians who came to London to retrieve the jewel and Rochester's Creole wife who is brought to Thornfield Hall from the colonies. There are also other Gothic narratives which present the racial Other as cannibalistic, signaling the savage and barbarianism. Hence, Imperial Gothic "made monstrous which was nationally or racially Other" (Illott 20).

Though the postcolonial Gothic signifies an act of 'writing back' to the centre, it does not engage with the simple subversion of this construction of monstrosity. It aims to deconstruct or dismantle the very basis of these dichotomies which foster an imbalance in the power structure. This comprehensive approach is employed by Rushdie in the majority of his fictional writings. In *Shame* (1983), Sufiya Zinobia, the manifestation of monstrosity in the narrative, is the one who breaks down the binaries between good and evil, devil and angel. Hence, the function of the postcolonial Gothic is not only to subvert the racial Other constructed by colonial discourse and disrupt the ground which breeds binary oppositions.

As aforementioned, the gradual shift in the dynamics and engagement with 'Otherness' paved way for the development of the postcolonial Gothic. The idea of the Gothic double and the constant alteration of Otherness in turn give birth to the concept of hybridity, unhomeliness, ambivalence and the uncanny. These are concepts which are all at play within postcolonial literature. Within the postcolonial Gothic framework, the Gothic tension is created in negotiating the pre-established ideas, concepts and notions that have been imposed upon the colony by the colonizers. The colonial idea of the 'Other' is, therefore, not only subverted in postcolonial discourse but gives birth to a whole new form of Otherness, i.e the hybrid. Apart from being an exploration of the 'Other' side, postcolonial Gothic narratives recognize and acknowledge the alteration of the colonial Other, unlike the colonial or Imperial Gothic which "conceptualize Otherness as anything but a lack or a negativity: the Other is seen only in its potential as 'limit and menace' and hence a source of terror" (Khair 169).

Contemporary postcolonial Gothic in the twenty-first century is confronted with new social, political and cultural contexts which generate fears and anxieties different from those addressed by early postcolonial Gothic narratives. With increasing globalization and cross-cultural movements, the concept of otherness is now largely centered around diasporic, immigrant and displaced identities. In relation to this, within the paradigm of recent postcolonial studies, the issue and the question of Muslim identity has been one of the most debated and contested topics, owing largely to the events following 9/11 and the American War on Terror. Sarah Illot argues that "there has been a wholesale distortion of particular features of Muslim life and custom" (25). This ultimately leads to the othering of the human Muslim subject to "a fixed object" where "the behavior, the body and dress are treated not as cultural markers but as a kind of moral index, confirming non-Muslim viewers of these images in their sense of superiority and cementing the threatening strangeness of Muslim Other" (25).

The catastrophic impact of colonialism was the degradation of individual and collective native identity, cultural collapse and the termination of inherent tradition. In the current geopolitical climate, the Muslim identity has assumed the role of the

Other on account of the different forms of representation in literary works, Western media and cultural narratives. Said refers to this undesirable form of representation as "the residue of imperialism" (23). The Muslim is popularly associated with terrorism, Islamophobia, suicide bombing, bearded men with guns, religious fundamentalism, jihads and many other terminologies and identifications fostered by the West. Within this context, the chapter relies on Sophia Rose Arjana's concept of "the Muslim monster" which has been generated in the popular imagination through different art forms, a negative identity that the West sees as "monsters that disturb the calm of white Christianity" (4).

In *Muslims in the Western Imagination,* Sophia Rose Arjana examines how the larger part of Muslim identity in the current global scene is based on Western discourse, discernable in the ignorant generalization and stereotyping of the Islamic faith. She observes that, "Muslim men are so dehumanized that since 9/11 they have become less than zero… reduced to bodies held indefinitely, stripped of all legal rights afforded under US domestic and international law, force-fed like animals" which leads to "the stripping of identities" (2). She also argues that this violent social construction of Muslim identity, especially in the post 9/11 period, serves as a threat because "the imaginary violence perpetrated by Muslim monsters, as well as the figurative harm inflicted on these villainous characters, affects *real* Muslim bodies" (3). She traces how the idea of "the Muslim monster" has been generated in the popular imagination through different art forms, as early as the early medieval age because Christianity has always been the decisive and foundational basis for the notion of normative humanity while everything else existed as strange, foreign, and monstrous. This negative representation seeps its way into the Elizabethan Age in the form of the much celebrated Renaissance paintings of evil Turkish lords, and in the much popular literary works of the age like the plays of Christopher Marlowe and Shakespeare. Even as we come to the contemporary scene, the image of the 'Muslim monster' is promptly generated by agents of popular culture like films, comic books, magazines, etc. Therefore, even in the postcolonial age, the category of Muslim continues to be socially and culturally colonized by Western discourse as the religious and ethnic Other.What is also significant is that the incongruity of Muslims has been problematized by the issue of postcolonial diaspora, embodied not

only by Muslims who settled abroad and Muslims who feel alienated in their own homelands. In his remark on the Palestinian Muslims, Edward Said argues:

> How rich our mutability, how easily we change (and are changed) from one thing to another, how unstable our place- and all because of the missing foundation of our existence, the lost ground or our origin, the broken link with our land and our past. (128)

On account of their diasporic existence, Muslims have become prominent figures in the current global scene of multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism and globalization. The fiction of Pakistani writers in English largely deals with the idea of diaspora, home, nationalism and most importantly the construction of Muslim identities in the contemporary scene. The traumatic history of Pakistan is voiced out in the literary works of these writers, filling up the spaces which were once silent. In his review of Pakistani writing in English, David Waterman remarks that contemporary Pakistani writing in English is "politically engaged and historically informed, attracting much critical acclaim and scholarly attention, nurtured by a Pakistani imagination which is not only pre and post- colonial, but linked to the wider Islamic world" (1). Through their literary works, these writers are attempting to construct a postcolonial Muslim identity which has always been previously represented in terms of Otherness.

The primary texts in focus for this study, *Kartography* and *A God in Every Stone* by Kamila Shamsie and *Maps for Lost Lovers* and *The Wasted Vigil* by Nadeem Aslam, are examined and analyzed as postcolonial Gothic texts which aim to construct a Muslim identity not only in terms of Otherness but a separate identity that has its own historical, political and cultural value. In the works of these Pakistani authors, the idea of nation is often treated with a sense of haunting and their narratives artistically authenticate how Pakistani identity is in itself a haunted concept for the West. Both Shamsie and Aslam deal with the concept of national haunting which stems from the Muslim diasporic existence, running parallel to the search for individual identity, home and belongingness. The process of 'othering' in the Muslim context is inevitably linked to religious and racial identity. Arjana posits

that the Muslim is seen in the West as "a frightening adversary, an outside enemy that doesn't belong in modernity, who, due to an intrinsic alterity, must be excluded from the American and European landscapes" (2).

The Muslim monster in contemporary context is intrinsically uncanny because it is a figure from the past that has been haunting the Western imagination for over 1300 years. This is evident in medieval monsters built on the Saracens. (13) Thus, the Muslim, as the monstrous Other, resurfaces in the contemporary times on account of terrorism, religious fundamentalism and the influx of Muslim migration to European countries in the twentieth century. The identity of the Muslim is now socially and culturally colonized by western discourse as the religious and ethnic Other. Peter Morey and Amina Yaqin points out that Muslim identity has been reduced to "fixed object" "a caricature" (3), burdened by the excess of stereotypes and assumptions generated by Western media. Sarah Illot also identifies the 'othering' of the Muslims as "the neo- imperial effort to control oil in the Middle East" and "military intervention is then justified as a response to 'their' hatred' of 'us' (25).

Using the framework of the postcolonial Gothic, Shamsie and Aslam address this othering of Pakistani Muslim identity within the context of colonialism, race and culture. In *Maps for Lost Lovers,* Aslam subverts the general Western representation of the Muslims as the Other and subverts the stereotypes constructed by the West, projecting them on the white characters in the narrative. Here, Aslam employs the strategy of directly subverting the Otherness in the tradition of early postcolonial Gothic texts like *Wide Sargasso Sea.* He situates racial otherness in the English characters and England is depicted as the 'othered' land. In the story, England is a portrayed as a diseased and sickly country; the entrance of the white woman into Shamas' house is perceived by the family as a sign of bad luck and horror since the power supply went off and the house becomes covered in darkness. When the English woman steps into their house, Kaukab exclaims, "Now our house reeks of a strange smell. It is polluted" (*Maps* 146). Kaukab also makes sure that she maintains a distance between the "white people" and herself in order to keep away from the "vile culture". She says, "I don't go there; white people's houses start soon after that

street" (*Maps* 256). Here we see an inversion of the racial Other that characterizes Imperial Gothic narratives.

On a similar note, Shamsie's *A God in Every Stone* portrays the British as unwelcomed guests in Peshawar. Though the English protagonist Viv appears to have little interest in the colonial administration of her fellow English in Peshawar, her interest in the history of the city and archaeological excavations in and around Peshawar can be interpreted as a desire for power and knowledge over native history and culture. What is noteworthy in the narrative is that after Viv went back to London, Najeeb has to obtain permission from Viv to excavate and dig his own land for archaeological purpose. In a letter to his brother Najeeb, Qayyum expresses his scepticism about the English:

> Of all the fantastic tales you've ever told none is more fascinating than that of the kind English who dig up our treasures because they want you to know your own history. Your museums are all part of their Civilizing Mission, their white Man's Burden, their moral justification for what they have done here. As for the spade they place in your hand, the honours they shower on you- the English are too few, we too many and so they see that it is necessary for there to be a class of Indian who will revere them, feel honoured by them, benefit from their presence and ultimately serve them. (*God* 185)

Here, Qayyum's observation asserts the relationship between Viv and Najeeb as one which reflects a typical colonizer-native interaction with the intention to 'civilize' and educate the native, thus marking their relationship with the postcolonial ambivalence. Najeeb's obsession with history, on the other hand, points to what Nayar describes as "the postcolonial's attempt to retrieve the land using native knowledge" (*Uncanny* 110).

Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil* showcases how the involvement of Britain, Russia and America in the history and political affairs of Afghanistan destroyed the country into rubbles. Aslam brings together characters from these big countries under one roof, a house haunted by the ghosts of the Afghan women and the haunted statue of the Buddha. In this manner, the narratives subvert European colonial discourse and

the popular projection of the Muslim in western media. In *The Wasted Vigil,* the narrative makes use of the popular Gothic trope of the haunted house in order to engage with the uncanny spaces within the postcolonial context. The house is haunted by the ghosts of Marcus wife and daughter which signals the return of the repressed. Both Qatrina and her daughter Zameen are victims of colonial and imperial oppression who eventually died in the hands of the Russians and the Talibans. Moreover, they are presented as victims of the patriarchal structure of dominance as they transgress the borders drawn by faith, society and culture.

Running parallel to the concept of Otherness is Homi Bhabha's concept of the unhomely or unhomeliness. In his seminal essay, "The World and the Home", Bhabha defines unhomeliness as something which "captures something of the estranging sense of the relocation of the home and the world in an unhallowed place. To be unhomed is not to be homeless, nor can the "unhomely" be easily accommodated in that familiar division of social life into private and the public spheres" (Bhabha 1). Here, unhomeliness becomes a haunted estrangement, an unfamiliar belonging where the space is characterized by a troubled or ghostly presence; home becomes the Other space infested with death, loss and a sense of haunting. In the context of Muslim postcolonialism, diaspora, dislocation, migration and their related concepts have become defining traits of the contemporary Muslim identity to a large extent. This is one of the reasons why many Pakistani writers often address the Muslim issue in relation to these concepts in their literary works. On account of the prevalence of religious fundamentalism, ethnic violence and most significantly, the 1947 Partition, the Muslim community has undergone large scale migration in different parts of the world. Leela Gandhi observes that dislocation and diaspora, in their postcolonial incarnation, blames the colonial project "for its disruption of native/ domestic space" (132). Following Bhabha's theory, she perceives colonialism as "the perverse instigator of a new politics of 'un-homeliness'" (132). Diasporic discourse, therefore, becomes a form of resistance against colonial disruption of 'homely' spaces and an attempt to reconstruct cultural identity.

In Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers*, Pakistan is described by the Pakistanis residing in England as "a harsh and disastrously unjust land, its history a book full of sad stories" (*Maps* 9). Here, Pakistan is projected as a postcolonial society marked by ethnic conflicts, religious fundamentalism and social injustice; hence, uninhabitable. This projection runs parallel to what Pramod K. Nayar argues in his postcolonial critique of Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* (2004), that the refugees of Morichjhapi are "unhomely" because "the land itself is "unhomely," by virtue of being inhospitable" (*Uncanny* 89). The Pakistani refugees in England suffer the same tragic fate of dispossession of their homeland, not because they do not have a home but because home, for them, has become "inhospitable".

Aslam takes the postcolonial haunting of unhomeliness further when he sets *Maps for Lost Lovers* in England. The story is set in a fictional town in England, inhabited by Pakistani immigrants and it is noteworthy that the town is given a Pakistani name Dasht- e-Tanhaii which, loosely translated into English, means the Desert of Solitude. What is of significance to the current analysis is that the British are projected as foreigners, the Other, even in their own homeland and England becomes yet another unhomely space. Even though the town is given a Pakistani name to make it feel like home, it is located in England, a foreign country which, moreover, is the country of people who were once their rulers.

As a resident of the Pakistani town in England, Shamas' wife Kaukab feels a continuous sense of unease throughout the narrative. She calls England "a deplorable country… a nest of devilry where God has been exiled… denied and slain" a place where "every day you hear about depraved white men doing unspeakable things to little children" (*Maps* 41). Kaukab's comment on the state of England echoes Ashis Nandy's statement that "the long term cultural damage colonialism did to the British society was greater than it did to the colonies" (Nandy 32). Kaukab struggles to find the balance between her religious beliefs and the Western culture, characterized by moral degradation and loss of faith, which often drives her to the verge of madness. Unhomeliness, therefore, does not only refer to the spatial domestic sphere or geographical landscape, but a psychological state because the resulting "cultural identity crisis has made [one] a psychological refugee" (Tyson 42). Meanwhile, her

husband Shamas, a married Muslim man, is having a secret affair with a Hindu woman and people started to whisper about the sightings in the lakeside wood, the place where Shamas and his lover used to meet. Here, they saw "a pair of sad ghosts wanders, luminous, like figures stepped down from a cinema screen, a man and a woman, his hands on her stomach glowing more than the rest of their bodies" and "they call out repeatedly and quietly to someone called Shamas without moving their lips" (*Maps* 268). What was once the center, in colonial terms, no longer holds its previous status of superiority but is reduced to an unhomely space, infested by ghosts, murders, death and violence. The presence of the white woman, Jugnu's girlfriend, in the home of Shamas evokes fear and anxiety among the family members as the lights completely went off the moment the English woman steps inside the house, bringing darkness and fear. The familial domestic space is turned into an unhomely space because an intruder has stepped into what Bhabha calls "the intimate recesses of the domestic space" (Bhabha 141).

In order to examine the dynamics of the Other as a spatial concept, Bhabha's concept of the unhomely or unhomeliness needs to be taken into account. Bhabha defines unhomeliness as a haunted estrangement, an unfamiliar belonging where the space is characterized by a troubled or ghostly presence. In this manner, home becomes the Other space infested with death, loss and a sense of haunting. Diaspora, dislocation, migration and their related concepts have become defining traits of the contemporary Muslim identity and experience to a large extent. Aslam's portrayal of both England and Pakistan in *Maps for Lost Lovers* indicates the presence of the unhomely in these settings. The neighbourhood is described as a place haunted by silence, where secrets are hoarded and no one speaks about it: "No one makes a sound in case it draws attention. No one speaks. No one breathes. The place is bumpy with buried secrets and problems swept under the carpets" (*Maps* 63). The Uncanny is at play in the immigrant community on account of the fact that its residents belong neither 'here' nor 'there'. They are suspended between two cultures in a liminal state. The Pakistani immigrants in the novel suffer the tragic dispossession of their homeland, not because they do not have a home but because home, for them, has become inhospitable or 'unhomely'.

This feeling of dispossession of one's homeland is felt by Qayyum, the Pathun soldier in Shamsie's *A God in Every Stone*, who returned to Peshawar after long years of fighting in the British Army. The unwanted presence of the Other, the British people in the streets of Peshawar distorts Qayyum's view of the city and he feels as if he is standing on foreign soil. In Shamsie's *A God in Every Stone*, a novel set during British colonization of the Indian subcontinent in the late 1920s, the Pathun soldier Qayyum lost his sense of belongingness to Peshawar when he returned from the World War after fighting in the British Army. The city that was once his home has become a site populated by foreigners, i.e., the British. Due to this unwanted presence of the Other, the residents of Peshawar feel threatened, violated and vulnerable. This fear of the presence of the British affects "the intimate recesses of the domestic space" which "becomes sites for history's most intricate invasions" (Bhabha 141).

The representation of Peshawar as the ultimate unhomely space is seen in the climax of the novel when a violent incident broke out at Qissa Khwani Bazaar, the Street of Storytellers. Shamsie has chosen this specific location because of its historical significance and places her characters in the middle of this violent historical incident. The Street of Storytellers was the most important public space in Peshawar where traders and travellers would gather from different parts of the continent and recite their tales of adventure; it was the heart of Peshawar. However, during British colonization in 1930, the Street of Storytellers witnessed the massacre of 400 unarmed civilians who were holding peaceful protest against the British rule. The English troops, armed with machine guns and bayonets opened fire which led to the death of hundreds of Peshawaris. The massacre prompted protests throughout the country and initiated the famous Khudai Khidmatgar movement. Shamsie brings all her characters together in the midst of this massacre and paints a haunting scene:

> Below, a horse lies dead in the street, its mane drenched in blood. An armoured car is on fire, and something else, a man… his flesh charred. A crowd of hundreds of Peshawaris fills the Street of Storytellers. Soldiers with bayonets at the ready face them. In between, the dead. One of the dead starts to crawl. (*God* 275)

Peshawar had become the ultimate unhomely space as the heart of the city is turned into a graveyard of its own residents.

Similarly, in *Kartography,* the city of Karachi is projected as a space that denies a sense of home and belonging to the characters. *Kartography* tells the tale of friendship between Karim and Raheen amidst the turmoil of Pakistan's civil war. Shamsie's narrative relies on the violent historical timeline of Karachi, mainly the 1947 Partition and the 1971 Pakistan Civil War, as the characters move from one place to another in search of home, security and belongingness. Throughout the narrative, the city of Karachi looms larger than any of the characters as it defines the lives and fate of the major characters. Shamsie paints a realistic picture of how the Partition of 1947 and the Pakistan Civil War of 1971, resulting in the creation of Bangladesh have violent and long lasting impact on the private and public sphere. Kavita Daya, in her examination of the South Asian ethnic violence in South Asian literature and culture, identifies the 1947 Partition as the most significant defining historical moment in the entire history of South Asia and Britain because of its "profound and lasting effect on the politics and societies of many of the nations that make up contemporary South Asia" (Daya 5).

During 1970 and 1971, Pakistan faced continuous internal conflicts prompted by issues regarding territory and ethnicity. This eventually led to the separation of West and East Pakistan and the liberation of Bangladesh as a separate country. The 1971 Civil War can be seen as the direct ill-fated outcome of the Partition of 1947, a colonial strategy that divided India and Pakistan. *Kartography* is set in this post 1971 Karachi where the ethnic conflict between Muslims and Bengalis reached its zenith, leading to violence and bloodshed within the city. When one of the major characters, Karim, explains to his friend about how he felt guilty to have fun while hundreds of people die every day in the poorer sections of the city, his friend Zia replies, "This is Karachi. We have a good time while we can, 'cause tomorrow we might not be so lucky" (*Kartography* 63). Zia's comment reflects the instability and uncertainty that haunts Karachi. On account of its long history of violence and sufferings under colonialism, Karachi is projected as a space that has always been inflicted with insecurity and uncertainty. This is evident in the narrator Raheen's

comment: “Although the ethnic fighting had broken out for the first time in my life in 1985, I cannot remember Karachi being a safe city even before that” (63). She does not feel at home in her own hometown because Karachi, throughout history, has always been defined by a sense of insecurity which she describes as “a place that I always have to say goodbye to everyday” (75).

For Raheen and Karim in *Kartography*, Karachi is turned into an unpleasant ‘other’ space stripped off of all familiarity and the warmth of home. While sitting on the garden where they used to play together since they were little kids, Raheen says:

> The garden is located where all our beginnings, Karim’s and mine, are located: Karachi. That spider plant city where…you might find a fossilized footprint of Alexander. The Great. He led his army through Karachi, long, long, before the spider- plant effect took hold, when Karachi was a harbour named Krokola. Perhaps Alexander’s was the first army that stirred up the sand along the eastern coast of the Arabian Sea.” (*Kartography 3*)

What is significant in Raheen’s opening narrative is that right after declaring Karachi as their place of origin, a home, she goes on to highlight the historical account of Alexander’s invasion of Asia briefly. This signals a mixture of the sense of home with an intrinsic awareness of the presence of foreign power, thus rendering the place as unhomely. Later, when Raheen moved abroad, she writes a letter to Karim and says, “Boston is just like Karachi. The city does not embrace me… it wants me to go back home. But where is home?” (*Kartography* 236). It was only when she moved to America that Raheen realizes that Karachi never felt like home to her because the city’s violent histories have strong associative bonds with her family’s past and eventually, the present. The sense of unhomeliness is also signified by Karim’s desperate desire and attempt to exert control over the unstable and ever shifting city by investing his time and interest in trying to create an official map of Karachi. Julie Hakim Azzam argues that “in the postcolonial Gothic, homes and dwellings are the geographic sites in which larger political, historical, and national allegories are cast” (4). Hence, the unstable political climate of Karachi and the present constantly haunted by the bloody wars of the past are reflected in the

uncertainty and lack of fixed geographical markings in the city. Maps mark specific locations with symbols, directions and names. They represent sites and territories and provide a sense of spatial understanding. The absence of a proper cartographic marking of the city points to the unstable, incongruent and inconsistency that define the city.

The dark and unfriendly feel of the city is also a result of the rampant ethnic violence which has almost become a natural part of the city. On the night when Zia and Raheen went out for a casual drive through the city, they encountered a gunman who fired a bullet at Zia's car. Raheen says:

> A wavy line of bullet holes ran all the way across the front and back door, just centimetres below the window. I bent forward at the waist and touched the tip of my finger to the jagged metal that marked a bullet's point of entrance. Hot. I jerked my finger away. What that thing could do to flesh. How my body would convulse. Thrown forward into the windshield. No pain, just burning. Seared. And then this sentence, in these words exactly, came to mind: they cannot protect you against this. (*Kartography* 68)

The incident triggers Raheen's sense of fear and discomfort as she realizes that her status as a member of Kararchi's elite class will not save her from the violence and killings rampant in the city. In *The Wasted Vigil*, the eerie silence in Marcus' house where different nationalities come together and the ruined old perfume factory which housed the head of the haunted Buddha become the haunted 'geographic sites' which represent the foreign infested Afghanistan and the return of repressed histories.

Writing in the context of postcolonial Australia, Ken Gelder argues that "when a nation engages with others— indigenous people, immigrants, separatists— a sense of national identity is both enabled and disabled" (26). In *The Wasted Vigil,* we see a similar context in Afghanistan, as a nation, where foreign presence in the form of invasion generates the nation's "investment in the idea of a national self" (26). Gelder further argues that "a certain anxiety results which stems from the difficulty of disentangling what is one's home from what is not one's home— what

is foreign or strange" and that the Freudian Uncanny "speaks to this anxiety directly" (26).

When we come to the postcolonial Gothic, it can be safely said that the sub-genre has a close alliance with what Katarzyna Ancuta terms as "Asian Gothic" (432). The reason for this has to do largely with the "portrayal of Asia as the land of terrifying otherness" which Ancuta remarks as a "characteristic of many Western Gothic text" and "has resulted in a promotion of a set of stereotypes that remain valid up to the present day" (435). She further divides Asian Gothic into three broad categories: firstly, there are "imitative texts" which strictly follows the classical form of Western Gothic writing, secondly there are "indigenous Asian texts" that rely on local traditions and conventions to create a sense of Gothic aesthetic and haunting, and finally the "hybrid texts" which are dependent on the interplay of dichotomies, a characteristic argued by Ancuta as an essential trait of the postcolonial Gothic because "hybrid texts invoke comparisons between East and West, old and new, local and global, and so on, and are possibly the most reflective of the three" (435). The works of Kamila Shamsie and Nadeem Aslam can be accommodated within this third category of Asian Gothic which Ancuta identifies as "hybrid texts". Their works, hence, render themselves to a postcolonial Gothic reading as they deal with "themes of terrifying nationalisms, haunting, embedded violence, foreignness, loss, wastage/wasting and cultural crypts" (*Munnu* Nayar).

In Nadeem Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil,* the house of the Englishman Marcus is treated almost as a major character in the same way that Karachi is projected as having a life of its own in *Kartography.* Marcus' house, located in the outskirt of Afghanistan, is described as a living organism and all the five rooms in the house represent the five human senses:

> Beginning on the ground floor, each of the first five rooms was dedicated to one of the five senses… the first was dedicated to the sense of sight…from there they moved to the room of smell, where angels bent down towards the feet of humans to ascertain from the odour whether these feet had ever walked towards a mosque… In the

> room about the sense of touch, there was a likeness of Muhammad with his hand plunged in a jar… Then it was on to taste, and from that room they ascended to the highest place in the house: it contained and combines all that had gone before. (*Vigil* 13)

As characters belonging to different nationalities come together in Marcus' house, Aslam brings together "those global powers responsible for Afghanistan's situation" (O' Brien 4). The house being haunted by the ghosts of Qatrina and Zameen signifies the foreign characters' encounter with the pre-colonial past of the country. Julie Hakim Azzam argues that "in the postcolonial Gothic, homes and dwellings are the geographic sites in which larger political, historical, and national allegories are cast" (4). The politics of home and belonging, often set against the larger national backdrop, function as the instigators of the Gothic tension in the postcolonial Gothic. National disturbances, violence and traumas are echoed in the familial and domestic spaces which is evident in the works of postcolonial writers like Rushdie and Arundhati Roy. In *The Wasted Vigil*, the sense of unhomeliness within the home is prompted not by family feuds, patriarchal or incestuous madness but by the entrance of the national elements into the recesses of home. This further serves as an important differential marker between traditional Gothic and the postcolonial Gothic because "in contrast with the traditional Gothic where the violence is endemic to the family, in the postcolonial Gothic the family merely echoes, draws upon or is impacted by the violence writ across the *nation-as-family*" (Nayar *Munnu* 4). Even within the narrative framework of the four selected texts, the public/national sphere merges with the domestic space which creates disturbance, violence and discomfort within the families. This is most dominant in Shamsie's two novels where the lives of the individual characters are extensively shaped by the socio-political landscape. Characters like Vivian Spencer and Qayyum Gul are displaced in an unhomely environment driven by colonialism. After his return to Peshawar, Qayyum feels less at home day by day as he "moves deeper into a world in which everything touched by the British is tainted, even Peshawar's ancient history" (*God* 273). The Gul household loses the comfort of home because of the dispute between the two brothers in their attitude towards the colonizers.

In *Kartography*, the characters live in a constant state of terror even within the confines of their homes because of the realization of their immigrant identity and the ethnic violence prevalent in the region. What is reflected here is the violent historical landscape of Pakistan, marked by British colonialism which fosters conflict and violence. Karim starts to lose his trust in his parents and moved out of the house when he learnt the family secret marked by ethnic violence. The family's turbulent history becomes a reflection of the histories of the two nations, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Karim and the narrator Raheen learn that both their parents' lives had been deeply affected by the political turmoil and ethnic violence during the Bangladesh Liberation War. Raheen's father could not marry Karim's mother, who was initially his fiancée, because she was a Bengali from Bangladesh. During the 1947 Partition, Karim's mother had to settle in Karachi as her home where she was labeled as a 'Muhajir', an immigrant. According to Kavita Daya, Muslim refugees who went to Pakistan are often, even today, considered outsiders there, such that the status of "refugee" or "muhajir" has generated a "Muhajir national identity" and the Muhajir Qaumi Movement in the eighties that combats the former Partition refugees' oppression as outsiders in contemporary social and political life. (107). At a glance, the incident of 'the fiance swap' between both the parents in *Kartography* seems to occupy the centre of the narrative; however, this incident is only the precursor to the more serious issue of the haunting consequences of the historical 1971 incident for later generations such as Raheen and Karim. As the violent historical forces gradually altered Karachi into an unhomely space, Raheen is struck with the realization that their 'mujahir' identity will always mark her as an outsider in Karachi. Even though their elite status in society protects them from the ongoing violence within the city, the two families live in silent fear and Raheen wonders:

> What kind of immigrant is born in a city and spends his whole life there, and gets married there, and raises his daughter there? And I, an immigrant's daughter, was an immigrant too… If I told them Karachi was my home just as much as it was anyone else's, would they look at me and think: another Muhajir. Immigrant. Still immigrants, though our family had crossed the border nearly four decades ago. (*Kartography* 41)

The tragic events in Karachi, “the shootings on a massive scale, the unnatural silence in the evenings, the siege mentality” (*Kartography* 259), continue to reflect the cracks and unease in both the families as Raheen and Karim ran away from Karachi, their hopes in having a normal relationship being completely shattered by the turbulent family histories and the violent national history that shaped them. This echoes Nayar’s observation that “the family becomes the site where national histories are often played out in postcolonial fiction” (*Munnu* 3).

In *Maps for Lost Lovers*, religious intolerance and cultural tension are played out in the personal breakdown of Shamas’ family. The brutal murder of Shamas’ brother Jugnu and his lover Chanda on account of religious fundamentalism causes unrest and discomfort within the family. Subsequently, the gradual Westernization of the children in the household as they move out for higher education clashes with that of the traditional mindset of their mother, Kaukab who detests Western culture because she thinks it is immoral and corrupted; for Kaukab, “England is a dirty country, an unsacred country full of people with disgusting habits and practices” (*Maps* 380).

The idea of the Unhomely runs through the entire narratives of the selected texts and is put into play by the Freudian Uncanny. In the two novels of Nadeem Aslam, the figure of the *djiin* features prominently which ushers in the effect of the Uncanny within the Unhomely spaces of the narratives. In Islamic tradition, a *djinn* is the Arabic name for a certain type of spirit which means ‘demons’ or ‘spirits’. Muslims strongly believe that the *djinn* can take both human and animal form and has the power to possess humans. In *The Wasted Vigil,* the *djiin* creates a sense of haunting in and around Marcus’ house: “No one came near the house, Marcus had told her, because the area around the lake is said to contain the djinn” (*Vigil* 15). The figure of the *djinn* creates the Gothic tension in and around the house. Lara, the Russian guest, experiences an uncanny feeling throughout her stay, “Her mind has shimmered with the things she had encountered in this house. They were desert images. Phenomena she could not really be sure she had seen” (*Vigil* 88). The people of Usha are afraid to venture near the house because “a ghost said to be that of his daughter Zameen had appeared in one of the rooms the day the Taliban came there,

the apparition putting them to flight" (*Vigil* 15). Marcus' Russian guest, Lara, does not feel safe inside the house and is always possessed by a sense of fear and restlessness as she moves about the house. The house has become a haunted site for the residents because "these are the rooms where Qatrina had lost her reasons, Marcus having to tell her there was no need to be afraid just because the bar of red soap was producing white lather" (*Vigil* 75). Aslam delicately established a link between psychological fear/ anxiety and the architectural space which is again reflected in the opening line of the novel, "Her mind is a haunted house" (*Vigil* 3). This is a reference to Lara, the Russian woman who has desperately come to Afghanistan in search of her brother who had served in the Soviet Army. Aslam highlights how the political ventures of countries like Russia and America not only disrupt familial peace and home for the Afghans but for the dominant European countries as well; thus, blurring the line between the oppressor/victim binary. Similarly, the Englishman Marcus has lost his entire family during the war between the Taliban and the Soviets. The trope of the haunted house foregrounds the impossibility of inhabiting the town of Usha because it has because of the consistent presence of foreigners following the Soveit-Afghan War of 1979-1989 and the American War on Terror in post 9/11. The house becomes the ultimate representation of the uncanny, which has been repressed with all the murders, bloodshed and madness it has witnessed over the years. It represents the once familiar domestic space turned into a strange and unfamiliar space that creates fear and tension.

According to Nayar the Freudian Uncanny is associated to the spatial experience of individuals which is characterized by perplexing sets of dichotomies; he, therefore, posits that the Uncanny "is a perception of a space where the perceiver finds herself simultaneously "at home" and "not at home" or a "space which is at once familiar and strange, safe and threatening" (*Uncanny* 89). The Uncanny proves to be significantly applicable in diasporic discourse, especially in addressing postcolonial Gothic spaces because of its preoccupation of the idea of home. The word *Heimlich* "belongs to two sets of ideas…the one relating to what is familiar and comfortable, the other to what is concealed and kept hidden" (Freud 122). It is

between the tension created by these two contesting set of ideas that Freud situates the *Unheimlich.* According to Freud, the uncanny is an aesthetic experience which is "frightening precisely because it is not known and familiar. The Uncanny or the *unheimlich* comes to light when it has lost the sense of familiarity because what has been repressed is brought to light. It is this idea of the return of the repressed that is utilized by Gothic writings in order to induce a sense of fear and terror. Botting argues that Gothic signifies "an over- abundance of imaginative frenzy, untamed by reason and unrestrained by conventional eighteenth century demands for simplicity, realism or probability" (3). Gothic writing, therefore, poses itself as a reaction to Enlightenment values which celebrate Reason and hence, Gothic texts become the embodiment of the repressed desires of the eighteenth century that have been brought to the surface. Similarly, postcolonialism is marked by a strong retaliation against the long history of colonial suppression, and is concerned with the rethinking and reconstruction of culture, history and identity. Therefore, both the Gothic tradition and postcolonialism are inherently associated to the idea of the return of the repressed i.e., the Uncanny.

In Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers,* the Uncanny is represented by the dark landscape of Dasht-i-Tanhaii which is infested by ghosts, murderers and dead bodies. Located in England, this particular landscape occupied by Pakistani immigrants represents the return of the repressed. When the English newspapers warn the public after the murder in the mosque, Kaukab comments that "after suffering so much in their hands in our own land, it is only fair that they get terrorized by us here in their own land" (*Maps* 235). The religious beliefs of the once colonized nation come back to haunt the center in the form of the *djiin*, honour killings and death justified by religious bigotry. Kaukab, the most conservative character in the novel, is constantly in a state of fear of cultural assimilation because 'white' society or Western culture always remains foreign to her. She is able to speak English only in broken sentences, she does not cross the streets on the side where the English houses are located, hence maintaining the distance from anything associated with the whites.

Uncanny identities in the postcolonial context are linked to the concept of hybridity, which has become a catchphrase for cultural exchange in the postcolonial terrain. In his seminal work *The Location of Culture* (1994), Homi Bhabha defines hybridity as something that is "new, neither the one nor the other" (53). Hybridity, then, points to a concept that signifies a state of *in- betweenness*, a liminal state between two or more cultures. In her analysis of Helen Oyeyemi's *The Icarus Girl* (2005) as a postcolonial Gothic fiction, Diana Adesola Mafe defines hybridity as "a process of negotiation and a condition of being between multiple, often opposing, cultural identities and influences (22). This notion of hybridity is directly linked to his concept of the third space and unhomeliness which Mafe calls "an eerie sense of cultural dislocation (22). The third space is the liminal or "in-between" space through which one may "elude the politics of polarity" (Bhabha 55). The novels of the two writers in focus, Kamila Shamsie and Nadeem Aslam, can be said to project a certain kind of hybridity in terms of cultural identity since both are Pakistani writers residing in London. Their diapsoric identity can be said to have facilitated their perspectives and writings, which is often the case with many diasporic writers. As an Arab who grew up with Western education, Said finds himself suspended between two cultures. In the introduction to *Culture and Imperialism* (1994) he states, "Ever since I can remember, I have felt that I belonged to both worlds, without being completely of either one or the other." (xxxiii). Said perceives his liminal position and status with a positive approach and remarks how this has assisted him in shaping his perspectives. In recent postcolonial, diaspora and subaltern studies the works of these writers residing in Western metropolis offer insightful perspectives especially within the postcolonial framework as the writers themselves are suspended between the 'Third World' and 'the West' which equips them with insider and outsider perspectives.

The selected novels of Nadeem Aslam and Kamila Shamsie appear to oppose the validation of cultural diversity, a common trait in diasporic writings, but instead attempt to project a different approach towards cultural difference, and highlight the anxiety and angst caused by belonging to an 'in- between' space or on the cultural margins of two worlds. This is strongly characterized by a sense of estrangement

which drives individuals to a state of constant renegotiation of cultural and individual identities. The hybrid figure, for Shamsie and Aslam, does not signify a celebration of multiculturalism or diversity but is a haunted being, shunned by society from all sides as it is seen as a threat and danger— a traumatic reminder of colonialism. Though hybridity, in its dominant form, may be presented as a conceptual tool to do away with binarism, allowing a reconstruction and rethinking of hierarchical structures, the postcolonial Gothic tends to subvert this positive aspect of hybridity; it becomes a ghostly presence which moves within the liminal space, unwanted and constantly pushed to the periphery of cultures. Because the hybrid resists allocation and categorization, it is perceived as the definitive threat to established discourse embedded in the formation of cultural differentiation.

Shamsie's protagonist in *A God in Every Stone* is Vivian Rose Spencer, an English archaeologist who has come to Peshawar in search of a historical artifact. Born and brought up in an aristocratic English family, Vivian finds herself suspended between the two worlds of East and West as she deeply sympathizes with the people and culture of Peshawar. During her stay in Peshawar, she is more at ease with the natives of Peshawar than with the English colonizers residing in the city. However, Vivian is pulled in again and again into the English community as she cannot completely escape her identity as an English woman. The line between the familiar and the unfamiliar has been blurred as her passion, allegiance and loyalty are all vested in the people of Peshawar. Shamsie, thus, paints her protagonist as a hybrid character who is a Pakistani at heart and English by blood, so as to bring to light that even the white people suffer the plight of colonialism in terms of loss, death and violence. Najeeb, her pupil suffers the same plight as Vivian as his interest in museum studies ties him to the English woman. His close friendship with Vivian encourages him to embrace English education and culture. These two characters both defy cultural categorization as they move in the in-between spaces, thereby causing a sense of unrest and turbulence in their respective cultures. Qayyum, Najeeb's older brother strongly opposes the friendship between Vivian and Najeeb, constantly reprimanding his younger brother to stay away from the English woman. Najeeb and Vivan transgress cultural borders as they move to and fro between their English and

Pashtun identity. It is through their characters that the Gothic excess isplayed out in the form of excessive desire for knowledge which motivates them to transgress cultural borders.

The Englishman, Marcus, in Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil* feels a deep connection to the culture of the East and chooses to settle permanently because of his Afghani wife but is treated as an outsider and a threat within the society, leading to the gruesome murder of his wife and daughter. Characters like Vivian and Marcus are trapped between opposing cultural identities and are in a continuous state of negotiation; thus, they become inhabitants of unhomely spaces. They fit right into Habib's definition of hybridity where he states that "Hybridity expresses a state of 'in- betweenness,' as in a person who stands between two cultures" (12). As hybrid characters who move between two cultures, they destabilize the established binaries of colonizer-colonized, East-West and English-Pakistani. Similarly, Maheen, Karim's mother, in *Kartography* is labeled as a "muhajir" or "Muslim immigrant" because she is a Bengali from Bangladesh who is forced by political tensions to settle in Karachi during the Partition of India. Even after long years of settling down in the city and embracing Karachi as her home, Maheen is haunted by the ghosts of Partition as she loses her engagement with Zafar, her Pakistani fiancé. Even after settling in Karachi for decades, her Bengali identity still lingers in parts of her in meaningless pieces. When relatives from Bangladesh visits her Aunty Maheen, the narrator Raheen observes: "After the relatives left, stray words of Bengali would stay clustered around her tongue, falling off in ones and twos, un-understood and untranslated" (*Kartography* 42). The postcolonial Gothic's fear and tension is played out through her hybrid identity as it continues to control the fate of her family and her children as her hybridization becomes the source of chaos and disorder within the lives of her children. Though Karachi is the only place that the younger generations like Raheen and Karim know of, it becomes less and less familiar as their hybrid identities become clearer as the narrative develops. This is signified by Raheen's remark when gunfire and bombs start to reach their part of the city: "How could the violence reach somewhere so familiar?" (*Kartography* 282). This is the

postcolonial Uncanny at play, when the calm and familiarity of the present is disturbed.

The idea of the postcolonial hybrid functions on another level as well. There are characters that undergo cultural and individual transformation in a different form. These characters echo what postcolonial theorist Aime Cesaire refers to as the 'decivilization' of the English as colonizers which Nandy confirms as "an empirical reality" (31). Fanon, in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) also illustrates an incident where an English police officer eventually developed a violent attitude towards his family after continuously torturing the Algerians. Fanon's illustration is mirrored in Shamsie's narrative in the form of the character of Mr. Remmick, the Englishman in Peshawar who exercises his power not only on the natives but upon his fellow English residents as well. Mr. Remmick represents the force of patriarchal dominance for Vivian as he continuously attempts to take advantage of her status as a single English woman in Peshawar, posing himself as a threat and a danger to her security as a woman. Remmick is an embodiment of the racial degeneration and cultural decline, the fears inherent in the Imperial Gothic.

Leela Gandhi offers a new standpoint where she refers to colonialism as a "nuanced culture of travel" (133). She argues that the colonial project could be seen as a form of migration or diaspora, characterized by the movement of Western population in large numbers. Viewed from this standpoint, Gandhi opens up the possibility of reassessing the twin discourses of hybridity and diaspora in order to throw light on the uncertainty and adulteration of colonial culture. In the course of his civilizing mission, colonial masters like Mr. Remmick loses their own civility, thus succumbing to immoral acts of violence on their fellow English as well and becomes the terrorizing hybrid character. For Bhabha, hybridization represents a positive force and calls for a constructive approach in such a way that the convergence of two or more culture signifies multiplicity and ambivalence, and eventually the creation of the 'third space'. In contrast to his valorization of hybridity, Shamsie and Aslam deal with the concept of hybridity as a limitation, something which generates fear, loss, chaos and disruption within the private, domestic and national sphere. The hybrid characters transgress borders between

different nations, cultures and political sides, thus, becoming threat and danger to the two opposing sides. Vivian's close association with Najeeb is seen by her fellow English folks as a contamination and degradation of the superior status of the colonizers in Peshawar.

The postcolonial Uncanny is also played out in the narrative when Kaukab sense a kind of "strangerness" within her children who are brought up in England. Even though she tries her best to distance herself from the 'white' people, her children cannot escape the cultural assimilation, hence, becoming the site of the postcolonial Uncanny. For Kaukab, her children represent the familiar yet strange. She exclaims in exasperation, "My Charag, my Mah- Jabin, my Ujala. Each time they went out they returned with a new layer of stranger-ness on them until finally I didn't recognize them anymore" (*Maps* 345). This 'stranger-ness' can be equated to the Uncanny which continues to haunt the familial structure until, in the end, it completely breaks familial relationship. In this sense, the cultural encounter as experienced by Kaukab's family becomes the site for fear and chaos.

This negation of hybridity is established by the entry of the Uncanny. What makes the Uncanny especially applicable to discussions surrounding hybrid identities and the dislocation so often associated with them is that "the specificity of the sensation of the uncanny lies in the fact that something is frightening, not because it is unfamiliar or new, but because what used to be familiar has somehow become strange" (Masschelein 3). This corresponds closely to the way in which the hybrid identity is characterized by a deep seated confusion over the estrangement of the familiar and the familiarization of the strange. Bhabha believes that the interconnected concepts of hybridity and unhomeliness render the colonial presence as ambivalent and this ambivalence inturn render colonial discourse as a failure, and these concepts become significant forms of resisting colonial domination. However, in Shamsie's and Aslam's narratives, the postcolonial hybrid becomes the embodiment of transgression, which Botting regards as a significant Gothic trope, as they move across established borders and defies categorization.

In postcolonial diasporic literature, the nature of home is unhomeliness, the feeling that one has no cultural home or sense of cultural belonging. The diasporic people often retain strong links with memories of their original home or homeland which renders their current state as unhomely. In this regard, Stuart Hall points out, "The link between these communities and their 'homeland' or the possibility of a return to the past are much more precarious than usually thought" (p. 355). Due to modernization and globalization the diasporas themselves are deeply affected by their position, so they do not return home. The postcolonial critic and sociologist Avtar Brah defines the home of diasporas as "a mythic place of desire in the diasporic imagination" and "a place of return" (192). In Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers*, Kaukab and the other women in the neighbourhood continually express their longing for Pakistan whenever they have complaints about their current situation in England. However, Pakistan also represents something that was once familiar but is now perceived with a certain sense of unfamiliarity. Kaukab mentions that her rheumatism has adjusted to the climate of England and that the pain would only resurface if they go back to Pakistan (*Maps* 207). Some of the Pakistani women in the communityfear that their friends and relatives in Pakistan might laugh at how they pronounce certain Urdu words. (118). This mixed sentiment towards Pakistan indicates that the return to their original homeland is simultaneously exciting and frightening. Hence, the notion of home for diasporas is much more complex and ambivalent. The home of origin and the home of settlement juxtapose, and the diasporic identity can often draw much more on the experience of migrancy and settlement of making one's home than on a fixation to a homeland. Similarly, for Salman Rushdie, the idea of home has been a damaged concept as he says in his book *East, West*, "Home has become such a scattered, damaged, various concept in our present travails" (93). For Rushdie, home signals a shift away from homogeneous nation-states based on the ideology of assimilation to a much more fluid and contradictory definition of nations as a multiplicity of diasporic identities. One of the overriding characteristics of diasporas is that they do not, as a general rule, return. They are at the threshold. Thus, they are haunted by some sense of loss, rootlessness and alienation.

Cynthia Sugars and Gerry Turcotte argue that the Freudian Uncanny "is integrally linked to the paradox of home and "unhomeliness"- those moments when the familiarity of home is infected by unhomeliness" which result in "an uncanny or unsettling experience" (4). Home, then, is rendered uncanny in the case of migrants, immigrants and other diasporic identities. Vivian, in *A God in Every Stone,* is unable to sleep peacefully in Peshawar because she is possessed by "a feeling of being watched by figures from the past, the eyes of the ancient gods" (*God* 272).

When we look at the dynamics of othering in the context of gender in the narratives selected for the study, it can be argued that the domestic role assigned to Kaukab as a mother and a wife in a patriarchal community denies her the opportunities for positive cultural encounters. While her husband and children are able to developed a more inclusive and progressive mentalities on account of their contact with English culture, she remains a stranger to white culture throughout the text, barely speaking their language. Though this refusal to come into contact with the other culture comes from her personal choice, it is also largely because of her confinement to the four walls of her home as a wife and a mother. In Shamsie's *Kartography,* Maheen's identity as a Bengali woman during the 1971 Civil War completely changed her future and she is denied the future that she wanted. Zafar, to whom she is already engaged, expressed his anti-Bengali sentiments when he found out that Maheen has Bengali blood: "How can I marry one of them? How can I let one them bear my children? Think of it as a civic duty" (*Kartography* 385). Raheen, Zafar's daughter, moves across state borders and even international borders in her attempt to uncover the dark history of her family. Karim, her male counterpart in the narrative, refuses to come face to face with the truth, fearing that it would bring "pain, humiliation and loss" (*Kartography* 291). Raheen shows her transgressive nature and her willingness to disturb the "pretentious calm" and says that she "chose to face the ugliness and the horror of it all" (332) even if it means the falling apart of the family structure. Through their marginalization as the gender Other, female characters in the postcolonial Gothic become the Uncanny, highlighting social injustices and flawed societal structures in these narratives. As foregrounded earlier, the heroine in postcolonial Gothic transgresses social, gender and cultural borders as

they move beyond the normative standards set by imperialist structures and forms of society. Vivian in *A God in Every Stone* had to live up to the expectations of the two important men in her life— her father and Tashin Bey. “A daughter nursing in a Class A hospital was almost as fine as a son going into battle” her father had said (*God* 29). However, Viv breaks free from this patriarchal restraint as she flees to Peshawar to do what she loves best- digging up archaeological sites. Shamsie’s female characters challenge the gender roles that their society, culture and religion imposed on them and they, in their transgression, question forms of oppression, violence and legacies of colonialism. Aroosal Kanwal argues that fictional narratives like Shamsie’s “interrogate fictional narratives highlighting the stories from the Muslim world that feature forced marriages, beating, rape, and women behind burqas” which are “sometimes used to justify the war on terror” (42). However, this is not to say that Shamsie and Aslam fail to present the strict gender codes that confine Pakistani women. Their narratives extensively engage with the portrayal of the fears and anxieties that render home as Unhomely and this include gender othering in Pakistani society. Shamsie’s choice of bold and transgressive female characters is, perhaps, informed by her class, belonging to the Karachi elite class and born into a family of celebrated literary figures. Her construction of transgressive female characters is a way of providing a counter narrative to society’s construction of what and who a woman should be. Aslam is also acutely sensitive towards the gender aspects in his writing though the manner in which he constrcuts his female characters differ from that of Shamsie’s. In *Maps for Lost Lovers,* the character of Kaukab is presented as the devout orthodox Muslim who is trapped in the confines of religion. Aslam portrays Kaukab’s character in such a way that she almost seems to echo the trope of the damsel in distress. However, in the case of Kaukab, there is no one to even notice her ‘distress’ condition since she is silenced, both in terms of gender and race. Her inability speak English leaves her out from many of the family conversations and when it is an all- Muslim gathering, is expected to remain silent as a woman. In this manner, Kaukab becomes the silenced gender Other but whose character speaks the loudest in terms of showcasing the condition of the Muslim immigrants.

The Uncanny and the Unhomely, thus, function as significant manifestations of the Gothic in the selected works of Shamsie and Aslam. In employing these two concepts in their novels, the two writers in focus address the racial and religious othering of the Muslim subject as the Other. Alongside this, othering also manifests itself in the form of space— cities, homes and communities. For diasporic identities like migrants, immigrants and refugees, the original homeland and the newly inhabited home become the Unhomely spaces as a result of which cultural encounters are experienced as haunting and uncanny. The representation of the Pakistani Muslim subject as the Other and the othering of postcolonial spaces like Peshawar, Karachi and the immigrant community all shed light on invasive presence of colonizers and the legacies they left behind which mark the postcolonial subject and societies as Uncanny.

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CHAPTER- 4

AGENCIES OF HAUNTING: HISTORY, MEMORY AND NOSTALGIA

The chapter is premised on a textual analysis of the four selected texts, *Kartography* and *A God in Every Stone* by Kamila Shamsie and Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* and *The Wasted Vigil* with an aim to locate the concept of haunting in the narratives through the different agencies of haunting. It will examine how the concept of haunting in the postcolonial is set in motion by history and memory acting as active agencies. It aims to look at how the colonial past, through cultural and individual history and memory, haunts the present in the four selected texts. These narratives disrupt the common perception of history as a linear progression and interrupt the assumption of time as a shift from colonial past to a modern postcolonial present. Memory also functions as an agent which evokes the phenomena of haunting both on the spatial and psychological levels. The chapter, therefore, aims to locate the postcolonial haunting in these four novels of contemporary Pakistani writers and examine how the concept of memory, history and nostalgia function as agencies that instigate the process of haunting.

Critical interest and attention to haunting, monsters, specters, ghosts and phantoms have become a popular interest in the contemporary scene which have broadened Gothic studies and hauntologies. Julian Wolfreys argues that "all forms of narrative are spectral to some extent. Moreover, any medium through which we seek to communicate today that involves a narrativization of our identities in relation to others not immediately present is inescapably spectral" (3). The entire concept of narration, in any form, is thus regarded as an invocation of the ghostly and the spectral as narratives can be seen as the medium through which the past is revisited and interrogated with. Wolfreys further argues:

> To tell a story is always to invoke ghosts, to open a space through which something or the other returns, although never as a presence or to the present. Ghost return via narratives, and come back, again and again, across countries, every time a tale is unfolded. This return… is arguably the trace of haunting

> itself, and of narrative's always being haunted in its very condition. There can be no narrative, in short, which is not always already disturbed and yet made possible from within its form or structure by a ghostly movement (3).

In relation to Wolfrey's argument, an engagement with the cultural interpretation of postcolonial Gothic narratives and an investigation into the social and political contexts in which the concept of haunting is produced and addressed has become a prevalent trend. Particularly in the current climate where postcolonial studies have continuously expanded to address the lived reality of once colonized nations and the experiences of people, the concept of haunting has come to acquire a central position in addressing the experience of the postcolonial subject. Michael F. O' Riley argues that postcolonial theory "has relied, to a great extent, upon the idea of haunting in order to bring awareness of colonial history to the present while reviving the conception of the contemporary nation and of cultural relations" (1). With the growing postcolonial consciousness, the focus has been centered on the idea of a return to unexplored colonial history and uncharted territories in order to create an encounter with what O' Riley calls "specters of the nation's colonial heritage" (1). The spectres of these repressed histories are Gothic in character as they gesture to the brutality of the past.

Within the paradigm of postcolonial studies, the dynamics of haunting is conceptualized as a metaphor to represent the process of cultural transmission from the conflicted colonial past. The figures of ghosts or the idea of the phantom is utilized as a medium to represent obliterated memories. Most significantly, the postcolonial haunting plays out in the form of the Freudian *unheimlich* with the return of the once repressed colonial experience that traumatized the postcolonial present.

However, in dealing with the postcolonial haunting, there is also the possibility of contaminating the contemporary landscape where the return to the past or revisiting history opens up fissures for the reoccurrence of phenomena and memories that they have struggled to surpass. The postcolonial subject, then, is forced into a dialogue with the unpleasant history of oppression and subjugation.

This problematization is substantiated in Botting's "Whither Theory" where he identifies literary and cultural theory as a game where "the rules of the game are to throw away the reel, making it disappear, and pulling it back" (201). He further argues that "the excess of positions, the more and more theoretical talk, is singularly perceived to be doing the same thing, repeating the same desire by trying to win the battle for theoretical authority" (Botting 215).

On the other hand, addressing the concept of haunting in the postcolonial space and subject is imperative in understanding the sense of self and identity. Confrontation of past suffering and trauma becomes crucial in what Ngugi calls the decolonization of the mind. The concept of haunting has an affective dimension as a result of which it has become easily entrenched in postcolonial thought. The colonial spectres inhabit the liminal space between the past and the present and the 'now' and the 'then' and the process of haunting retrieves the past which returns with an excess of meanings and forms. The past, therefore, acquires new meanings and interpretations as it is always approached with the apprehensions and concerns of the present. It is often approached with a literary- cultural reading and presented as lingering presence and as memories which are deeply embedded in the psychology and cultural spaces of the postcolonial subject. The encounter between past and present creates a site where unresolved tensions and unsettled questions are confronted. The concept of haunting in postcolonial studies also serves as a significant trope that provides platform to parts of colonial history that lack specificity, particularly in relation to position and place which are crucial factors in the process of retrieving hidden or repressed histories. Stuart Hall rightly argues that "the attempt to snatch from the hidden histories another place in, another place to speak from— that moment is extremely important" (184). In relation to this, Punter opines:

> The story of the postcolonial, then— here and elsewhere— is in the mouths of ghosts; the effect of empire has been the dematerialization of whole cultures, and the Gothic tropes of the ghost, phantom, the revenant, gain curious new life from the need to assert continuity where the lessons of

> conventional history and geography would claim that all continuity has been broken by the imperial trauma (58).

The dynamics of haunting, within the postcolonial paradigm, can therefore be examined in two directions. Firstly, the postcolonial subject hovers in the postcolonial landscape as a reminder of the past or a ghost from the past that haunts the present. On the other hand, the postcolonial subject is haunted by the past in the process of negotiating and interrogating the colonial past.

In his seminal work *Spectres of Marx* (1994), Derrida presents a critique of white European ethnocentrism and argues that the willingness to live "beyond all living present", to the past and the future, and "to learn to live with ghosts" would pave way for a just future. He identifies haunting as an imperative concept to problematize the link between presence and absence, present and past, being and non- being. He, therefore, calls for a discourse on haunting as a medium to perceive and understand the past, present and future. David Punter observes that Derrida's writing is characterized by "the thought of what it might be like to be living after the collapse… to be living in ruins and rubble, to be living a life which cannot but be haunted by the spectres of failed projects" (62). This ultimately calls for an investigation into the notion of the 'post' world or the idea of life in the aftermath of certain historical moments.

The centrality of the past, particularly for diasporic identities, is also emphasized by Rushdie in *Imaginary Homelands* (1981). In contrast to the general consensus of the past being a foreign country, Rushdie argues that it is the "present that is foreign, and that the past is home, albeit a lost home in a lost city in the mists of lost time" (9). He recognizes the past as 'home' instead of the present, particularly for diasporic writers because facts tend to get distorted by time and space. Speaking on behalf of writers who share the transnational experience, Rushdie argues:

> It may be that writers in my position, exiles or emigrants or expatriates, are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt. But if we do look back, we must also do in the knowledge— which gives rise to profound uncertaintites— that

> our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost; that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind (10).

This analysis of writers who are "exiles or emigrants or expatriates" applies aptly to Kamila Shamsie and Nadeem Aslam who are both Pakistani writers residing in UK. These writers stand at the border between two cultures and they are what Elleke Boehmer described as writers who write "within the precincts of the western metropolis while at the same time retaining thematic and/or political connections with a national background" (233). Commenting on the transnational quality of the Shamsie and Aslam, Peter Morey observes that "the work of these cosmopolitan writers, moving between East and West yet never entirely at home in either, conveys a sense of estrangement and a sharpened awareness of the scope and continuities of imperial and postimperial power politics" (185).

Particularly amidst the contemporary geo-political tension between the West and Islam, with the growing Islamophobic sentiments, Pakistani literature in English places great emphasis on the idea of a return to the past in order to reconstruct the Muslim identity. It becomes an imperative task for such writers to deal with the Muslim question on account of the popular representation of Muslims as imminent threat to global peace and harmony by western media in the contemporary world. Bobby Sayyid argues that Islam has become the distorted mirror on which the West sees its own past and that the Islamic resurgence "represents a return of the repressed" (2). He further identifies Islam as a source of 'fundamental fear' for the West and parallels this fear with the metaphor of the ghost as put forth by Derrida in *Spectres of Marx* to highlight the transformation of Islam into a ghost. Thus, he opines:

> Of the many spectres that have haunted western civilization from time to time, perhaps none is so perplexing or so irredeemably strange as the contemporary resurgence of Muslim. The spectral nature of this phenomenon arises…from the way in which the Muslim presence for the West has tended

> to be grounded in a 'hauntology', which finds it all too easy to conflate Muslims as ghosts (Sayyid 1).

This Western tendency to draw an analogy between ghost and the Muslim identity generates a sense of fear and haunting which further permeates the political and ideological realm.

Ghosts, being the remnants of the dead, are figures that float "between erasure of the past and the indelibility of the present" (1) and Sayid further emphasizes on the parallel drawn between the figure of the ghost and Muslims and asserts that like the figure of the ghost, Muslims too "are often thought to be out of time: throwbacks to medieval civilizations who are caught in the grind and glow of 'our' modern cultures… Like ghosts, they remain with us, haunting the present" (1). This observation is reinforced by Lufti Sunar who, in his analysis of the recent rise of Islamophobic policies and practices in American society, argues that "Muslims, who should have stayed in the past like ghosts according to the West, actually stay with us by visiting today's world" (35). Sayid further links the figure of the ghost to certain aspects of the modern day Muslim identity. He argues that ghosts are frightening because of "their bitterness at their incorporeal state, their resentment of the living and their vindictiveness at some ancient wrong that no one can recall- all fuel their unrelenting hatred of us" (2). He further adds that the utitlity of the ghost is for the easiy availability for justifying and explaining the irrational or the unexplainable. Sayyid equates this function of the ghost to that of the Muslim: "when some good ol' boys blew up the Federal Building in Oklahoma City, how useful it was to have Muslims around to explain bombs in the night" (2). Like the firgure of the ghost, "Muslims are still capable of making even sturdy liberal institutions anxious; and like ghosts, they seem to appear almost everywhere and anywhere" (3).

Corresponding to this fear generated by the Muslim, Arjun Appadurai deliberates on the generation of fear and anger towards minority groups which, he argues, is inversely proportional to their size. He poses a significant question "why can small numbers excite rage?" and provides an answer that "smaller numbers

represent a tiny obstacle between majority and totality or total purity…the smaller the number and the weaker the minority, the deeper the rage about its capacity to make a majority feel like a mere minority rather than like a whole and uncontested ethnos" (53). Minority groups like the Muslim community, therefore, "are metaphors and reminders of betrayal of the classical project" (43) and they serve as visible reminders of the incompleteness of the majority, and attract a sense of fear and resentment. Appadurai associates this 'fear of small numbers' with globalization:

> Majorities can always be mobilized to think that that they are in danger of becoming minor (culturally or numerically) and to fear that minorities, conversely, can become major …These linked fears are a peculiarly modern product of the inner reciprocity of these categories, which also sets the conditions for the fear that they might morph into one another…globalization intensifies the possibility of this volatile morphing, so that the naturalness that all group identities seek and assume is perennially threatened by the abstract affinity of the very categories of majority and minority. (83)

This fear of the minority not only haunts the majority group but has a striking effect on the minority themselves mainly due to representation of the minority group in media and other discourses. Muslim identity, in the postcolonial sense, thus becomes the hybrid figure who hover in the in- between spaces between cultures.

Being pushed to this liminal space, the lived experience of the Muslim in the contemporary world is then marked by fragmentation and uncertainty. Esra Mirze Santesso uses the term 'disorientation' as a collective term to explicate the diverse experiences of the Muslim migrant in the process of becoming. She states that disorientation "is the experience of separation, uncertainty, confusion and estrangement felt by the Muslim migrant, caught between two worldviews, and unable to adopt one over the other" and "prompted by the difficulty of 'losing' the East even after moving to the West (14).

Thus, haunting presents itself in two forms within the Muslim context. Firstly, the Muslim subject is seen as a threat, a ghostly figure that disturbs the present landscape as argued by Sayyid. This also corresponds to Rose Arjana's

concept of the Muslim monster which we have examined in the previous chapter. However, the term 'ghost' has a spectral connotation to it, indicating its origin as something from the past, thereby, echoing the return of the repressed. Secondly, haunting takes place in the form of disorientation for the Muslim subject, as put forth by Santesso, which is triggered by a return to the past. The return to the past and not from the past can be read in the context of diasporic identities who constantly return to the past/homeland through memories and nostalgia. However, a return to the past also indicates the temporal transgression as a result of which the subject becomes disoriented or fragmented. In these two forms of haunting, history and the aspect of memory and nostalgia act as agencies that open up fissures and create space for the haunting to take place.

In dealing with history in the postcolonial Gothic, it is not just the colonial past that comes to the forefront but histories that belong to the peripheries, the fringes and the margins- repressed and silenced histories. These "repressed histories" in other words, are familiar but concealed, dominated by larger historical events and grand narratives. Postcolonial Gothic texts, therefore, narrativizes history in such a way that it explores uncharted territories in history that have been neglected by western and colonial discourse and dominant historical accounts. The revisiting of history also signifies a temporal encounter between two timeframes- the past and the present- thus, rendering it an uncanny experience. In the selected narratives of Kamila Shamsie and Nadeem Aslam, history occupies a central role and the past which haunts the present is at the heart of these narratives. However, as aforementioned, the history prioritized in the selected narratives are the repressed histories as "the emphasis on the haunting of the colonial past stems from a return of that which has been written out of history" (O' Riley 2). These repressed and silence histories have severe impact and consequences in the present as a result of which they cannot be hidden, indicating a tendency to return.

Kamila Shamsie's *A God in Every Stone*, *Kartography* and Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil* can be read as historical fiction where the narratives are heavily populated by historical sites, spaces long forgotten and figures who left behind haunting legacies. They are set against grand historical backdrops— the World War,

the War on terror and Partition among others. The history of Karachi, Afghanistan and Peshawar have largely been that of unrest, marked by territorial conflicts, ethnic violence, and most significantly, colonial rule. With regards to the phenomena of haunting, the history of unrest and not ghosts and supernatural forces, has become significant agency that generates the sense of haunting. In both *Kartography* and *A God in Every Stone,* Shamsie places her characters in those well-known historical periods which are marked by fear, violence, horror and anxiety. This is a significant aspect of the postcolonial gothic as it "inquiries into the uncanny relationships between…public history and intimate narratives" (Azzam 2).

The story of Shamsie's *A God In Every Stone* starts with the relationship between Viv, the English woman, and Tashin Bey, a Turkish archaeologist as they embark on a search for the Circlet of Scylax. Viv's fascination with the history of Peshawar can be interpreted an expansion of the colonial project. The excavations and digging carried out by the English archaeological team in search of artefacts and treasures from the past signifies a disturbance of the very soil of Peshawar; thus rendering the place as Unhomely. Viv's engagement with the history of Peshawar is also in itself a form of colonizing the history and knowledge of the natives. Qayyum tells Najeeb that the Peshawar Museum is "part of the Civilising Mission of the British" (*God* 185). As the narrative proceeds from the battlefield of the First World War, the story turns towards the British colony in Peshawar where Qayyum, the one-eyed trauma inflicted Pathan soldier returns home from his service for Britain in the First World War. Peshawar is described as a place "where even the finest hotel in town was a whitewashed barracks, a reminder that the world of guns lurked beneath every veneer" (*God* 84). Later, Viv comes to Peshawar in search of the lost Circlet of Scylax where she befriends Qayyum's younger brother, Najeeb. The narrative, then, proceeds to unfold the events that led to the massacre at the Streets of Storytellers which culminated into the Indian Freedom Movement. In *A God in Every Stone,* the two larger historical frameworks, the First World War and the Indian Freedom Movement, serve only as the backdrop and culmination of the narrative while the climax of the novel is centered around the less recognized history of the massacre of more than 400 unarmed civilians at the Qissa Khwani Bazaar or the Streets of

Storytellers. These peaceful demonstrators were gunned down by the British army after which the dead bodies were disposed in inhumane condition.

In the text, the war, revolution, conflict and violence of the two popular historical events are overshadowed by the marginalized history: "The Street of Storytellers turned into a battleground…accelerating cars, men crushed beneath wheels, machine guns, fire, screams of death and slogans of freedom, bullets and stones" (*God* 205). Such is the kind of history that haunts Shamsie's narrative, evoking death, loss and violence as they shape individual and national history. By centering the story on the repressed history of the thousands of Peshawaris who lost their lives in the Streets of Storytellers, Shasmsie not only pays a tribute to the marginalized history of Peshawar but portrays how this repressed section of history functions as a significant agency that haunts the present reality of the characters. Shamsie picks out these unpopular moments and marginalized characters in history not only to challenge dominant western discourse but also to shed light on the current understanding of the individual Muslim and cultural identity. Her intention, thus, relates to María del Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren's statement that "the way we see the past—what we see *of* it— is predicated on our relationship to the present" and that "the quest for the past is activated by the questions we put to it in our now-moment." (482).

Another aspect of history that is played out in the novel is how Shamsie artistically links the history of the Circlet of Scylax to the fate of Qayyum and his brother. Viv first heard about the story of Scylax from Tashin Bey when she was a young girl. Scylax was the most trusted man of the Persian Emperor Darius so much so that the Emperor gave him a "a silver circlet fashioned with figs— a mark of the highest honour" (*God* 19). However, Scylax sided with his countrymen, the Carians, when they rebelled against Darius twenty years later. Tashin Bey tells Viv that this is "the part Herodotus never mentioned" (*God* 19) in his accounts of Darius and Scylax. This significant part of history which was intentionally left out and "never mentioned" echoes the massacre carried out by the British soldiers in the Streets of Storytellers. Furthermore, this repressed history of Scylax and the circlet also links the story of Vivian, Qayyum and Najeeb, whom Viv describes as her "young Pactyike, her Herodotus of Peshawar, her Civilising Mission" (*God* 263). Like

Scylax, Qayyum fought bravely for the British, a homeland that wasn't his home. But in the end, he participated in the fight for independence. The world of Emperor Darius and Scylax serves as a mirror reflection of Qayyum who, once a loyal soldier of the Empire ended up fighting against the British in order to protect his homeland and his people. Qayyum's choice and actions in the later part of the narrative aligns with one of the dying officer's complaint letter to the Emperor while he was in England: "*If a man is to die defending a field, let the field be his field, the land his land, the people his people*" (*God* 56). National histories are not only linked to individual histories, but they are also connected to histories across the borders and continents.

In the case of the protagonist Viv, it is not the grand historical narrative of the World War that has an impact on her present reality but Najeeb and the Pakistani community in Peshawar. The search for the ancient artifact posits her in one of the most traumatic yet silenced historical event of Peshawar. In this sense, Shamsie's fiction becomes "an alternate form of history-making in which things usually forgotten discarded, or repressed become foregrounded, whether as items of fear, regret, explanation, or desire" (Blanco and Peeren 484).

In *Kartography,* Shamsie's fifth novel, the Bangladesh Civil War of 1971 constitutes the sub-plot that impacts the present 1991 setting of the novel and the narrative shifts between these two historical timelines. As discussed earlier in relation to *A God in Every Stone,* the major historical frameworks are pushed to the periphery in *Kartography* and Shamsie brings marginalized histories to the forefront again, exploring how the identity of ordinary people and the nation are shaped and haunted by history. The narrative is centered on the lives of the residents of Karachi during the ethnic conflict of 1971 between Pakistanis and Bengalis and the Pathans and Muhajirs in the 1980s conflict. In her story, Shamsie pays attention to the marginalized whose loss and sufferings do not align with the nation's political map and have been largely omitted from historical accounts and literary narratives. Shamsie is aware of the "absence of the public memorializations of 1971" and "Pakistan's official silence on the atrocities of the war" (Herbert 159). By revisiting the Civil War of 1971 and its legacies in the narrative, Shamsie uncovers the repressed histories of the marginalized which have been largely overshadowed by

the "growing archive of interdisciplinary work interrogating the effects of Partition, much of this has focused on India" (Herbert 160).

In *Kartography*, the narrator Raheen and her childhood friend, Karim, experience loss and trauma as a result of the complicated marriage of their parents which is largely shaped by the Civil War of 1971 and the story tells the tale of how the two families are haunted by the unseen spectral presence of the 1971 Civil War. The family's encounters with the legacy of the violent history of Partition and the Civil War are defined by loss, and violence. When Raheen learns about the atrocities of 1971 and her father's involvement in the anti-Bengali movement, she tells Karim, "What Baba said in the past have carved a big hole in my heart and I can hardly breathe" (*Kartography* 244). The narrative throws light on how the violent history of Karachi in 1971 becomes the spectre that haunts the present, the 'now' of the characters in the story. The complicated marriage contract of both their parents was kept as a secret from Raheen and Karim who found out the truth later in the novel. The consequences of historical injustices play a significant role in shaping the lives of the characters. In the narrative, the return of the repressed comes in the form of violent histories, thus, rendering what was once familiar as strange and unfamiliar. In this way, national histories set the backdrop for the lives and fates of the characters and the national history is intricately linked to familial and individual history. Raheen asks herself, "What did something that happened nearly a quarter of a century ago have to do with our lives?" (*Kartography* 233). Hence, *Kartography* fulfills the aim of the postcolonial Gothic as "Postcolonial gothic fiction creates this sense of "past-ness" in the present by investing intimate relations and private structures of relation and kinship (marriage and family life) with a deep historical and political sensibility" (Azzam 36).

Kartography also displays how history transforms the city of Karachi into an unhomely space on account of its violent past. As a diasporic writer, Shamsie criticizes Pakistan's refusal to acknowledge the cultural difference that makes up a nation. This is asserted by Caroline Herbert's statement:

> Attempts to suppress cultural difference in favour of a narrative of a united national identity that elides the loss of Bangladesh failed to prevent the re-emergence of ethnic and regional tensions, and since 1980s Karachi has become a particularly contested site for competing cultural claims between Sindhi and muhajir communities, claims that are themselves legacies of Partition. (160)

In *Kartography,* the separation of East Pakistan in 1971 generated hostility and hatred towards the Bengali community and this drastically affected the relationship dynamics of the characters. Raheen's father, Zafar is forced to call off his engagement to his then fiancée, Maheen who is a Bengali. This results in a complicated marital set up where Zafar marries his friend Yasmin and Maheen marries Ali. Karim, Raheen's best friend, refuses to return from the U.S to Karachi because he is numbed by the communal conflict and violence between the Muhajirs and and the Sindhi. In this novel, the violent history of Partition and Karachi's long history of communal conflict haunt the characters so much so that every choice they make is defined by history. The narrative shifts between two time- frames— the 1971 Civil War and the present 1980s to 1990s. The narrator Raheen tells Karim, "I've melded the memories into a story beginningmiddleend, and don't you dare interrupt with your version of what-really-came-first and that-was-cause-not-effect" (269). The novel opens with the narrator Raheen's comment on the earliest history of Karachi:

> Of course the garden is located where all our beginnings, Karim's and mine, are located: Karachi. That spider- plant city where, if you know what to look for and some higher power is feeling indulgent, you might find a fossilized footprint of Alexander the Great. He led his army through Karachi, long, long before the spider- plant effect took hold, when Karachi was a harbour named Krokola. (*Kartography* 3)

Here, Raheen is trying to assert narratorial control and consolidate the fragmented history of Pakistan into a coherent linear historical narrative. However, her attempts

are disrupted by the violent histories of Karachi which returned to the present again and again.

In this manner, Shamsie's narratives explore the ruined and traumatized psyche of the postcolonial subjects apart from the social, political and cultural ruins caused by colonialism. They also examine the ways in which these memories are addressed and how it affects the identity and present condition of the postcolonial subject.

In *The Wasted Vigil,* Nadeem Aslam provides a transnational perspective to the 9/11 attack and examines the causes that led to the tragic event on a larger scale. The narrative "reproaches all the perpetrators of violence, may they be Taliban, Afghanis, British, Americans or Russians" and "spares no one of the responsibility of the tragedy of 9/11 tracing its roots in the history of war struck Afghanistan" (Kiran 258). The character of Casa can be seen as the embodiment of Afghanistan's continuing national trauma. Casa is a native Afghan who is left as an orphan on account of the Soviet and brought up in the jihadi training camps by extremists in the borders of Pakistan and Afghanistan. The novel is set in the small town called Usha which is located in the northern parts of Afghanistan. One of the major characters in the novel, Marcus, is an English doctor who converted to Muslim after marrying Qatrina, a Muslim woman. He lives alone in the family house after the death of his wife and daughter, Zameen. The novel opens with Marcus living with Lara, who is Russian woman looking for her brother Benedikt, one of the soldiers who served in the Red Army. An American named David, a former CIA operative, joins them later in the novel. Aslam situates his narrative in one of the worst war- inflicted region with a long dark history of conflict and unrest. By bringing different nationalities—a Russian, an Englishman and an American—under one roof in Afghanistan, Aslam links the global history that haunts contemporary Afghanistan, and the tragic victims of this violent history are the natives like Casa and Dunia. For Sarah O' Brien, the novel is "an example of world literature that gives voice to marginalized perspectives, countering those reductive representations of Afghanistan in particular and Islam mire generally that dominate western media" (1). She further notes that

Aslam "reveals the continuities of history that continue to scar remote corners of the world, like Afghanistan" (1).

Particularly after the events of 9/11, the image of 'Muslim other' is further tainted by linking it to the image of the terrorist under the influence of western media. The Muslim identity has been homogenized into a single category that is marked by fear and hunger for violence. The portrayal of Casa's in- depth life story and an insight into the workings of his psyche provides the lens through which readers are able to understand Casa as a victim haunted by the global history of war and violence.

As aforementioned, history also embodies itself in material spaces and temporal sites. The manner in which cities, buildings and other spaces become the site of historical embodiment encapsulating a sense of haunting can be seen in the selected narratives. The landscape, buildings, streets and monuments become the manifestation of the interstices between past and present, between "there" and "then". In *A God in Every Stone,* Shamsie depicts Peshawar in its full glory, decorating it with ancient tales and significant historical aspects which have been suppressed in many historical narratives, a place "where journeys begin and end" (*God* 39). She achieves this by bringing different nationalities, Persians, Turkish and English to the centre of Peshawar. Looking at the city from a hill, Najeeb "is grateful that the clutter of the present is largely absent so that nothing obstructs his view of the Old City walls and arched gateways, the ancient hills and mountains. What he most loves in Peshawar is the proximity of the past" (*God* 272). Bringing the rich ancient past of the city into light, Shamsie highlights the cultural prosperity that once defined Peshawar and juxtaposes it with the present Peshawar destroyed by colonialism:

> Everywhere a traveller looked there was the Buddha, carved over and over into and around the countryside, in an age when the people of this region had the vision to find the god in every stone… Now there was devastation cut into wheat fields. The low mound that was the remains of the Great Stupa lay abandoned, the earth around it pockmarked with trial pits and trenches, miniature stupas and rubble. The stupas were badly damaged… This was a

> place archaeologists had given up on. Too much of it destroyed, too little of value in what remained, to make recovery worthwhile. (Shamsie 81- 82)

The city of Peshawar, particularly the museum and the Streets of Storytellers serve as significant embodiment of history that haunts the present. The Peshawar Museum houses the Circlet of Scylax and the many statues of the Buddha which signified the long- forgotten history of the city. In these interstices "the postcolonial and the spectral reciprocally transform each other in the mottled ground of the ex-colonial city, driven by heterogeneous class/caste, gender and racial anxieties" (Mukherjee 3). This further creates a certain site of amalgamation informed by uncertainty and ambiguity where the past is re-interrogated. Similarly, the Streets of Storytellers in Peshawar can be read as a space which evokes the historical sense of haunting. It is a site haunted with the apparition of a young Muslim girl who has been shot dead by the English. The Municipal Commissioner tells Qayyum:

> Yesterday, on the Street of Storytellers. A figure made of light stood on a balcony, dispensing water to the men on the street below; the water itself liquid light, a miracle. The English officers saw her standing there, a sign of Allah's grace, and shot her with every single gun in their artillery. She plunged from the balcony, a falling star, and only when she landed, dead, did the light extinguish. (*God* 258)

The sense of haunting that envelops the Street of Storytellers retaliates against colonial rule. The English soldiers are apprehensive to pass through the Street as they fear "that they might become sick or bewitched just by passing through the shops" (*God* 213). Furthermore, the repressed history of Scylax which Herodotus left out in his historical accounts finds its home in Peshawar with the circlet housed by the Museum and the Street of Storytellers is a place where where 'Darius and the Betrayal of Scylax' is a familiar and well-loved tale (273). Also, the Peshawar Museum becomes a cultural space which stores the repressed histories of Peshwar, housing the Gandhara Buddha and other artifacts. Viv observes that "the Museum had been built to make men feel small" (*God* 137). On his first visit to the Museum, Qayyum sees a "stone figure standing against the wall, holding out a stump where there should have been a hand. The smell of blood, of dead flesh. Turning, he pressed his face against the giant figure and there was another smell: stone, ancient"

(*God* 137) and when he sees the ancient weapons displayed in a cabinet, he remembers the battlefield at Vipers. In this manner, the museum functions as a haunting site for materializing the trauma of colonial history. For Qayyum, looking at the artifacts in the Museum is equivalent to looking at both the self and the other simultaneously.

In *Kartography*, one of Shamsie's four novels which are set in Karachi, the city can be seen as a dynamic narrative space that redefines itself constantly which further summons repeated hauntings. The narrator Raheen longs for the Karachi that she remembers and she tries desperately to reclaim the city in her memory which eventually led to the loss of her friendship with Karim. For Raheen, Karachi— the buildings, the streets and the shop— is one homogenous entity which becomes a symbol of stability and consistency in her life. However, the ethnic conflict and violence of 1986, a reincarnation of the 1971 Civil War, disrupts the sense of belongingness that the characters feel towards Karachi. To escape the violence and death, Karim moves to Boston and takes interest in cartography, the art of making maps. Meanwhile, Raheen wants Karachi to remain the way she remembers it since her childhood. While studying in America, Raheen received a map of Karachi which Karim had drawn, and this angered Raheen because it distorted her memory of Karachi:

> Streets leading to other streets, streets named, areas defined, places of interest clearly marked out. This map was Karachi's opposite. It could only exist through its disdain for the reality of the city: the jumble, the illogic, the self-definition, the quicksilver of the place. (*Kartography* 131)

In one of her letters to Karim, Raheen also mentioned that Karachi should remain as a place "where the streets have no names" (*Kartography* 133). She wants "to pay attention to the stories that define Karachi" and remember the names of streets by the things that happen there and she is angered by the fact that Karim has created a definitive map "to know what the name of the road connecting Gizri to Zamzama is, and how many people have died there in the last year" (*Kartography* 180). However, upon her return to Karachi, Raheen experiences a sense of loss and 'unhomeliness' as much of the cityscape has been altered by the conflict. Streets are

named, buildings disappeared and she no longer recognized the signboards on the shops.

The disintegration of the city space in Karachi is mirrored in the replacement of Karachi of Raheen's memory with Karim's logical map of the city. Hence, the city space becomes a fragmented site which haunts the characters' relationship and their understanding of themselves. Commenting on Shamsie's fiction, Madeline Clements observes:

> Shamsie constructs a historical narrative which de-centres predominant Western readings of "world" history and uses Islamic characters to challenge the ethics of judging planetary "others". It suggests that these writers are particularly effective in circumventing dominant narratives: they confound the world reader's search for "insight"; bring into view alternative perspectives of Asian Muslim experiences of affiliation and affinity. (157)

Thus, repressed histories penetrate family relationships, and are sometimes embodied in the material spaces and cities. They also throw light on the failure of the postcolonial national project and how legacies of colonialism and emerging trends in neo-imperialism haunt the present.

Central to the aspect of the past and history is the concept of memory and the process of remembering the past which have become dominant themes in recent cultural and literary studies. Particularly within the vicinity of postcolonial literature, narratives that portray how groups and individuals rely on memories to reconstruct their individual and cultural identities have emerged as new trends in postcolonial writings. These texts are "concerned with the mnemonic presence of the past in the present" and they "re-examine the relationship between the past and the present, and they illuminate the manifold functions that memories fulfill for the construction of idenitity" (Neumann 333). For diasporic identities, memory becomes more important. As postcolonial Gothic texts, the four narratives in focus rely extensively on the psychological experience where the sense of haunting is more prominent in the inner psyche of the characters rather than the landscape and material spaces. In the introduction to their study of the postcolonial Gothic in Canadian literature, Cynthia Sugars and Gerry Turcotte, argue that "Gothic discourse is used to mediate

forgotten histories and, in some instances, initiate forms of cultural mourning (signaling a loss of cultural memory/history resulting from colonialism or migration)" (xi). Hence, within the paradigm of postcolonial Gothic, memory occupies a central space. In these narratives, memory, as an agency, refuses the put the past to rest and invokes specters of a traumatic history and is used to reconstruct cultural identity by the postcolonial subject.

Particularly for diasporic narratives, the concept of memory is intricately linked to the idea of home thus, resulting to the creation of what Rushdie calls "imaginary homelands". In these, narratives, the act of haunting is "effective because it displaces us in those places where we feel most secure, most notably in our homes, in the domestic scene," and haunting becomes "the destabilization of the domestic scene, as that place where we apparently confirm our identity, our sense of being, where we feel most at home with ourselves" (Wolfreys 5). What is significant to the concept of memory in the postcolonial Gothic is that memory is Uncanny, and thus functions as an agency of haunting.

Aslam's two novels can be categorized into what Neumann calls "fictions of memory" as they are "presented by a reminiscing narrator or figure who looks back on his or her past, trying to impose meaning on the surfacing memories from a present point of view" (Neumann 335). The setting of Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* is a small Muslim community in the northern parts of England where the residents desperately cling on to the memory of their homeland in order to create a sense of home in the foreign country. In her textual analysis of the novel, Yamina Yaqin comments that "Aslam feels a social responsibility towards those Muslim communities in Britain whose lives mimic the desolation of his fictionalized cold and hostile neighbourhood of Dasht- e- Tanhaii, variously translated as 'The Wilderness of Solitude' and 'The Desert of Loneliness'" (108). It is in this 'desert of loneliness', a desolate wasteland that Aslam situates his characters and the murder of the two lovers around which the narrative revolves. In the conversation with his secret Hindu lover Suraya, the protagonist Shamas tells her that 'Pakistan is not just a wife-beating country, it's a wife-murdering one' (*Maps* 226). The memory of 'home' that the residents of Dasht-e Tanhaii has marked by violence, darkness and

fear. Shamas, the narrator, says that "life is a trial if not a punishment for most of the people born there" (*Maps* 9).

However, in spite of the haunting memories they have of home, for the Muslim in this migrant community, traditional religious practices and customs of their homeland are viewed as both oppression and comfort simultaneously. They are torn between community, religion and human duties. The memory of their life in Pakistan, which was largely driven by religious doctrines and practices, continue to haunt their conscience while living in a foreign land. The material distance between Pakistan and England is diminished by the haunting memories of home that have become entrenched in their psyche. Hence, terrible incidents continue to torment the community where unruly girls are beaten to death in the mosque in an attempt to exorcise them and the clerics raped the young boys. Thus, the narrator Shamas exclaims:

> Nobody deserves this rundown neighbourhood of one suicide attempt a year, twenty nine people registered insane, and so many break-ins a month… more and more of the burglaries are being done by the sons of the immigrant themselves, almost all of whom are unemployed. (*Maps* 26)

In the novel, the narrator Shamas often exclaims his wish that they would be able to live a life which is free from the influence of their homeland, and he wonders if it would be possible to be "a good Muslim in England without doing the things that they do in Pakistan" (*Maps* 203). However, the memories of home have taken a strong hold of their lives and are unable to free themselves from the past. The narrative revolves around two absent protagonists, Jugnu and Chanda, who are already dead at the opening of the novel. The story is "permeated by partially buried histories anchored to experiences in the Subcontinent as well as in Britain" (Moore 13). The tension created by the memory of home and the foreign cultural setting of England echoes the concept of the Freudian uncanny, which is "actually nothing new or strange, but something that was long familiar to psyche and was estranged from it only through being repressed" (Freud 113). The uncanny memory of the lifestyle and practices that defined Pakistan continues to haunt the psyche of the characters as

they try to accommodate these practices within the secular setting of England. Here, the phenomena of honour killing, which is at the heart of the narrative, becomes a significant embodiment of the uncanny. Kaukab, Shamas' orthodox wife is described as "a picture of loneliness" (*Maps* 63) as she is daily haunted by the memory of her homeland; like the other women in the neighbourhood, she remembers "how the Tannoy announcement at the bus station always makesher think she's in Pakistan and a Friday sermon is being conveyed over amosque loudspeaker" (*Maps* 63). In spite of the bleak picture of Pakistan portrayed by the author, the members of the community are plagued with the fond memories as they try to reconstruct their cultural identity in a foreign land. In the community, there is a woman who "tries to hold back her tears because she's beginning torealize that she would never be able to go back to live in her own country (she has started monthly payments for funeral arrangements at her mosquenear her house)" (*Maps* 64). Even after many years of being away, the residents still perceive Pakistan, their homeland, as "a country that's poor because the whites stole all its wealth,beginning with the Koh-i-Noor diamond" (*Maps* 64).The mixed attitude they hold towards Pakistan is evident in their reaction to certain news on TV: "…the heart of everywoman in the neighbourhood sinks whenever there is an unscheduled"newsflash" on TV, making them think the government is about to announcethat all the Asian immigrants are to be thrown out of Britain"but at the same time they are "ready go backwith pleasure" (*Maps* 64).

Mah-jabin, the only daughter of Shamas and Kaukab, tells her mother that they should learn how to leave behind the rigid practices of Pakistan when her mother objects her plan to visit America because "it is a strange country full of strangers" (*Maps* 157). Furthermore, the strong memory of home that is ingrained in the minds of the older generation is absent in the new generation Pakistanis who are born in England. This generational difference in what they remember about Pakistan creates tension within the family dynamics as Kaukab tries desperately to "conceal everything regarding the Pakistanis that the children might deem objectionable" (*Maps* 157). This memory of home foils the possibility of establishing the feeling of homeliness within the migrant community and leads to betrayal, death and violence.

The major problem in this process of trying to accommodate the idea of Pakistan in England is on account of the nature of Islam as a religion. David Waterman explains this problematic in the light of the boundaries enclosing the nations, communities, homelands, etc:

> Islam (much like Christianity) sees itself as applying to all humanity, whereas a nation or, on a smaller scale, a community, is never global. Nations and communities never include everyone; they are always bounded, their members identifying themselves not simply by those who represent "us" but also by those who are "not us" but also by those who are "not us". (26)

For the residents of this migrant community in Aslam's story, their national identity is inherently linked to their religion which results in the creation of what Rushdie calls "imaginary homelands" (10). They are "haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back" and create "fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands" (10). In this sense, the narrative, like Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, become "a novel of memory and about memory" (10) and the characters, like Saleem in *Midnight's Children*, are "obliged to deal in broken mirrors, some of whose fragments have been irretrievably lost" (11). This sense of loss and a longing for home motivate the community of Dasht-i-Tanhaii to rigidly follow and observe the doctrines of Islam in order to make a home out of England. Islam, argues Waterman, "is more than a religious doctrine, the Koran being very much concerned with social life, especially the law; in many ways, it is more a legal and political than a religious document" (26). Hence, establishing a community based on religious beliefs leads to complications and tension because of cultural differences which echoes Appadurai's contention that "one man's imagined community is another man's prison" (32). This tension, which is apparent on the national level, has a much deeper consequence on the intimate and domestic level such as family. Tha charcaters in *Maps* are plagued by disorientation, a condition which Santesso defines as "the experience of separation, uncertainty, confusion and estrangement felt by the Muslim migrant" who is "caught between two worldviews, and unable to adopt one over the other" and "prompted by the difficulty of 'losing' the East even after moving to the West (14).

In *Maps for Lost Lovers,* we see that Kaukab's memory of traditional Pakistan does not align with her children's worldview and this creates tension, violence, betrayal and death in the family. Her youngest son, Ujala comes home after eight years of running away from home to escape Kaukab's nostalgia. He condemns his mother for her inability to move on from the past and says, "You were too busy longing for the world and the time your grandparents came from, they and their sayings and principles…What about your responsibilities to the people around you here in the present?" (*Maps* 324).

The cultural contact zone becomes a traumatic site that haunts each member of the family. The bridging of two cultures become an impossibility because of the memories of home which clash with modernity that defined England and the new generation of Pakistanis. Finding herself at the crossroad of religious orthodoxy and modernity, Kaukab is unable to come to terms with the foreign country, thus becoming the melancholic subject who constantly mourns the loss of her homeland and tries to reconstruct it through memory. She laments, "If I tell you something every day because I relive it every day. Everyday— wishing I could rewrite the past— I relive the day I came to this country where I have known nothing but pain" (*Maps* 101). Kaukab's condition relates to what Fanon calls "devaluation of the self" in *Black Skin, White Masks* where "the lack of esteem of self as an object worthy of love has grave consequences" and that "it keeps the individual is in a state of profound inner insecurity, as a result of which it inhibits or falsifies every relation with others" (75). Hence, Kaukab and the older generation of Pakistanis in the community, as diasporic identities, are individuals haunted by a pervading sense of loss, alienation and rootlessness which results in death and violence.

Another significant aspect of memory in the narrative is the ghosts at the lakeside. In *Maps for Lost Lovers,* the most prominent Gothic element is situated in the lake haunted by the ghosts of dead lovers who disobey the Islamic laws. The first sighting was that of Jugnu and Chanda's ghosts spotted by the children who reported that they saw "a pair of sad ghosts wanders, luminous, like figures stepped down from a cinema screen, a man and woman, his hands and her stomach glowing more than the rest of their bodies" near the lakeside wood (*Maps* 268). Shamas and his

family are aware of this sighting but they are more concerned by the new development in the ghost-sighting, that the ghosts "call out repeatedly and quietly to someone called Shamas without moving their lips" (*Maps* 268).

The lake has become a significant site which represents the memories of lovers who were killed on account defying traditions and the religious practices of Islam. In the last chapter titled "Ghosts", the Hindu boy whose Muslim lover has been beaten to death by the clerics claimed to see the ghost of his dead lover in the lakeside. When Shamas found the boy wandering near the lake, the boy points to the two mysterious figures and says, "It's me and her: her stomach glows because that's where on her dead body my letter was placed, the letter I wrote to her on the day of the funeral. And my hands glow because of the orchids I am carrying for her (*Maps* 520).

The haunted lake becomes the embodiment of repressed memories where lovers who could not fulfill their longing for one another returns to haunt the community that has brutally killed them. The ghosts of Jugnu and Chanda and the girl are the memories that return to challenge the memories of home which led to their deaths. This echoes Julian Wolfrey's statement that "haunting is a politically charged, subversive force with the potential to "destabilize discourses of power and knowledge and, with that, supposedly stable subject positions" (11). Moreover, the presence of ghosts in the migrant community in England becomes a significant political symbol when one of the women in the neighbourhood says that the ghosts will "teach the white people not to mingle with the Muslims" (*Maps* 430). The ghosts that haunt the lake represent the Other whose presence in the Center cause mysterious disturbances. Zuzanna Dziuban argues that "while spirits, conjured up and intentionally addressed, symbolize conscious recall or desired memory, ghosts stand for involuntary or counter-voluntary memory" (116) and that "the ghost is… an interruption or disruption that paradoxically testifies to continuity with the past over which one has little control" (117).

Similarly, the figure of the *djinns*, which occur frequently in the narrative, is an embodiment of the memory of home that has taken strong hold of the residents. *Djinns* are supernatural creatures in Islamic belief whose existence is confirmed by

the Qu'ran. It is believed that these creatures have tremendous power and are not controlled by the laws of nature. They have the ability to move across different dimensional spaces and can turn into animals, human beings or objects. They are the specters that haunt the community situated in England causing death and fear. Like the entire community itself, the figure of the djinns can be interpreted as the return of the Empire to the center to instigate fear. Kaukab and the older generations in the community strongly believe in the presence of the *djinns* in the neighbourhood and any unpleasant incident, particularly the ones relating to white people, is immediately linked to the working of these creatures. One of the men had called a cleric to "exorcise the djinns that had taken possession of his teenaged daughter" and "soon after an end was put to her love for a white schoolmate and she was married to a cousin brought hurriedly over from Pakistan" (*Maps* 13). Kaukab tells Shamas that one of the girls in the neighbourhood has a secret affair with a white boy and "has become possessed by the *djinns*—that is why she won't accept her new husband" (*Maps* 192). The haunting presence of the *djiins* become an important force that maintains the purity of the Muslim identity. On the other hand, the younger generation Muslims like Mah- Jabin refuses to believe in the *djiins* and tried to maintain a rational mindset towards incidents and events happening in the community.

In *The Wasted Vigil,* we see a similar role played by the concept of memory in the character of Casa who is devoted to his homeland, Afghanistan, and is ready to give up his life for his country. Set in the small town of Usha which is located in the northern parts of Afghanistan post 9/11, the narrative links Afghanistan's beleaguered past to its violent war-torn American invaded setting. Casa is a young Afghan boy who is left as an orphan on account of the Soviet invasion and brought up in the jihadi training camps by extremists in the borders of Pakistan and Afghanistan.What is significant is that he acquires the name 'Casa' from a boy in the school set up by Americans who was enthralled by his courage. The boy has given the name to Casa as a derivation from the courageous son of a French Admiral, Giaconte Casabianca. Casa's upbringing is in stark contrast to the name that he acquires which places him on the borders between two cultures on account of war and politics; hence, Casa's character is intricately linked to his homeland. Growing

up in a war- torn home constantly invaded by foreigners and brought up in a jihadi camp, Casa's present memory is strongly rooted in the conflicted past marked by violence and death. His character becomes the embodiment of the current national trauma of his homeland. O' Gorman notes that, as a reader, we cannot help but empathize with Casa and accept his fundamentalist worldview related to "an intimate network of social, political and historical contexts" (139). Similarly, Sobia Kiran identifies Casa as a victim who is left "vulnerable in a system that is a product of war, indoctrination of hatred and global political conflicts" (259). Hence, his memory of the past is of bombs, bullets, death and bloodshed and this memory is weaponized into hatred in the jihadi camps. Casa's memory concurrently defines the way he sees his present.

> There have been occasions when he has eaten something sweet and been reminded for the briefest of moments of dynamite, from the time in the al-Qaeda camps when he had been made to recognise various explosives through taste, placing a small amount on the tongue. Certain large flower buds in Marcus' garden reminded him of bullets. (*Vigil* 398)

Memory, for Casa, becomes something which constantly haunts his present. In the US occupied Afghanistan, as someone who stands on the threshold between cultures, Casa finds himself in a situation where he is forced to rethink the aspects of fundamentalism. But his past comes back to haunt him which affects the choices and decisions he makes. When Casa suffers bullet wounds during a shoot-out in Usha, he takes shelter in Marcus' house. He stays for a few days during which he struggles to suppress his hatred of the West and spends a large majority of his time in planning a suicidal act of bombing against the US army stationed in Afghanistan. He comes close to having a friendly relationship with Dunia, a school teacher who is also taking shelter in Marcus' house. Casa confesses to her and says, "I wish I didn't feel alone all the time…Sometimes nothing makes sense and I become afraid" (*Vigil* 311). Dunia tries to reason with Casa as she tells him about the moderate side of Islam and that "Muslims hate fundamentalism" (312). For a brief moment, Casa questions his beliefs and perspectives. In this conversation, between two Muslims with different worldviews, Aslam presents "the existence of a majority of Muslim community committed to the virtues of moderate religious observation, and a

traumatized subset of the population driven to extremism by anger and frustration" (O' Brien 9). However, as the conversation proceeds, Casa's strong memory of the teachings at the jihadi camp and the memory of his early childhood as a victim of the Soviet-Afghan war championed over Dunia's reasoning. He says with determination, "We will destroy America the way the Soviet Union was destroyed" (*Vigil* 312).

A similar scene is repeated when Casa helped David in constructing the canoe where he told David that he "memorized all the scars and bruises on his body" (*Vigil* 247) so that he would never forget what the white people had done to him. Casa's strong memory of the traumatic past, fueled by the indoctrination at the jihadi camp determines the choices and decisions that he makes in the present. Every time he is forced to reevaluate his beliefs and perspectives, the indelibility of the past wins over his reasoning faculty. Like the character of Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist,* Casa often finds himself questioning the implications and meaning of fundamentalist thoughts and beliefs. In such moments, he allows the memory of his tragic childhood to take over his rational thoughts as he "remembers the scar on his knee stamped by an American bullet" (*Vigil* 224). The disfiguration of the present, with memory as the medium, results in unpleasant consequences and eventually led to Casa's death.

When Casa is stopped by the US Army on his way to work, he considers it to be an act of suspicion on the part of the US Army, one that is meant to demean his status. He remains silent and desperately tries to stop himself from crying, giving space within his inner self for anger and fury ashis eyes become "two live coals where he's trying to hold back tears. Rage and humiliation, a fury many centuries deep" (*Vigil* 243). Casa's perception of the Americans is largely based on historical events, his memory of American violence on his homeland and his longing for an Afghanistan free of foreign invasion. Thus, he wonders: "These days they kept saying, *Why do the Muslims become suicide bombers? They must be animals, there are no human explanations for their actions.* But does no one remember what happened on board flight United 93?" (*Vigil* 244).

As he retreats into his memory, Casa "keeps his thoughts to himself and allows them to take an increasingly toxic hold on his thought processes, not least when he finds himself routinely subjected to questioning by Western forces in his

country" (Gorman 43). Gorman argues that by making Casa think out loud, Aslam is able "to infuse the figure of the fundamentalist with a sense of historicity and memory and, in turn, to invite empathy with those who might be drawn to such thinking" and at the same time calls attention "to the antagonism that a fundamentalist way of thinking bears towards the complexity and contradictions central to any reasoned understanding of human identity" (43). Aslam's novel "help to generate a sense of empathy with seemingly "fundamentalist" figures, and, in turn, to offer an understanding of fundamentalism that is potentially more sophisticated- as well as more productive in the nation's struggle to control it- than that perpetuated through media stereotypes" (35)

In the novel, memory is also materialized in the form of spaces and objects. The house of Marcus and the old perfume factory nearby which housed the ancient statue of the Buddha are the mediums through which the memories of the past are materialized. The place is haunted by the ghost of Zameen, Marcus' daughter who was killed by the Soviet soldiers many years ago. The presence of the *djiins* around the area also adds to the sense of haunting within the area. The people of Usha are scared to "come into the house… afraid of the ghost of the perfume maker's daughter" and the statue of the Buddha is referred to as "the suffering stone that had bled gold, that had been granted life by bullets" (*Vigil* 124). The perfume factory, built by Marcus and his wife, was once an important workplace in Usha before the Soviet invasion. It was left in ruins for many years and soldiers "had encountered a large boulder…as they worked away the earth, a slender ridge was found snaking around the small depression, and then they saw that the whole was in fact a large human ear" (*Vigil* 21). It was here the Russian soldiers come face to face with "the head of a great Buddha, lying on its side.... A face from another time" (*Vigil* 21).

The perfume factory housing the statue of the Buddha and Marcus' house become the embodiment of the past that haunts the present reality. When he first laid eyes on the Buddha Marcus thought to himself, "So much destruction and yet this had survived" (*Vigil* 22). The supernatural force contained in the statue is evident when the factory was under attack by the Taliban who were "preparing to dynamite the head when one of them had contemptuously fired a round of bullets into the stone face smiling to itself" (*Vigil* 41). After multiple shots were fired at the face of

the Buddha, "a small point of light had materialised in each bullet hole, a softly hesitating sparkle. Over the next few instants…each of these spots grew in brilliance and acquired a liquid glint. Welling up in the stone wounds, the gold eventually poured out and began to slide down the features very slowly, striping the face, collecting in unevenly spaced pools on the floor" (*Vigil* 42). As the men fired more bullets, they saw "the stone beginning to rise without sound in what felt like an endless moment" (*Vigil* 42). The haunted Buddha is a spectre from the past which stands as a force of resistance to the legacies of colonial violence and foreign invasion.

In an interview with *The Hindustan Times*, Aslam comments that "the sense of smell is linked closest to human memory, and I wanted Caldwell's perfume factory to be a repository of Afghani history. Hence the Buddha buried on its grounds" (Aslam). The past which has been materialized into these spaces and objects are characterized by a sense of haunting which further creates disturbance and fear in the present.

If memory materializes in statues, houses and idols in Aslam's fiction, Shamsie's *Kartography* utilize maps and the concept of mapping as the material manifestations of memory. In the narrative, the residents of Karachi navigate through the city using their memory as they mentally mark places, locations and spots with the memories of what had happened there. They "give directions in terms of landmarks and stories" (*Kartography* 330). Aroosa Kanwal observes that for Karim "Karachi is also indubitably linked to his feelings for the place and for Raheen" (118). Raheen does not support Karim's idea of creating an official map of Karachi. She feels that there was no need "for him to call the road by its official name" (*Kartography* 65). However, for Karim, mapping Karachi officially becomes an imperative task because everything that he remembers about Karachi are "the sound of gun fire in the distance, children running home in fear, night curfews" (*Karotgraphy* 357). To navigate through Karachi was to come into contact with the memories he has of the city. Hence, Karim wants to "remember the streets of Karachi by their official names and not what happened there" (*Kartography* 358). Hence, memory is Uncanny for Karim in the context of the city because every time he gets in touch with stories and incidents from the past stored in his head, he

automatically links himself with the violence, conflicts and bloodshed that have tainted the cityscape. Interestingly, for Karim, the map becomes the memory with which Raheen remembers him by and his only link to his hometown as he moves abroad due to the increasing ethnic violence in the city. Thus, the role of memory, as an agency of haunting, is a key aspect in the postcolonial Gothic narratives of Shamsie and Aslam.

Alongside the concept of memory, postcolonial nostalgia functions as an agency that generates a sense of haunting. Nostalgia often tends to be perceived as a destructive force as it aligns closer to personal emotion than memory does. Svetlana Boym defines nostalgia as "a rebellion against the modern idea of time, the time of history and progress. The nostalgic desires to obliterate history and turn it into a private or collective mythology, to revisit time like space, refusing to surrender to the irreversibility of time that plagues the human condition" (42). In postcolonial Gothic texts, "the presence of the Gothic allows a space for the unspeakable and the haunted past to force its way to the surface, particularly in a culture characterized by loss and transgression" (Wisker 10). The nostalgic self of the postcolonial society is positioned in a kind of twilight zone, between history and memory. Hence, postcolonial nostalgia negotiates these two spheres, creating a zone where memory and history refract each other.

Kaukab, in *Maps for Lost Lovers*, is the postcolonial Uncanny in the sense that she constantly navigates between the present and the past, the foreign and homeland. The yearning and nostalgia with which Kaukab regards Pakistan is Uncanny in the sense that when she "dreams of the flowers and fruits in Pakistan" she could also hear the neighbour women whispering "about the clerics who raped little girls in the mosque" (*Maps* 158). Hence, nostalgia places her in both the present and the past. Shamsie's treatment of nostalgia is played out in her character's longing for home. Raheen, in *Kartography,* feels a strong sense of longing for Karachi during her years in Boston. The desire for home is also intensified by her fear of losing connections with the people she loves. Nostaligia forces Raheen to mainatain consistent contact with the past and at the same time, it enables her to envision a future where she would be in Karachi with Karim. Postcolonial nostalgia is, therefore, charcaterized by an uncanny doubleness. This echoes Kanwal's

observation that “nostalgia is both alluring and repulsive” (126). Karim’s obsession with map making is informed by nostalgic feelings that ultimately guarantee his return.

Haunting, in the postcolonial context, is largely instigated by the engagement with the past, memory and nostalgia. History, in particular, plays a significant role in postcolonial Gothic narratives because it is the key concept which binds the Gothic and the postcolonial. The history of the postcolonial subject is one that is haunted by trauma of colonialism thus, rendering the act of remembering as an uneasy negotiation with the past. However, the fear and terror brought about by violent histories, painful memories of home and nostalgic longing for home and the past all act together to bring to light the atrocities of colonialism. These concepts are linked together by the act of remembrance which further points to the possibility of distortion, instability and alterity. This renders the concepts are unreliable and subjected to individual emotions and perspectives. This is the reason why Karim, in Shamsie’s *Karotgraphy*¸ is obsessed with the idea of maps and map- making. The postcolonial subject, in its attempt to reconfigure the past and re-envision the idea of home, is often haunted by the trauma of the past.

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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In highlighting the close alliance between postcolonialism and the Gothic, Alison Rudd argues that the Gothic caters to the need of postcolonial writers by providing them "with a means, in narrative and idiom, to expose and subvert past and continuing regimes of power and exploitation, and to reinscribe histories that have been both violent and repressed" (2). In the twenty- first century, postcolonial studies continue to address and offer critique on the current paradigms of power which is at play in the globalized world and these are "still the result of colonial legacies, albeit in different guises and mutations, changing manifestations and shifting avatars" (Lau 104). Hence, postcolonial Gothic becomes a beneficial tool to address the anxieties and fears that continue to haunt the postcolonial nation today.

Tracing the development of the Gothic, the study examines how the Imperial Gothic narrativized colonial discourse and subsequently paved way for the emergence of the postcolonial Gothic. These Gothic narratives from the Victorian period address "the horror of going native, or being possessed and transformed by local customs and beliefs to the extent that one is no longer recognizable as civilized" (Gelder 191). Imperial Gothic is also concerned with "invasion of civilization by the forces of barbarism or demonism" (Brantlinger 230). From an overview of the historical development of the Imperial Gothic in the second chapter of the study, it is discernible that the Gothic has a strong engagement with the idea of Empire. Brantlinger observes that during the Victorian period, "the empire's business was everybody's business" and that "routine domestic activities such as eating and dressing came to have powerful associations with patriotism (the use of "empire" goods) and exotic pleasures (the glamour of familiar tropical or oriental products)" (127). The Gothic, being one of the most significant literary forms, was also inevitably linked to narratives about the Empire during this period.

Postcolonial literature, as a counter narrative to colonial discourse, employ the Gothic form to address the horrors, trauma and fear that plague the postcolonial subject. There have been quite a number of critical studies on postcolonial magical realism and postmodern Gothic, but very little critical attention has been given to the

postcolonial Gothic. Thus, certain problematics arises in pinpointing the defining characteristics of the sub- genre. The few available studies have placed emphasis on the act of 'writing back' and the subversion of Imperial Gothic narratives as the central characteristics of the postcolonial Gothic. This was the pattern largely employed by early postcolonial Gothic writers like Jean Rhys in *Wide Sargasso Sea* which subverts the narrative of Bronte's classical text *Jane Eyre*. However, contemporary postcolonial Gothic has developed extensively from its early pioneer texts thereby expanding the scope of the Gothic. Salman Rushie's *Midnight's Children* (1981), *Shalimar the Clown* (2005), Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (1997), Helen Oyeyemi's *The Icarus Girl* (2007) and other Gothic narratives of African and Caribbean literature have often been recognized and read as postcolonial Gothic texts. In her reading of Roy's *The God of Small Things*, Michelle Giles argues that "Roy both adopts and challenges Western Gothic conventions to illustrate the haunting of India's colonial past upon its present as the country struggles with its modern-day identity" (1).

My reading of Kamila Shamsie's *Kartography* and *A God in Every Stone* and Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* and *The Wasted Vigil* employ a Gothic mode of analysis in which the Uncanny, the Unhomely and the engagement with Otherness are identified as the significant characteristics which render these works as postcolonial Gothic texts. With the exception of *Maps for Lost Lover*, which is outright Gothic even from a surface level reading, the remaining three novels have been selected on the account of the fact that they focus on "articulating repressed histories and recounting past traumas through a language of haunting and spectrality" (Ilott 21). Many of the characters are born out of conflicts, violence, conquests and invasions associated with colonialism while some characters suffer the consequences of colonial politics and the continuing neo-imperialism.Within this context, the study brings attention to the ways in which Pakistani writers, particularly those belonging to the second-generation and addressing issues surrounding Pakistani identities like Kamila Shamsie and Nadeem Aslam, employ the postcolonial Gothic in their writings. It explores the different defining characteristics of contemporary postcolonial Gothic and subsequently used them as conceptual tools to read the selected texts. Though the authors and texts selected for

the study are marked by a strong political sense on account of the authors' religious and ethnic identity, it has to be noted that the present study is not a way of stressing on any particular standpoints related to politics and religion. As writings from Pakistan and writers belonging to specific religious communities can be easily read from a bias religious and political perspective, it becomes imperative to maintain a neutral literary foothold while reading and analyzing these texts. Keeping this in mind, the study is limitedto the analysis of the viewpoints and perspectives of the two writers in focus and how their works can be situated within the framework of the Gothic.

The study analyzes the fictional writings of the two authors in focus, emphasizing on how they attempt to destabilize the history and identity of the Pakistani Muslim constructed by Western narratives, and how their writings signify the return of the violent and repressed histories. Here, it is important to note that these texts do not strictly conform to Gothic tropes, themes and language. Critical works and analyses on the selected texts usually look at the narratives as post 9/11 fiction or trauma fiction. Available literatures consulted in this study show that there has been no study or analysis that looks at the selected texts as postcolonial Gothic fiction, except Sarah IIlot's short reference to *The Wasted Vigil* as a contemporary postcolonial Gothic text. However, as foregrounded in the introductory chapter, the Gothic excess and turbulent landscape figure prominently in the writings of Shamsie and Aslam who render their texts as Gothic. They also conform to the different characteristics and aspects of the postcolonial Gothic outlined by scholars and critics of Gothic studies like Ken Gelder, Gina Wisker, Andrew Smith, Sarah Illot and others. By engaging with the postcolonial Uncanny, Unhomely spaces and the dynamics of Otherness, Shamsie and Aslam are able to gothicized their narratives, particularly in their portrayal of the migrant condition and experience as haunted and frightening. Moreover, these texts are often preoccupied with the objection to the dominant discourse and are therefore, transgressive in nature which asserts the Gothic as a boundary- breaker, one that transgresses established norms and conventions.

Situating the four fictional narratives of Shamsie and Aslam within the framework of the postcolonial Gothic throws light on how the Gothic offers the convenient trope and language for addressing contemporary fears and anxieties, particularly those prevalent in the twenty-first century. This runs parallel to Illot's statement that contemporary postcolonial Gothic "reference the continuation of colonial violence and its legacies" (24). These legacies include "increased precarity, poverty and enforced displacement and the inevitable outcomes of…warfare engendered by the pillaging of natural resources and racial hierarchisation" (24). These are problems and crisis inherent to the twenty-first century, thus, becoming the source material for both creative writers and academicians. Furthermore, "increased precarity", "enforced displacement" and "racial hierarchization" can be associated to the plight of Pakistani Muslim identities in the current geopolitical climate. Especially in relation to migrant and diasporic identities, Pakistani Muslims assume an uncanny identity as they negotiate between homeland and the foreign, between the East and the West. In her analysis of Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers,* Amina Yaqin opines that Muslims are "multicultural misfits" (107) in search of a sense of belonging.

Representation of Muslim identities in literary works by Pakistani writers have immensely increased in the twenty-first century, particularly in the post 9/11 period. It comes as no surprise that, Pakistan, being one of the most prominent Muslim countries, is responding to the social and cultural perception about Muslim identity in the West. However, the objective of second-generation Pakistani writers like Shamsie and Aslam is not image correction per se or to provide counter narratives to the Western narratives and perspectives on fundamentalism and terrorism. Their fictional narratives do not have direct engagement with the rampant terror attacks in the West like Mohsin Hamid and HM Naqvi did. Hence the term "post-9/11 fiction" is avoided in the context of this study even though it has become a popular term to categorize many works of Pakistani writing in English.

The concern of the study largely stresses on the postcolonial aspect of Pakistaniidentityand their engagement with their religious identity in the selected texts rather than the conflict between two religious faith. The main thrust of Shamsie

and Aslam's fiction is to provide critiques and insights regarding Pakistani identities in their homeland and abroadas characterized by their religion. The texts selected for the study extensively deals with the theme of migration, diaspora, dislocation and dispossession of homeland and how the characters negotiate with their identities at home and abroad. Their narratives draw attention to "how brutal cross- cultural and international encounters can be" (Cilano 11). However, Shamsie and Aslam's works often tend to merge the nation and the political with the personal; their identities as Pakistanis do inform their works to a large extent which puts them in a position where they are compelled to address the status of Muslims in the twenty first century global politics. Texts like Shamsie's *A God in Every Stone* and *Kartography* reflects how the cities of Peshawar and Karachi become unhomely spaces for the characters which further redefines the notion of home and alter identities. We also see a similar pattern in Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil* where war-torn Afghanistan is presented as unhomely for Afghans like Casa and Dunia.

Though Shamsie and Aslam both belong to the Muslim community, it has to be noted that the global phenomenon of Islamophobia and the Muslim identities in relation to 9/11 is not always the major concern of their writings. Instead, as writers who grew up during the 1970s, the 1971 Civil War, the ethnic conflicts, the Islamization of Pakistan under the presidency of General Zia-ul-Haq and the subsequent political turmoil in the country informed many of their fictional works. They address the issues and concerns that haunt the Pakistani Muslim identity in both the regional and global scale. However, the political and the religious aspects cannot be completely avoided since Muslim identity is largely informed by the Islamic faith and the troubled politcal history of Pakistan. In her sixth novel *Broken Verses* (2005), Shamsie writes:

> The art of story-telling, so ingrained in this nation, had turned- in all the years of misrule and oppression- into the art of spinning conspiracy theories, each one more elaborate than the one before. (*Verses* 37)

It is almost an impossible task to leave out the political aspects of thelived reality in such a violent and tumultuous postcolonial nation. As a Nigerian writer

who grew up in a society plagued by corruption and exploitation during the Biafra War of 1967, Ben Okri writes, "You can't really write about Nigeria truthfully without a sense of violence. To be serene is to lie. Relations in Nigeria are violent relation. It's the way it is, for historical and all sorts of other reasons" (Quayson147). Hence, it becomes an imperative task for writers to address, critique and question the systemic violence which threatens the postcolonial identity both at home and abroad. Furthermore, on account of their diasporic identity, Shamsie and Aslam are both presented with insights and perspectives from both the East and the West. This marks them as cultural ambassadors and intermediaries who negotiate between the East and the West. Said's comment on exiles, migrants and expatriates can be aptly applied to the two writers:

> The more one is able to leave one's cultural home, the more easily is one able to judge it, and the whole world as well, with the spiritual detachment and generosity necessary for true vision. The more easily, too, does one assess oneself and alien cultures with the same combination of intimacy and distance. (*Orientalism* 259)

As diasporic writers, the works of Kamila Shamsie and Nadeem Aslam constitute a global, cosmopolitan and borderless terrain. Their characters not only cross geographical borders but also cultural, religious and moral borders, and as such they are transgressive. Their preoccupation with the theme of migrancy is also largely a result of their diasporic identities which mark them as intermediaries between cultures. As foregrounded in the preceding chapters, their fictional narratives highlight the uncanny nature of migrant identities, the Unhomely spaces of both the new homes in the diaspora and the original homeland. Postcolonial writing has always been preoccupied with the concept of space as an essential aspect of postcoloniality, mainly because of the close connection between the notion of empire and geographical territories. As contemporary postcolonial Gothic narratives, Shamsie and Aslam's texts subvert the colonial appropriation of space, literally and metaphorically; they also offer insights regarding the implications of this subversion. More significantly, their novels look at the way national histories and personal histories are intertwined by violence, trauma and other traces of the colonial project.

In Shamsie's *Kartography*, Karim says, "My world is not just Karachi here. It's also the Karachi of 1971. Just like Abba's world is made up of both 1971 Karachi and the Partition" (*Kartography* 336). From this statement, it becomes apparent that in the postcolonial temporal topology, the past, present and future are conflated in order to render histories as uncanny. Characters like Karim reflect Rushdie's argument that "exiles or emigrants or expatriates are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back… which gives rise to profound uncertainties" (10).

From the present study, it becomes apparent that the selected narratives of Shamsie and Aslam are preoccupied with the notion of home and this renders their writings as Gothic. Azzam argues that the postcolonial Gothic is concerned with the notion of home in two ways i.e., "home as a concept (notions of kinship, belonging, and the idea of home)" and home as "dwelling (houses, other habitations, and localities)" (4). She further states that homes and dwellings in the postcolonial Gothic "are the geographic sites in which larger political, historical, and national allegories are cast" (4). The popular Gothic trope of the haunted house is employed in *The Wasted Vigil* where Marcus' house is haunted by the ghosts of his wife and daughter. In the other three narratives, the two authors emphasize on the aspect of haunted unhomely spaces in relation to nation, community and family. Thus, the postcolonial migrant condition itself is treated as haunted.

When looking at the immigrants and displaced identities in Shamsie and Aslam's narratives, it has to be noted that they are different from Mohsin Hamid and HM Naqvi's characters who migrated to the West. The latter are immigrants on account of their individual choices and they have moved to foreign countries for employment and education. This is also the current reality of immigrants who have moved to the West for different reasons. Cilano observes that Shamsie and Aslam's migrants are compelled to cross the borders "because of historically-related (rather than solely personal) loss or trauma, or they undertake a quest to fill in the absences born of historical brutalities" (215). Angelo Monaco argues that in Aslam's novels "terrorism is not featured as a specific act; rather, it is represented as a historical account of powerful elites dominating powerless people… revealing the continuities

and intersections that lie at the core of the rhetoric of terrorism" (17). This observation rightly corresponds to the story of *The Wasted Vigil.*

In exploring the idea of home in relation to individual and cultural identity in the four selected texts, the thesis employs Rushdie's concept of 'imaginary homeland' which becomes crucial in understanding both Shamsie and Aslam's status as diasporic writers and the immigrant Muslim experience in their narratives. In her novels, Shamsie portrays Karachi and Peshawar, not as mere cities and geographical spaces, but as one of the major characters in the novel. The two cities become the focus of Shamsie's and her characters' "imaginary homeland." Similarly, in Asalm's novels, the immigrant Muslim community in England tries to relive their lifestyle and experiences in Pakistan in their daily lives but fails to reclaim what they have left behind. The characters in Shamsie and Aslam's narratives are all plagued by what Rushdie calls "the experience of uprooting, disjuncture and metamorphosis" which he believes is also "the migrant condition" (Rushdie 394). However, "the idea of home can acquire more power in the absence of access to the place itself, and this imagined construct has the power to strongly influence issues surrounding the intersection of home and identity" (Alghamdi 110) and this is the reason why Shamsie and Aslam, as writers residing in the West, have been able to portray Pakistan and the social realities in their narrative successfully.

Closely related to Rushdie's notion of 'imaginary homelands' is Homi Bhabha's concepts of the Unhomely and the Freudian Uncanny which the study extensively uses as theoretical framework. Bhabha's concept of the Unhomely is intrinsically linked to the Uncanny as developed by Freud as the latter is stimulated by the former. Bhabha's assertion that "the unhomely is a paradigmatic postcolonial experience" (Bhabha 142) can be rightly taken as a description of the twenty-first century immigrant Muslim experience. The dispossession of homeland and the presence of unhomely landscapes and haunted domestic spaces in the four selected narratives become crucial in the reading of the texts as postcolonial Gothic texts. Alaa Alghamdi opines that "identification with one's home or homeland becomes complex and problematic in the case of the exile or immigrant subject because the homeland has been altered, left behind, or otherwise inaccessible" (99) and because

of this, the construction of individual and cultural identity is significantly informed by the concept of home. Both Shamsie and Aslam project home as a space characterized by a troubled or ghostly presence driven by their experience of growing up in a turbulent postcolonial nation and their eventual move to the West.

Following Bhabha's concept of the Unhomely, Leela Gandhi also defines colonialism as "the perverse instigator of a new politics of un-homeliness" (132). This is particularly true in the case of the Pakistani Muslim community who has undergone large scale migration in different parts of the globe for which Gandhi blames the "colonial encounter for its disruption of native/domestic space" (32). Diasporic discourse and the migrant narratives, in this manner, become forms of resistance against colonial disruption of 'homely' spaces and an attempt to reconstruct cultural identity from new perspectives. Since unhomely space always have an association with the past or a longing for the familiar, the study foregrounded the ways in which history, memory and nostalgia have been utilized in the four selected texts in order to generate a sense of haunting. In the tradition of the contemporary postcolonial Gothic, the concept of haunting is played out subtly in the narratives of Shamsie and Aslam. The texts are not haunted by shrieks, howls and screams which are common elements in classical Gothic. Instead, it is the silence of repressed voices, quiet statues, ghosts and violent histories which generate the sense of haunting in the novels. Hence, history, memory and nostalgia are examined as the concepts which create the haunting effect. However, the study does not engage with memory studies as theorized by renowned scholars like Cathy Caruth. History, memory and nostalgia are examined in their literal sense as agencies that haunt the characters in the narratives. Shamsie and Aslam consciously place their characters against violent and repressed moments in history, marginalized histories to be precise, thus employing the Gothic trope of the return of the repressed. Michael F. O' Riley observes that the "disruptive quality of postcolonial haunting is frequently portrayed as the Freudian *unheimlich* of history and is figured as an interruptive or affective moment in the course of Western consciousness where the repressed colonial scene returns" (1). Even in the context of memory and nostalgia, the act of longing for the homeland and yearning for the past can be read as what Michael

Rothberg calls “remembering back” (359). This ultimately leads to a fusion between past and present and it is in this liminal encounter zone that the Uncanny comes into play.

Though both Shamsie and Aslam belong to the diaspora, the two writers have several points of difference in their approach to politics, religion and culture. Their points of divergence have more to do with their class than their gender. Aslam prefers to maintain a distance from non-fiction, interviews and is less vocal in expressing his political views beyond fictional writings. He confines his writings to the fictional representation of trauma and violence related to Pakistan and the larger Muslim world. The reclusive aspect of Aslam’s nature as a writer is on account of growing up in a lower middle-class family and spending his formative years in a foreign country where he had to struggle with the language and social life of England as an immigrant. Shamsie, on the other hand, openly shares her political views through newspaper articles, essays and public lectures. Her non- fiction, *Offence: The Muslim Case* was published in 2009 by Seagull Books. In this seven-section essay, Shamsie presents critical insights into the current rise of extremism in Pakistan and debunks the concept of the global Muslim brotherhood. The book met strong opposition from Islamic leaders and political figures from all over the world. This outspoken nature of Shamsie may have been shaped by the fact that her mother was a renowned journalist in Pakistan and was a big influence in Shamsie’s writing career. Growing up among the Karachi elites in a family that has three generations of women writers, Shamsie, unlike Aslam, is unfettered in voicing her political opinions. Hence, there are multiple points where Shamsie and Aslam’s views on politics and religion converge but Shamsie tends to be more expressive and vocal in addressing these issues. However, texts like *Maps for Lost Lovers* have been analysed as a “devastating anti-Islamic novel” as Aslam “portrays the physical and psychological violence committed in the name of God” (Yaqin 107). It is this aspect of the selected narratives, not just Aslam’s but Shamsie’s as well, which makes the texts multidimensional and cosmopolitan. In throwing light on the injustices and violence committed against the Muslims, the two writers in focus unflinchingly narrates the internal violence and atrocities inflicted by religious fundamentalists or radical Islamists. In this context, gendered violence becomes a significant factor

because of the tragic plight of women in Pakistani community both at home and abroad.

However, Shamsie and Aslam also differ in their way of engaging with the gender issue. In spite of the social class that they grew up in, the rigid patriarchal restrictions in Pakistan posed several problems for Shamsie. In terms of characterization, Shamsie's protagonists are mostly strong independent women who transgress class boundaries and traditional gender roles. In *A God in Every Stone,* Vivian crosses oceans and continents to come to Peshawar to pursue her passion for archaeology, a profession which her father considers to be a male-centric field. Raheen, in *Kartography,* becomes the disruptive yet necessary force who unveils the violent past of Karachi and her family. Aslam, on the other hand, addresses the violent misogynist underpinnings of the more conservative aspects of Islam as a result of which his female characters are often portrayed as helpless victims of orthodoxy, religious fundamentalism, war and violence. His female protagonists like Kaukab are representatives of the uncanny migrant identity, trapped in the liminal space between two cultures.

In exploring the dynamics of Otherness in the postcolonial Gothic, the study looks at how Muslims have been marked as monstrous figures in social discourses and how the selected texts provide counter narratives to the construction of the 'Muslim Other'. The postcolonial Gothic, therefore, offers itself as a significant framework for addressing the Muslim issue. On commenting the compatibility of the postcolonial Gothic and African diaspora, Maisha Wester argues that "familiar monsters are so overloaded with meaning" which makes it "impossible to escape re-instituting the very racial and classist ideals already encoded within their texts" (301). In turn, she proposes the introduction of "monsters from the African Diaspora" and "creatures and histories that record the horror of physical and cultural theft" (301). From Wester's observation, it is discernable that the same strategic approach would be necessary for addressing the questions and issues of Muslim identity in the twenty-first century.

Looking at the plethora of writings under the sub-genre, it is evident that contemporary postcolonial Gothic acts as a platform for writers to re-engage with

social and political realities of postcolonial societies and to address repressed historical truths. The scope of the postcolonial Gothic as put forth by Sarah Illot rightly echoes why second-generation Pakistani writers like Shamsie and Aslam have employed the Gothic mode. She states, “The Gothic is not a means of escape, but a means of re-engagement with the lived realities of twenty- first century postcolonial societies in the face of systemic violence and the structural exclusion of minority voices” (22). The postcolonial Gothic, therefore, lends itself as a tool for postcolonial writers to address the fears and horrors lurking in postcolonial societies.

When questioning narratives from diasporic writers, particularly when writing about the community in the homeland, the problematics of validity and authenticity comes into question. Boehmer offers a rather strong criticism of postcolonial writers residing in Western metropolis. She states:

> Postcolonial migrant literature can be described as a literature written by elites, and defined and canonized by elites. Because of their connections or their upbringing, they have tended sooner or later to win acceptance in metropolitan elites. Essentially, by migrating, they have been able to secure themselves a different, more comfortable location in the wide neo-colonial world. (231)

While this may be true to a certain extent in the case of Shamsie and Aslam, the fact that they are immigrants residing in the West does not necessarily limit the knowledge of the violent histories, discrimination and conflicts that characterizes their homeland. In fact, their dual nationality enables them to look at events and experiences from a neutral point of view which render their narratives as reliable voices. However, the recent increase of fictional narratives from authors in the diaspora has received numerous critical studies and academic analysis. For many scholars and critics, diasporic authors write “in accord to the demand of cultural capital” and “they become those figures who allow the West to retain its central position” (Younas 132). Critics like Lisa Lau even goes as far as labelling postcolonial diasporic authors as agents of ‘re-orientalism.’ With emphasis laid on the dialectics between the West and the East, re-orientalism is “a discourse which is an orientally generated discourse coming out of postcolonial and diasporic legacies”

(Lau 120). However, re- orientalist discourse "continues to be filtered through Western lenses" which enables the West to "maintain its advantageous position as "Centre"" (167). This condition of being the native informant for western scholarship may be true in the case of many diasporic writers who contribute to the discourse of 'othering' the Orient or the postcolonial subject. Abida Younas reads Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* as a re-orientalist project where the character of Kaukab only "affirms that subalterns are made to adopt the Western values and those who reject them are shown as out casted" (134). Also, while reading the fictional narratives of Shamsie and Aslam, the vast distance between their present home and the 'home' that they are writing about has to be taken into consideration. As postcolonial writers residing in Western metropolis, there may be certain aspects of the political dynamics of Pakistan that they have missed out. Hence, their narratives cannot be read as truthful representation of Pakistani life and culture.

The four selected fictional narratives- *Kartography* and *A God in Every Stone* by Kamila Shamsieand *Maps for Lost Lovers* and *The Wasted Vigil* by Nadeem Aslam- are fairly recent works of Pakistani writing in English. Thus, there are still open possibilities and scope for further reading and critical engagement with these texts. Though Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil* has been popularly read and analyzed as post 9/11- fiction, little critical attention has been given to the other three texts. The study does not perform a thorough reading of the texts as diasporic literature which is also another lens through which these narratives can be analyzed. Shamsie's *A God in Every Stone* and Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* can also be studied within the context of transnational literature as the texts deal with cross- cultural interaction and moves across different nationalities and borders. However, Pakistani writers like Mohammad Hanif and Bina Shah oppose to the idea of labelling their works as 'commonweatlth literature' and 'postcolonial literature because "these labels represent a kind of colonial gaze" (Bilal 16) as they are categories commonly used by western academia and literary prize juries.

As laid out in the introductory chapter, commentaries and statements on Pakistan, be it in fiction or non-fiction, have become sensitive and complex topics which could easily generate debates, conflicts and misunderstandings. Any

engagement with issues related to Pakistan and the Muslim community in the twenty-first century can pose several controversies and misunderstanding. Especially with recent news of fundamentalist groups terrorizing Western countries and the Taliban taking over Afghanistan in September 2021, terrorism continues to remain synonymous with Pakistan and with the idea of being a Muslim. This is largely due to the constant political unrestin the country's internal affairs, the ethnic conflicts and its uncertain international relations with other countries in the present times. But this is where literature becomes more significant than ever for postcolonial nation states. In such a frenzied political climate, it becomes necessary for writers to engage with these issues using frameworks and modes that can provide the language and tropes "to address new racisms emerging from neo- imperial and nationalistic movements, and to repurpose new monsters suited to systemic critique" (Illot 23). The postcolonial Gothic asserts Stuart Hall's contention that it requires an engagement with the traumatic past and that monsters, haunting and the uncanny are all inevitable in the process of decolonization. Thus, he opines, "We always knew that the dismantling of the colonial paradigm would release strange demons from the deep, and that these monsters might come trailing all sorts of subterranean material" (256). The postcolonial Gothic, therefore, addresses the violent colonial histories and their continuing legacies in the contemporary world in order to offer counter narratives to colonial discourse.

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APPENDICES

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Sl. No	Year	Title of Chapter/ Research Paper	Name of book/ journal	Publication details (Place/Publishers) with ISBN/ ISSN
1	2018	Dynamics of Nationalism and Identity through Cultural Hybridity in Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows*	Ajker Jodhan, May- June 2018 Special Issue.	Place: Kolkata Pub: Jhargram Raj College ISSN: 9871-5819
2	2020	Structuralism and Language Theory	A Study of Mizo Language	Place: Aizawl Pub: Dept. of Mizo, St. Xavier's College. ISBN: 978-81-947253-1-2
3	2021	Mizo Postcolonialism	Zirtirtu Lalmama: The Works and Contributions of Lalmama	Place: Aizawl Pub: Dept. of Mizo, Govt. Aizawl North College, Aizawl. ISBN: 978-81-945490-9-3
4	2021	Behind Locked Doors, Re-evaluation	Lockdown Literature from Mizoram. Ed Margaret L. Pachuau	Place: Kolkata Pub: Writer's Workshop India ISBN: 978-81-949985-5-6
5	2021	A Bird Called Freedom	Big Mistakes: An Anthology of Growing Up.	Place: Delhi Pub: Penguin, Random House ISBN: 0143452973
6	2021	Zorami: A 'redemption song' for the silent voices in Mizoram	Social and Cultural Changes in Mizo Society. Pp. 48- 56	Place: Aizawl Pub: Research and Publication Cell, Govt. Hnahthial College ISBN: 978-81-951935-0-9
7	2021	Consumerism as the Representation of Terror in Postmodern Gothic: A Study of Katherine Dunn's *Geek Love*	International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (IJCRT)	Open Acess E-Jounal ISSN: 2320-2882

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1	2017	Consumerism as Representation of Terror in Postmodern Gothic: A Study of Katherine Dunn's *Geek Love*	International Conference on Literature, Religion and Culture	Higher Education and Research Society (HERSO), Pune
2	2018	Postcolonial Gothic in South Asian Literature	Capacity Building for Research Scholars	Pachhunga University College & OKDISCD, Guwahati
3	2018	Dynamics of Nationalism and Identity through Cultural Hybridity in the Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows*	International Seminar on Women in Texts	Jhargram Raj College, Kolkata
4	2018	Structuralism in Mizo Language	Full Day International Seminar on Mizo Language	St. Xavier's College, Aizawl
5	2019	Excess, Turbulence and Transgression in Selected Mizo Folktales	National Seminar on Rethinking Tribal Identity	Mizoram University, Aizawl
6	2019	Between Religion and Spirituality: A Postmodern Reading of Selected Works of Mafaa Hauhnar	Two Day National Seminar on Resuscitating Mafaa Hauhnar: Contemporary Perspective on his Essays and Poetry	Pachhunga University College, Aizawl
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DATE OF ADMISSION	:	28.07.2017

APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

1. DRC	:	16. 04. 2018
2. BOARD OF STUDIES	:	26. 04. 2018
3. SCHOOL BOARD	:	10. 05. 2018
MZU REGISTRATION	:	1800014
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ABSTRACT

LOCATING THE POSTCOLONIAL GOTHIC: A STUDY OF SELECTED WORKS OF KAMILA SHAMSIE AND NADEEM ASLAM

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Since the eighteenth century, Gothic literature has always served as a vehicle for exploring the horrors that haunt cultures and societies. As the genre progresses with time, in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the anxieties that the Gothic addresses have become more varied and ideological as it deals with racisms, class, social structures and political issues. The Gothic is, then, readily adopted by postcolonial writers as it is a mode which conveniently accommodates a critique on colonial discourse. Hence, postcolonial Gothic is popularly employed by writers belonging to South Asia, West Indies and the Caribbean.

Pakistani writing in English is marked by a strong regional dynamic and a distinct history of colonialism. But what gives it its unique characteristics are its inevitable connection to the religious dynamic, particularly Islam and its status in global politics today. With the Muslim identity being at the centre of the global geopolitical arena after 9/11 and increasing Islamophobia, Pakistani writers have engaged extensively with the racial and religious issue in order to give response to the increasing Westernized construction of the image of the Muslim community. Even before the twenty-first century, Pakistani writing in English has always maintained a consistent flow of literary production where the political history surrounding the events of 1947 casts a strong influence on the literary works of many first-generation Pakistani writers. In the contemporary times, the literary landscape has been marked by a number of efforts to assimilate and familiarize the supposed alien culture and practices of Islam and Muslims. In this context, second generation writers of Pakistani diaspora have taken on the mantle of spokesperson for parts of the Muslim world, focusing on their political and cultural status. These writers grew up in a postcolonial nation state where riots, conflicts and violence are rampant, and it comes as no surprise that they have chosen literature as a means to make political statements, address important national issues and revisit the turbulent history of their country.

As writers belonging to the Pakistani diaspora, the works of Kamila Shamsie and Nadeem Aslam, constitute a global, cosmopolitan and borderless terrain. However, as writers belonging to a postcolonial society whose culture and literature have gradually progressed with the idea of the nation, their artistic inputs are extensively informed by their conception of the nation. The national history, the political violence and unrest that wounded Pakistan and the status of Pakistani Muslims in the current geopolitical climate

form the crux of their writings. Similar themes and subject matter can be found in the works of their contemporaries like Mohammad Hanif, Uzma Aslam Khan and Mohsin Hamid. The works of these contemporary Pakistani writers in English provide relevant political and social commentaries as they unflinchingly address complex issues related to their racial and religious identity. Commenting on the position of contemporary Pakistani writers, Mushtaq Bilal states that on account of the geopolitical status that Pakistan holds today "it has become virtually impossible to write about Pakistan without making it a political statement" and that "particularly in post 9/11, it has become increasingly difficult for writers to address the Muslim issue" (2).

Commentaries and statements on Pakistan, be it in fiction or non-fiction, have easily become sensitive and complex topics which could generate debates, conflicts and misunderstandings. This is largely due to the volatile domestic political climate of Pakistan and its uncertain international relations with other countries in the present times. Hence, it becomes necessary for writers to engage with the issues using frameworks and modes that can provide the language and tropes "to address new racisms emerging from neo- imperial and nationalistic movements, and to repurpose new monsters suited to systemic critique" (Illot 23). However, it has to be noted that though the authors and texts selected for the study are marked by a strong sense of the political on account of the authors' Muslim identity, the present study is not a way of stressing on any particular standpoints related to politics and religion.

The works of Kamila Shamsie and Nadeem Aslam are marked by the desire to transform individual traumatic experience into a shared collective memory through their narratives in the post 9/11 era. Their works can be seen as an attempt to destabilize Western narratives on the postcolonial Pakistani subjects and reconstruct the racial and religious identity of Pakistanis. For Shamsie and Aslam, the sub- genre of the postcolonial Gothic offers a way to address and counter the growing issues and questions that have loomed large within the postcolonial domestic space. The close literary alliance that the Gothic shares with the postcolonial enables postcolonial writers to engage with prevailing issues in postcolonial society. The thesis will examine how the postcolonial Gothic acts as the convenient framework to address the contemporary issues in postcolonial society, particularly those related to Muslim identity, migration and diaspora in the four selected works- *Kartography* (2002) and *A God in Every Stone* (2014) by

Kamila Shamsie and *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004) and *The Wasted Vigil* (2008) by Nadeem Aslam.

Contemporary postcolonial Gothic engages with the changing world of the twenty first century by addressing what Sarah Illot calls the "aftershocks of European colonialism" (23) which include "the impact of climate change" "war and human migrations" "9/11 and the consequent War on Terror and increased Islamophobia" and "refugee crisis" (23). In their narratives, Kamila Shamsie and Nadeem Aslam employ the Gothic mode to render Muslim identities and spaces as ghostly, thus demonstrating the complexity and impossibility of confronting certain issues. Looking from a historical perspective, one can see that the Gothic has always maintained close affiliation with issues related to colonialism. This is evident in their engagements with repressed memories, marginal identities, the Self and the Other. According to Meghan Carlton, the Gothic serves as the convenient form that caters to the need of the postcolonial writer. She argues:

> For a postcolonial author dealing with the repercussions of colonial occupation, a literary form rooted in ambiguity, a form that does not require an answer to unanswerable questions, could be an attractive means through which to engage the postcolonial state of being. (142)

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The introductory chapter situates the four selected texts of Shamsie and Aslam within the Gothic framework by identifying the Gothic tropes and elements present in the narratives. Gothic fiction, according to Botting, is marked by the presence of excess, transgression and turbulence. Transgression and excess are central to Gothic narratives as they signify the disruption of conventional and pre-established boundaries in order to interrogate social and cultural issues. According to Botting, "Gothic excesses…the fascination with transgression and the anxiety over cultural limits and boundaries, continue to produce ambivalent emotions and meanings in their tales of darkness, desire and power" (2). In the primary texts selected for the study, the Gothic excess and transgression are played out by the presence of ghosts and spectres, hybrid identity, violent histories, haunted homes and other spaces. What is of significance here is that both Shamsie and Aslam and their characters cross geographical boundaries as they move

from home to foreign territories and negotiate with new identities, thus signifying transgression of borders which subsequently generates fear, unhomeliness and dispossession. In addition to this, the Gothic turbulence is present in the historical landscapes of Pakistan and Afghanistan in the narratives which have conflict-ridden scenes with uncertainty threatening the continuity of a postcolonial state. Like Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981), Shamsie's novels have as their background, among others, the World War, the Partition and Indian independence movement.

Similarly, Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil* is set against the American War on Terror and war-torn Afghanistan as the backdrop and *Maps for Lost Lovers* takes place in a haunted fictional immigrant community living in a neighbourhood named 'the Desert of Loneliness' in England. Such drastic events and landscapes, according to Botting, develop room for horror, atrocity and monstrosity, which become fertile ground for the manifestation of Gothic haunting. The chapter explores these characteristics of the Gothic in the selected narratives to situate the texts within the framework of the Gothic.

The chapter also gives an overview of the postcolonial Muslim identity and how it is being projected and engaged with in the works of Shamsie and Aslam. In an age where Muslims continue to be in the spotlight of growing fervent political, cultural and academic discussions, the Muslim identity has become one that is heavily charged with political identity, nationalism, ethnicity and race. The Rushdie affair, 9/11 and the US War on Terror further intensified the discourse on postcolonial Muslim identity in the contemporary times as a result of which the figure of the Muslim has become a metaphor for barbarism and violence, meaning that "Muslimness has become synonymous with terror" (Kanwal 3). However, the chapter also acknowledges the fact that certain religious beliefs and practices of the Muslims are violent especially towards women. This is also addressed by the writers in focus in the selected texts.

With individual and cultural identity intrinsically linked to the concept of home, the immigrant/ migrant Pakistani identity has further garnered critical attention in the recent years. As Pakistani writers residing in the UK and the US, Shamsie and Aslam are attentive to the ways in which the Muslim identity is fabricated using the familiar terms and tropes of the West. Their works, therefore, engage with the search for identity, home and selfhood, and their diasporic identity extensively informs their writings. The chapter lays emphasis of how the two writers negotiate with the postcolonial Muslim identity in

their works and how their perspectives are defined by their personal experience as second- generation Pakistanis growing up in a conflict- ridden postcolonial state and their eventual move to Western metropolis.

Shamsie was born on 13 August, 1973 into an upper-class family of Karachi in Pakistan. Shamsie spent her childhood in a Pakistan which had recently recovered from the nine-month long 1971 Civil War which led to the secession of East Pakistan and the birth of a new country, Bangladesh. Hence, Shamsie grew up in an unsettling time when the hangover of a brutal and violent war still enveloped the nation. The war fostered a culture of violence where ethnic conflict and communal violence became rampant in Pakistan and Bangladesh. This is reflected in her novel *Kartography,* set in the 1971 Civil War and in 1991 Karachi where the impact of the war still looms large. Though she continued to pursue her higher education in the United States, Shamsie drew her literary inspiration from the Kashmiri poet Agha Shahid Ali. She moved to London in 2007 and became a part of the diasporic writers who wrote "within the precincts of the Western metropolis while at the same time retaining thematic and/or
political connections with a national background" (Boehmer 233).

Aslam, too, falls within this category of Pakistani diasporic writers. Nadeem Aslam was born on 11 June, 1966 in Gujranwala, Pakistan and spent his formative years under the tyrannical presidency of General Muhammad Zia-ul- Haq. When he was 14 years old, his family escaped from Pakistan and went to England because of his father's political affiliations with communism. Like Shamsie, Aslam stands on the borders between two cultures and his writings focus on Pakistan and the complicated spectrum of political and cultural allegiances which define the country. In *Maps for Lost Lovers,* Aslam tells the story of an immigrant Pakistani community and portrays their diasporic experience as one haunted by the loss of home and cultural identity. A similar sense of homelessness is seen in his third novel, *The Wasted Vigil* where he writes, "How keen everyone is to make this world their home, forgetting its impermanence. It's like trying to see and name constellations in a fireworks display" (Aslam 213).

The chapter, therefore, attempts to examine how the selected works of Shamsie and Aslam present the postcolonial Muslim identity as one that is marked by dispossession of homeland, migration, diaspora and cultural misrepresentation and most significantly, Islamophobia. It looks at the ways in which Muslims have become the

object of fear and terror in the West, an irrational fear that fosters the 'othering' of the Muslims in the global landscape. Khair suggest that it is important to note how new racisms and the prevailing attitude of the West towards the Muslims have "reconstructed and revivified some colonial and even precolonial notions of racial and religious Otherness" (Khair 3). Hence, the works of Shamsie and Aslam can be read as postcolonial Gothic texts engaged with the endurance of colonial violence and its related issues in the twenty first century.

CHAPTER 2: THE POSTCOLONIAL GOTHIC

This chapter attempts to provide an understanding of the postcolonial Gothic as a framework which accommodates the fears and anxieties of the contemporary times. By tracing the historical development of the Gothic from an eighteenth-century literary form to the Victorian Gothic and the Imperial Gothic, the chapter examines the relationship between the Gothic and empire and how this laid the foundation of the postcolonial Gothic. It also looks at several critical observations and existing definitions of the postcolonial Gothic.

During the Victorian period, the Gothic transitioned from just being tales of terror and horror and took on an imperial stance; it became conscious of the political and social changes of the age which paved way for the emergence of the Imperial Gothic. In the nineteenth century, authors increasingly incorporated Gothic and Orientalist elements, including imperial settings into their writings which led to the birth of the Imperial Gothic. According to Brantlinger, the fears inherent in the Imperial Gothic include the fear of "individual regression or going native" and "an invasion of civilization by the forces of barbarianism or demonism" (230). The postcolonial Gothic, on the other hand, signifies an "act of writing back" (Illot 19) as it deconstructs the fears addressed by the Imperial Gothic by "displacing the central concerns of Imperial Gothic by centralizing those who were once marginalized and made monstrous" (Illott 20). Also, the Imperial Gothic situates monstrosity in the racial Other which is evident in Bronte's 'mad' Creole, Bertha Mason or the cannibalistic tribes encountered by Marlow in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899). Bronte's narrative also addresses the gender Othering which have always been present since early Gothic narratives. Postcolonial Gothic not only subverts

these patterns of monstrosity but reveals the ambivalences and incongruities inherent in colonial discourse.

The chapter further examines the nature of the Freudian Uncanny as a distinctive characteristic of the postcolonial Gothic and how it is being employed in the four selected works of Shamsie and Aslam. Gina Wisker argues:

> Postcolonial Gothic is doubly uncanny. It takes received, formally legitimated versions of histories, cartographies and lives and opens them up like a suddenly raw, unhealed cut, revealing an ostensibly calm landscape interlaced with livid scars and putrid with hidden, historical violence…The postcolonial Gothic disturbs the calm surface of received and accredited versions of events, offers alternative versions, recovers and retells stories. (105)

Wisker's observation asserts the fact that the concept of the uncanny is central to the postcolonial Gothic. In his 1919 essay, Freud argues that the uncanny refers to "what was once familiar. The negative prefix *un*- is the indicator of the repression" (151). It is a concept developed from the German word *unheimlich* which he defines as "that species of the frightening that goes back to what was once well known and had long been familiar" (124). In the four selected texts for the study, the uncanny is examined in the form of the return of repressed histories, the haunting of the present by the once familiar past. This runs parallel to the diasporic identity, the immigration experience and the dispossession of homeland that we see in the selected narratives.

The play of the Uncanny in the narrative situates the characters in a state of liminal space between Pakistan and England. Kaukab's expressed sentiment aligns with Nicholas' Royle's statement that "the Uncanny is not simply an experience of strangeness or alienation… it is a peculiar commingling of the familiar and unfamiliar" (1). This "commingling" is also played out in the form of space in the haunted house of Marcus in *The Wasted Vigil*. Shamsie's characters in *Kartography* experience the uncanny in the domestic space as familial relationships become disintegrated by the return of the violence of the Civil War of 1971. In these narratives, the familiar alone cannot engender the effect of the Uncanny; the conflation of the binary, the familiar and the unfamiliar, is indispensible to the working of the Uncanny as one constantly inhabits the other. The uncanny experience, particularly of the second- generation immigrants, is a matter of in-betweenness and the Uncanny comes into play at the points of cultural

encounter. The familiar becomes unfamiliar on account of the cultural shock which they experienced because their parents and grandparents fail to pass on their native cultural values and practices to them.

In relation to the Freudian Uncanny, Homi Bhabha's concept of the 'Unhomely' is utilized to examine the primary texts in this chapter. Bhabha, in "The World and Home", lays emphasis on the concept of the 'unhomely' or the state of 'unhomeliness' which he identifies as "a paradigmatic postcolonial experience" (142). The Bhabhain 'unhomeliness' is stimulated by the Freudian theory of the uncanny and Bhabha argues that the unhomely is something "that captures something of the estranging sense of the relocation of the home and the world in an unhallowed place" (1). Bhabha defines unhomeliness as a haunted estrangement, an unfamiliar belonging where the space is characterized by a troubled or ghostly presence. Diaspora, dislocation, migration and their related concepts have become defining traits of the contemporary Muslim identity and experience to a large extent where home becomes the unhomely space infested with loss, a search for identity and a sense of haunting. Aslam's portrayal of both England and Pakistan in *Maps for Lost Lovers* indicates the presence of the unhomely in domestic settings caused by the tragic dispossession of their homeland. This feeling of dispossession of one's homeland is felt by Qayyum, the Pathun soldier in Shamsie's *A God in Every Stone,* who returned to Peshawar after long years of fighting in the British Army. Similarly, for Raheen and Karim in *Kartography,* Karachi is turned into an unhomely space, stripped off of its familiarity and the warmth of a home. Raheen realizes that the streets of Karachi are haunted by an uneasy invisible presence, which renders the place unhomely. She tells her friend Karim that whenever she passes through the marketplace, she thinks about the people who were beaten to death during the war in 1971 (Shamsie *Kartography* 233). Wisker argues that "postcolonial places are haunted places; everywhere there are traces of erasure of cultures and resistance, built over by the physical and psychological constructions of the imperial governors, the invader settlers" (23). The sense of unhomeliness is also signified by Karim's desperate desire and attempt to exert control over the unstable and ever shifting city by investing his time and interest in trying to create an official map of Karachi, "one that is not drawn in haste by white cartographers" (Shamsie *Kartography* 312).

In *The Wasted Vigil,* the eerie silence in Marcus' house where different nationalities come together and the ruined old perfume factory which housed the head of the haunted Buddha become the haunted 'geographic sites' which represent the foreign infested Afghanistan and the return of repressed histories. Julie Hakim Azzam argues that "in the postcolonial Gothic, homes and dwellings are the geographic sites in which larger political, historical, and national allegories are cast" (4). Hence, the unhomely sites and spaces in these narratives function as powerful national allegories which reflect distorted boundaries and disrupted identities in the postcolonial nation.

The study also engages extensively with the concept of home which has become a central aspect in postcolonial studies. In exploring the idea of home in relation to individual and cultural identity in the four selected texts, the thesis employs Rushdie's concept of 'imaginary homeland' which becomes crucial in understanding both Shamsie and Aslam's status and position as diasporic writers as well as the immigrant Muslim experience in their narratives. In her novels, Karachi and Peshawar become the focus of Shamsie's and her characters' "imaginary homeland," particularly Karachi, the home city of Shamsie before she moved to the UK. Similarly, in Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers*, the immigrant Muslim community in England tries to relive their lifestyle and experiences in Pakistan in their daily lives but miserably fails to reclaim what they have left behind. The characters in Shamsie and Aslam's narratives are all plagued by what Rushdie calls "the experience of uprooting, disjuncture and metamorphosis" which he believes is also "the migrant condition" (Rushdie 394). However, "the idea of home can acquire more power in the absence of access to the place itself, and this imagined construct has the power to strongly influence issues surrounding the intersection of home and identity" (Alghamdi 110). In light of this statement, one can argue that Shamsie and Aslam, as Pakistani writers residing in the West, have been able to portray Pakistan and the social realities in their narratives successfully.

In foregrounding the theoretical approach and concepts used in the study to locate the postcolonial Gothic in the selected texts, the chapter also looks at how the postcolonial and the Gothic are intricately interconnected through a mutual commitment to the concept of the Other and Tabish Khair rightly argues that both the Gothic and the postcolonial address "the problematics of narrating the 'Other'" (3). In the Gothic tradition, the portrayal of the monstrous, the grotesque and the diseased is

centered on the 'Other' and it is the presence of the 'Other' that contaminates the landscape and instigates the horror and terror in all Gothic narratives. In almost every Gothic writing, "the 'Other' remains the lynchpin of all perceptibly 'Gothic' action" (Khair 6). The Gothic and its preoccupation with Otherness can be traced back to the early history of the Gothic literary tradition. Literature of the eighteenth century witnessed a popular interest in oriental tales which was stirred into motion by the publication of the first English translation of *The Arabian Nights.* The reading public was introduced to tales of mysticism, tyrants, magicians, and dark dungeons. These elements came to be successfully incorporated into Gothic narratives like William Beckford's *Vathek* (1786). In all the major Gothic novels, the Other is portrayed as "Satan, demon, orphan, the outsider, vampire, ghost, non- Christian gods, sexually dangerous women" and the tale would often end with "the predictable destruction or containment of this Otherness" (Khair 6). As the genre progresses, the popular pattern in Imperial Gothic texts is marked by the portrayal of the native or the colonized as the undesirable 'Other'- the barbaric, the diseased, the ghostly. This literary pattern can be traced to the socio-economic setting of the British society of the eighteenth century, during which the idea of 'Empire' has started to haunt the center and became a social reality in Britain. As argued by Said in *Orientalism,* the concept of the Other is a construction of imperialist thinking to reinforce the privileged existence of the Self. The Other, in the postcolonial Gothic, is used to address prevailing social, racial and political realities.

CHAPTER 3: LOCATING THE OTHER

In the current geopolitical climate, Pakistani Muslim identity has assumed the role of the Other on account of the different forms of representation in literary works, Western media and cultural narratives. Said refers to this undesirable form of representation as "the residue of imperialism" (23). Within this context, this chapter relies on Sophia Rose Arjana's concept of 'the Muslim monster" which has been generated in the popular imagination of the West through different art forms, creating a negative identity that the West sees as "monsters that disturb the calm of white Christianity" (4). Hence, the process of 'othering' in the Muslim context is inevitably linked to their religious and racial identity.

Tracing the historical evolution of the 'Muslim monster' in Western history, the chapter examines how the figure of the Muslim has always been associated with otherness from the early medieval age and posited against Christianity. This image of the Muslim as the monstrous Other seeped its way into the Elizabethan age in the form of popular Renaissance paintings of evil Turkish lords and in the works of popular playwrights like Christopher Marlowe and Shakespeare. Even in the contemporary age, the identity of the Muslim is being socially and culturally colonized by western discourse as the religious and ethnic Other through popular culture and media narratives. Sarah Illot even identifies the 'othering' of the Muslims as "the neo- imperial effort to control oil in the Middle East" and the "military intervention is then justified as a response to 'their' hatred' of 'us' (25).

The chapter examines the ways in which the Muslim Other is perceived by the West as the monster or the haunted being in the four selected narratives. In Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil*, the Russian and American soldiers are terrorized by the ghosts of Marcus and Zameen's daughter who was killed by the Soviet soldiers and by the haunted statue of the Buddha "a face from another time" (233) in the perfume factory near Marcus' house. The ghosts of Jugnu and Chanda in *Maps for Lost Lovers* haunt the English landscape and when Kaukab invites Mah Jabin's English friend for dinner, she strongly declines the invitation and says, "Your people have brought all the dark magic and spells of your prophet from your country. I have no wish to see the monsters you have conjured up here" (Aslam *Maps* 352). In *A God in Every Stone*, the English soldiers are afraid to go outside at night in Peshawar because the ghost of the carpet seller's daughter frequently haunts the streets. The ghosts in these narratives can be read as a projection of the Western fear of the cultural Other that endangers the safety and security in of the west as represented in popular media narratives. Within the context of Orientalism, Said points out the irrationality of this fear of the Muslim Other and argues that "even when the Orient has uniformly been considered an inferior part of the world, it has always been endowed both with greater size and with a greater potential for power (usually destructive) than the West" (Said 4). This aligns with Arjun Appadurai's observation on how Western perceptions about Muslims have changed from a "terrorized minority to a terrifying majority…in the contemporary world" (111).

However, Shamsie and Aslam's novels not only present the Western perception of Muslims as Other but also subvert the notion of the Other in their narratives. In *Maps for Lost Lovers,* Aslam subverts the general Western tendency of presenting the Muslims as the Other and shifts the stereotypes constructed by the West to the white characters in the narrative. In the story, England is portrayed as a diseased and sickly country; the entrance of the white woman into Shamas' house is perceived by the family as a sign of bad luck and horror since the power supply goes off and the house becomes covered in darkness. The uncanny experience of the immigrants and the portrayal of England as the Other space can be seen in characters like Kaukab who says:

> I refuse to settle there permanently even though there is nothing I would like better. There is nothing on this planet that I loathe more than this country, but I won't go to live in Pakistan as long as my children are here. This accursed land has taken my children away from me… Each time they went out they returned with a new layer of stranger-ness on them until finally I didn't recognize them anymore. (Aslam *Maps* 146)

Shamsie's *A God in Every Stone* portrays the British as unwelcomed guests in Peshawar whose presence marks the place as unhomely. The unwanted presence of the Other, embodied by the British people, in the streets of Peshawar distorts Qayyum's view of the city and he feels as if he was standing on foreign soil. Qayyum the Pathan soldier often describes the British in Peshawar as "ghosts from some other time unaware of the cries that would pierce any living heart" (185) and Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil* showcases how the involvement of Britain, Russia and America in the history and political affairs of Afghanistan haunts the people and eventually destroys the country into rubbles. Aslam brings together characters from each nationality under one roof, a house haunted by the ghosts of the Afghan women and the haunted statue of the Buddha. In this manner, the narratives subvert European colonial discourse and the popular projection of the Muslim people and spaces in western media.

Aroosa Kanwal observes that "Pakistani diasporics" like Shamsie and Aslam "retain strong connection with their culture of origin, even in the diaspora" (128). This rootedness in one's native home and culture is expressed by "neutralizing or downplaying the importance of western space" (129) which aligns with what Rehana Ahmed refers to as "an abstraction of the space of Britain" (13) which, she points out, are present in

Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* and Shamsie's *Kartography.* This abstraction of Western space is brought into play with an objective to reposition the West as marginal and the non- West as central in the midst of what is perceived as the xenophobic or Islamophobic imaginary of the white majority populations abroad" (Kanwal 128).

The chapter also examines the dynamics of othering in the context of gender in the four selected texts. Through their marginalization as the gender Other, female characters in the postcolonial Gothic becomes the uncanny presence which highlights social injustices and flawed structures in these narratives. Kaukab, the orthodox mother figure in Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers,* Maheen and Raheen in Shamsie's *Kartography*, Zameen and Oatrina in *The Wasted Vigil* and Vivian in *A God in Every Stone* are the major female characters in the selected texts who are marked as uncanny characters on account of their gender identity. Through these characters, Shamsie and Aslam present the strict gender codes that confine Pakistani women as the very structure which prevents them from having positive cultural encounters.

CHAPTER 4: AGENCIES OF HAUNTING: HISTORY, MEMORY AND NOSTALGIA

The chapter examines how the texts in focus employ the concept of haunting in order to interrogate and negotiate with colonial history in the present. In the twenty-first century, the Gothic is being employed by different literary modes and genres as a result of which the concept of haunting has acquired new etymologies and representations that are endemic to our global age and "ways of becoming a ghost have become varied" (Blanco & Pereen x). Bobby Sayyid argues that Islam has become the distorted mirror on which the West sees its own past and that the Islamic resurgence "represents a return of the repressed" (2). He further identifies Islam as a source of 'fundamental fear' for the West and parallels this fear with the metaphor of the ghost as put forth by Derrida in *Spectres of Marx* (1994) to highlight the perception of Islam as a ghost that haunts the present. Thus, he opines:

> Of the many spectres that have haunted western civilization from time to time, perhaps none is so perplexing or so irredeemably strange as the contemporary resurgence of Muslim. The spectral nature of this phenomenon arises…from the

> way in which the Muslim presence for the West has tended to be grounded in a 'hauntology', which finds it all too easy to conflate Muslims as ghosts. (1)

In this context, the chapter examines how the figure of the ghost or spectre has become symbolical for social outcasts and those in the peripheries of societies and cultures such as immigrants, prisoners and vagabonds. In *Spectres of Marx,* Derrida argues that each age and time in history has its own spectres or ghosts and the chapter argues that the figure of the Muslim has become one of the new manifestations of haunting in the twenty-first century. The chapter also looks at haunting beyond the classical manifestations in Gothic texts like vampires, haunted castles, etc., and explore the immigrant experience, Muslim identity and the violent histories.

In the selected narratives of Shamsie and Aslam, history functions as an important agency that creates a sense of fear and haunting. History, for the two authors, is not only a source of knowledge about the past but a continuation of the past into the present. In *A God in Every Stone,* the historiography of Pakistan is portrayed as one that is being written and controlled by the colonizers. The Peshawar Museum is managed by the English historians who decide what should be stored and displayed in the museum. As aforementioned, the selected works of Shamsie and Aslam are populated by ghosts and spectres which become significant national and cultural allegories. The haunted statue of the Buddha in the old perfume factory near Marcus' house in *The Wasted Vigil* becomes an embodiment of the rich historical past of Afghanistan that has been pushed to the periphery by wars waged by outsiders and the political conflicts which ensued. The centrality of the past, particularly for diasporic identities, is emphasized by Rushdie in *Imaginary Homelands* (1981) where, in contrast to the general consensus of the past being a foreign country, Rushdie argues that it is the "present that is foreign, and that the past is home, albeit a lost home in a lost city in the mists of lost time" (9).

Shamsie and Aslam's choice of turbulent historical events like the 1971 Civil War and the Qissa Khwani massacre sets the Gothic landscape in the narratives which, according to Botting, is one of the primary characteristics of the Gothic. The chapter looks at how the colonial past, through cultural and individual history and memory, haunts the present in the selected narratives. It examines the manner in which revisiting the past fosters the aspect of haunting in the selected narratives. Particularly amidst the contemporary geo-political tension between the West and Islam, with the growing

Islamophobic sentiments, Pakistani literature in English places great emphasis on the idea of a return to the past in order to reconstruct the Muslim identity. In *Kartography*, it is the dark and violent history of Karachi that haunts the present state of the narrative. The traumatic legacies of the Partition and the Civil War are evident not only in the reference to historical events but in the individual lives of the characters. By juxtaposing the ethnic riots of 1980s Karachi with the 1971 Civil War, which resulted in the creation of an independent Bangladesh, Shamsie, in *Kartography*, foregrounds the 1971 Partition as a cruel historical event that has left irrevocable marks on the infrastructure of the country, focusing specifically on the social fabric of Karachi. She blends these aspects of national history with the family histories of Raheen and Karim. Hence, the text can be read as a narrative that embodies the trauma of the postcolonial nation marked by communal conflict, ethnic violence and political disturbances. Shamsie and Aslam intentionally select those crucial moments in history marked by turbulence and violence. In Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil,* the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979- 1989 provides the backdrop of the novel which connects the traumatic experience of all the characters. The representation of the Soviet invasion serves as a pivotal lens through which enable readers to understand the role of the West in the horrors and terrors that haunts Afghanistan. In this manner, the novels fulfil the objective of postcolonial fiction which is to reclaim repressed memory and to address the marginalized and the forgotten.

By portraying Karachi as a haunted space characterized by unease, violence and unfamiliarity, Shamsie draws attention to the violent histories that have shaped the city, particularly the Partition and the Civil war of 1971. Shamsie chooses the Qissa Khwani massacre, the tragic incident at the Streets of Storytellers as the climax of her narrative. The incident happened on 23 April, 1930 and it involved the shooting of unarmed civilians by the British soldiers and was one of the significant incidents in the freedom movement. In an interview with *The Hindu,* Shamsie talks about the reason for choosing to highlight the incident and she says:

> It was a horrible and important event, but now even in Pakistan, we don't know about it much. In Peshawar they remember, but in the rest of the country we don't…One of the things I want the novel to do is to remind people of this. (Shamsie *In Search*)

In this narrative, Shamsie also brings to light an interesting yet unpopular history of the Pathans. The Khudai Khidmatgar movement which features prominently in the novel which was a Pashtun non-violent movement who resisted the British occupation in the Indian subcontinent. Shamsie says:

> The Khudai Khidmatgar was not some tiny blip in history. Ghaffar Khan remains the most popular political leader. But we just talk about the Pathans as though they are fundamentalists and extremists. If they were like that, then in Peshawar they would have welcomed the Taliban with open arms, whereas they're resisted and they're getting bombed everyday. (Shamsie *In Search*)

Kartography revisits the events of the Civil War of 1971 and Shamsie paints a dark and haunting picture of Karachi and how the city is transformed into an unhomely space on account of its violent history. This revisiting of the past haunts the present because with her acquired knowledge about the events of 1971, the protagonist Raheen learns of the choices that her parents had made in order to survive and her own father's involvement in anti-Bengali movement. This knowledge shatters the image she has of her parents and everyone around her, leading to the collapse of family structure.

In this chapter, the role of memory, as an agency of haunting, is also examined in the four selected texts. Within the postcolonial vicinity, the revisiting of the past through different agencies such as memory and nostalgia is often employed by writers. The chapter examines the manner in which memory is materialized in the form of physical spaces and objects, thus triggering a sense of haunting in the novels. Memories of the past are materialized in Marcus' haunted house, the old perfume factory and the haunted Buddha in *the Wasted Vigil* and in the maps created by Karim in *Kartography.*

The chapter also looks at the concept of nostalgia as an agency that generates a sense of fear and haunting in the selected narratives. In *The Future of Nostalgia* (2001), Svetlana Boym defines nostalgia as:

> A rebellion against the modern idea of time, the time of history and progress. The nostalgic desires to obliterate history and turn it into a private or collective mythology, to revisit time like space, refusing to surrender to the irreversibility of time that plagues the human condition. (42)

This 'refusal to surrender' is what plagues Kaukab in *Maps for Lost Lovers*, Karim in *Kartography* and Vivian in *A God in Every Stone.* In postcolonial Gothic texts, "the

presence of the Gothic allows a space for the unspeakable and the haunted past to force its way to the surface, particularly in a culture characterized by loss and transgression" (Wisker 10). In examining nostalgia as an agency of haunting in the selected narratives, the chapter rests on Denis Walder's definition of postcolonial nostalgia as "the uncertain zone between memory and history" which he associates with "contemporary figures whose links with earlier times and places have been severed by migration or displacement" (2)). Hence, this renders nostalgia as a liminal experience. For the postcolonial subject whose pasts have been shaped by colonization, nostalgia is more about a feeling of longing and desire for a lost home, place and time which haunts the present instead of "the rosy, sentimental glow" (Walder 3) or the reminiscing of the "good old days" (4). In *A God in Every Stone,* Qayyum's nostalgia about Peshawar which was free from the English rule makes him unable to adapt to the modern and progressive lifestyle that his brother expects from him to lead. Hence, he is being referred to as "a prisoner of the past" (Shamsie *A God* 189) and this severed his relationship with his brother.

The history of colonialism was in many ways one of displacement, brutality, renaming, and deliberate reconfiguration and reimagining of places, spaces and lives, which preceded its violent rupture. A recollection and reflection of the colonial past enable the subjects to reimagine, rewrite and reinterpret their own history, and to discard the historical narratives constructed for them by the colonizers. In the novels of Shamsie and Aslam, memory is recognized as the agency responsible for the reconstruction of the imaginary homeland and individual and cultural identity in the present. However, the unreliability of memory leads to distortion, trauma and alienation in the present reality. Memory does not merely recover the past or a distant homeland but reconstructs them in order to negotiate with the present. Memory, thus, plays a significant role in the formation of immigrant identity. Stressing on the role of memory in the identity formation of the immigrant, Alghamdi argues:

> For those separated from their homeland, history, and language, marginalized and perhaps discriminated against in a new environment, and forced to rely on that inherently unreliable element-memory- to produce identity, diverse and creative methods of constructing the self have become necessary. (172)

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The concluding chapter summarizes the different aspects of the postcolonial Gothic as seen in the selected narratives of Shamsie and Aslam. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, the postcolonial Gothic is an amalgam of anti-colonial narratives and Gothic tropes to interrogate, dismantle and destabilize dominant cultural narratives that push marginalized postcolonial subjects to the periphery of culture and politics. In the years following 9/11, there has been a shift in the racist discourse which Sarah Illot terms as "new racism" which is marked by an "increased framing of Muslims in mainstream news sources" (25). The concluding chapter establishes the fact that the concern of the study is more on the postcolonial aspect of Pakistani Muslim identity engagement rather than the conflict between two religious faith. The main concern of Shamsie and Aslam's fiction is to provide critiques and insights regarding Pakistani identities in their homeland and abroad characterized by their religion.

However, Shamsie and Aslam's works often tend to merge the nation and the political with the personal; their identities as Pakistanis do inform their works to a large extent which put them in a position where they are compelled to address the status of Muslims in the twenty first century global politics. It is in such a frenzied international political climate that Pakistani writers like Shamsie and Aslam employ the postcolonial Gothic "to index the failure of realist representation and to provide a language for the experiences of alienation and abjection of Muslims" (Illot 26) and in Western popular culture. It has become the task of such postcolonial writers like Shamsie and Aslam to provide counter narratives against the continuous repercussions of colonial violence and new fears and horrors that manifest themselves in the politics of culture, race and religion. These authors living in the diaspora become cultural intermediaries trying to bring the predicament of their country to an international audience that is fixated by its turbulent political situation. The postcolonial Gothic, thus, provides postcolonial authors with a shorthand for articulating repressed histories and recounting past traumas through a language of haunting and spectrality.

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