

**Analyzing Psychoanalytical Perspective of Immigration and Marginalization:**

**Hyphenated Diasporic Identities in Monica Ali's *Brick Lane***

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**Abstract**

*This research explores the psychoanalytical aspects of the lives of South Asian immigrant characters in the novel Brick Lane (2003). The novel highlights the theme of migration, describing the shock of arrival, the process of settlement, and the subsequent problems involved in the transition from one country to another, as well as from a rural environment to an urban. This research explores cultural issues related to migrant diaspora living in London. The novel constructs a detailed exploration of the psychological responses of particular individuals to the traumas of migration and marginalization, alongside an investigation of the psychological roots of the current conflicts between different ethnic and religious groups. This research represents an interdisciplinary study, combining a detailed reading of Brick Lane with recent psychoanalytic analyses of personality development and the effects of geographical displacement and migration on the individual and collective psyche. Salman Akhtar's work on the psychological causes and consequences of migration is used as a major theoretical framework in this research. The novel is mainly concerned with the personal development of a protagonist Bangladeshi woman, Nazneen, in England. This paper presents the diasporic consciousness along with the psychoanalytical perspectives of the migrants of the South Asian region and how they face the issues of cultural ambivalence.*

**Keywords:** Diaspora, Psychoanalysis, Migration, Identity, Displacement, Conflict.

**Introduction**

Since the Second World War, the English literary scene has undergone a radical transformation, as authors formerly associated with the margins of society and culture have come to occupy an increasingly central position. The new writing produced by migrants from Britain's former colonies and their descendants has introduced a new dimension to fiction focusing on new subjects and genres so that it has been termed by some critics the "new English literature" (King, 2004). As Bruce King has emphasized, this change can be traced to the post-war wave of immigration to Britain:

*"Unlike previous period changes, this one had its basis in a large influx of peoples from elsewhere, especially those of non-European origins, which resulted in the literature of England taking different perspectives from those in the past, having new concerns, and often being focused on the immigrants, their children, and their place in society." (King, 2004)*

After the arrival of the Empire Windrush, the first ship to bring migrant workers to England in 1948, the number of immigrants coming to Britain drastically increased. Works of literature belonging to this era contrast dramatically with those by earlier writers like Rudyard Kipling, who described colonial life from the perspective of the white imperialist. King divides the literature associated with this transformation into three different phases. In the early phase, mourning for the motherland, nostalgia, and fantasies about going home are dominant themes; in the second phase, authors frequently explore problems of integration into host culture; finally, the authors of the third phase, which is still in progress, are mainly concerned with the struggles to be accepted as part of British

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identity and history. *Brick Lane* explores such issues as discrimination, integration, the notions of belonging and exclusion, and racial and ethnic tensions. The novel is mainly concerned with the personal development of a Bangladeshi woman, Nazneen, in England. The name "Brick Lane" refers to an area of East London where many immigrants have settled from diverse countries, and in which there are many conflicts between different ethnic groups. According to Yasmin Hussain:

*"Brick Lane represents a transitional place where people either manage to succeed in overcoming their problems and stay in Britain, or fail and eventually leave. Brick Lane explores the theme of migration, describing the shock of arrival, the process of settlement, and the subsequent problems involved in the transition from one country to another, as well as from a rural environment to an urban."* (Hussain, 2005, p.94)

Nazneen is forced to come to England because of an arranged marriage. Her younger sister, Hasina, has run away to make a love-marriage without her father's permission, so Nazneen's father finds her a husband in England and sends her away. Nazneen is nineteen and Chanu is forty when they marry. In England, Nazneen experiences many problems. First, she does not know the language; secondly, the Bangladeshi community in Brick Lane is very strict, so she is initially not allowed to go out alone. She is very homesick and longs for her village. She also misses her sister deeply and is distressed when Hasina writes to tell her that she has run away from her abusive husband, and is struggling to survive alone in Dhaka. Nazneen feels very isolated, partly because her alienation from her environment leads her to resist engaging with others, and partly because of Chanu's inability to empathize with her. She loses her first baby, Raqib, but then gives birth to two girls, Shahana very isolated, partly because her alienation from her environment leads her to resist engaging with others, and partly because of Chanu's inability to empathize with her. She loses her first baby, Raqib, but then gives birth to two girls, Shahana and Bibi. While raising her children she learns English from them. She tries to mitigate her sorrows with her daughters. However, her life changes when she falls in love with a young British-born Bangladeshi, Karim, and has an affair with him. For the first time in her life, she feels that someone cares for her. It makes her excited but at the same time, she feels guilty because she is sinning. As their affair progresses, she realizes that Karim, like Chanu, is trying to dominate her life. She understands that he does not recognize her true identity, but just sees her as a naive village girl: he calls her "the real thing" (*Brick Lane*, 320), alluding to his image of her as a true Bangladeshi woman, un-spoilt by the West. *Brick Lane* was phenomenally successful and was made into a film in 2007. It has been widely discussed by critics because of its intense exploration of the experiences of a minority (Bangladeshi) culture in Britain. However, it has also become the subject of a heated debate concerning its complex political position as an exploration of a marginalized diaspora in Britain, comprising a formerly colonized people, and a narrative which has seemed to some to valorize Western modes of thinking over Eastern. Ali herself has come under attack as a Westernized woman seeking to represent a culture she no longer belongs to or understands.

### **Sophisticated Use of Psychological Realism**

The rest of the paper suggests how a focus on Ali's sophisticated use of psychological realism may allow a deeper understanding of the novel's world and her achievement to emerge. Michael Perfect has argued that "Rather than representing attempts to propagate and strengthen stereotypes, Ali's criticism of Bangladeshi culture and society functions to create an alternative, positive perspective on the experience of migration and diaspora living, (Perfect, 2008, p.110). By tracing Nazneen's unexpected progress towards integration into the British culture and community, Nazneen's story represents a celebration of individual resourcefulness, and can, therefore, be seen as a form of bildungsroman, or narrative of development. "*Brick Lane's* intensive focus on Nazneen's self-actualization, and eventual acceptance of life in Britain, associate it with this traditional Western genre, particularly as it traces Nazneen's story from her early childhood onwards" (Perfect, 2008, p.109). Alistair Cormack suggests that Ali's use of a traditional Western technique is problematic in the context of the new multicultural English literature:

*"On the one hand, realism ceases to be traditional, because it is called on to depict this new social juncture; the form's limits become visible, as do the presumptions by which it works. On the other...what I will term the 'doublings' of hybrid cultural and psychological structures is flattened when it is represented in a form that stresses linear*

*Development towards self-awareness.” (Cormack, 2006)*

Ali places her local and particular narrative within the political context of the world-wide conflict between East and West, Islam, and Christianity. The events of 9/11 are viewed through the eyes of characters who are caught within this conflict, regarded as the dangerous other by the host culture, and at the same time attempting to deal with the growing radicalization of their community.

*“Ali’s attempt to shed light on hidden, particularly female, lives, Therefore, can be associated with a postcolonial agenda, while also Making her novel a postmodern text, whose meta-textuality absolves It from charges of cultural commodification.” (Hiddleston, 2005)*

Critics have therefore been divided into their responses to the novel; while one group sees it as a Westernized betrayal of Eastern experience and perspectives, another regards it as innovative in its attempt to create a new kind of genre, fusing postcolonial discourse with Western literary tradition. However, this persistent focus on the political status of the novel has tended to overlook what this paper will suggest is Ali’s main achievement: a detailed exploration of the relationship between psychological development and cultural experience, an analysis of the psychological causes and consequences of migration, and an attempt to relate individual psychology to the psychological identities of broader groups and communities. As this paper shows, Ali’s attention to psychological conflicts reflects recent theoretical developments in the fields of migrant psychology, the evolution of group allegiances, and the effects of culture and personal history on individual personality formation. This paper represents an interdisciplinary study, combining a study of *Brick Lane* with recent psychoanalytic analyses of personality development and the effects of geographical displacement and migration on the individual and collective psyche. In particular, the paper explores the characters in terms of the psychic structures underlying their representation in the novel, as well as the processes of mourning they undergo. The novel examines the problems experienced by immigrants living in a new culture, issues of integration, the relationships between first and second-generation immigrants, and the migrants’ attitudes towards and relationships with the host culture and their own diasporic and native communities. The novel’s main characters, Nazneen, Chanu, Shahana, Bibi, Nazneen’s friend, Razia, and Chanu’s friend, Doctor Azad, are carefully differentiated in psychological terms. Ali shows how the stages following an immigrant’s first steps in a different land, and the problems of integration and diasporic living, have a profound effect on his or her psychological well-being, but can also be associated with his or her earlier cultural and familial experiences. For example, Nazneen grows up and marries into a culture within which women are devalued and treated as commodities. Moreover, in exploring the unconscious lives of the characters, their dreams, fantasies, and compulsions, Ali attempts to penetrate beneath the surface of postcolonial critique and extend the boundaries of realism. Françoise Kral has examined the consequences of what she describes as the “new geographies”, in which people are brought together because of increased mobility and communication, but may also suffer a growing sense of in-betweenness and no belonging. According to Lopez:

*“As the aftermaths of each of the global cataclysms of the last decade Have amply demonstrated, it is the poor, the disenfranchised and marginalized who bear the brunt of suffering and anxiety set in Motion by the economic, political and cultural changes unleashed by Globalization at the level of neighborhoods and communities.” (Lopez, 2008)*

Lopez associates the novel with the post 9/11 era. After the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks on the United States in 2001 and the July 7<sup>th</sup> attacks on Britain in 2005, the divergence between the Western and Eastern (especially Muslim) worlds deepened. On the one hand, America and Britain’s invasion of Iraq, and the Intifada in Palestine, caused great uneasiness within the Muslim world, and the repercussions from these events did not take long to reach the Muslims in the West. These attacks led those Muslim immigrants who already felt marginalized to become more attached to their religion and ethnicity, and in this way find the opportunity to express their problems through violence and political actions.

### **Research Questions**

1. How psychological responses of particular individuals to the traumas of migration and marginalization have formed and presented in Monica Ali’s *Brick Lane*?

2. How hyphenated diasporic identities have been projected in the selected text?

### Research Methodology

This paper presents a close reading of the novel through the work of three contemporary psychoanalytic theorists: Vamik Volkan, Salman Akhtar, and James F. Masterson. The works of these theorists shed light on different aspects of Ali's novel, illuminating issues surrounding personal development, the effects of migration, the circumstances of marginalized groups and migrant women in the West, and the complex reasons for social membership of groups. In their intensive focus on how psychoanalytic techniques can unravel the complex psychic structures affecting notions of cultural belonging or un-belonging, responses to migration and forms of oppression, and finally, the personal responses and choices that affect the outcomes of people's lives, the works of these theorists can be read fruitfully alongside one another. It explores the treatment of the psychological experience of migration in the novel, regarding Salman Akhtar's work on the psychological effects of immigration. This discussion includes phenomena such as nostalgia, 'going home' syndrome, mourning, and rehabilitation. The main study used here is Akhtar's *"Immigration and Identity: Turmoil, Treatment, and Transformation"* (1999). Overall, the paper argues that critical readings of the novel which focus on the author's own ethnic and cultural background, or which attempt to read *Brick Lane* only in terms of postcolonial "writing back", are inadequate to understand Ali's achievement. The novel represents a careful psychological study in which different personalities and their different histories and choices are put under the microscope. The novel also demonstrates that circumstances of ethnicity and migration are important factors in constructing a sense of self. The differences between the characters also relate to wider theories concerning the psychological roots and consequences of identifying what Volkan terms "enemies and allies." The Grinbergs use Melanie Klein's theories concerning guilt (1948) to explore the mourning process of immigrants, and the guilt they feel concerning those left behind. "Mistrust, fear, rage, greed, and ruthlessness predominate. In the depressive position, the self is aware of the losses and accepts them, but demonstrates mending mechanisms, such as seeing the self and other as not wholly good or bad." (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989, p.89)

### Analysis

The following paper explores *Brick Lane* in terms of recent theories concerning the psychological motivations for, and effects of, migration. An important early study of the psychology of immigrants is *Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Immigration and Exile* by Leon and Rebecca Grinberg (1984). The Grinbergs themselves lived in three different countries, so they had the opportunity to contribute their own experiences to their study. They discuss both normal and pathological reactions to migration, and the mourning process immigrants frequently experience in exile. They describe the early consequence of migration as the phenomenon of "disorienting anxiety", which arises from:

*"[p]roblems in differentiating one's feelings about two subjects of interest and conflict: the country and people one has left behind and the new environment...The emigrant experiences this as if his parents were divorced, and he engages in fantasies of forming an alliance with one against the other. Confusion increases when culture, language, place points of reference, memories, and experiences become mixed up and superimposed on one another. Confused states also result from defensive attempts to stave off persecutory anxieties in the face of the unknown." (Leon and Grinberg, 1984, pp.87-88)*

In his work *Immigration and Identity* (1999) Akhtar begins by noting that even under the best circumstances immigration is a traumatic experience, before going on to discuss the factors which affect the psychological outcomes of immigration. It cannot be denied that the immigration of a temporary ambassador to a country and sudden exile from one's country for political or economic reasons are not the same. Nazneen experiences her first months in England as a form of imprisonment, in a strange country, an apartment block which she sees as a tomb, a room which she regards as hostile, and finally a body which she regards as no longer her own. At this point in the novel, Nazneen's experience of the new country does not extend beyond her immediate environment and bodily sensations. Her only means of escape is by returning to her home environment through

fantasy. These mental returns to her home country occur in both waking fantasy and dreams, and are much more colorful and immediate than her perceptions of life in England:

*“Nazneen fell asleep on the sofa. She looked out across jade-green Rice fields and swimming in the cool dark lake. She walked arm-in-arm to school with Hasina, and skipped part of the way and fell and they dusted their knees with their hands. And the mynah birds called from the trees, and the goats fretted by, and the big sad water buffaloes passed like a funeral. And heaven, which was high above, was wide and empty and the land stretched out ahead and she could see to the very end of it, where the earth smudged the sky in a dark blue line.” (Brick Lane, 16)*

Akhtar emphasizes that immigration is a complex experience that must be analyzed from several perspectives. To begin with, he suggests that the individual's age on migration is important. Old people are more vulnerable to the traumatic changes caused by immigration than the young. Although young, Nazneen has been forced to migrate against her will. However, her youth means that she is eventually able to reconcile herself to life in England. Nazneen's children, who have never been to Bangladesh, resist Chanu's attempts to force them to identify with his homeland. "Parents may be voluntary or involuntary emigrants but children are always 'exiled': they are not the ones who decide to leave and they can't decide to return at will" (Grinberg and Grinberg, 1989, p.125). Migrant children might either identify themselves with the host culture, like Nazneen's eldest daughter, Shahana, or turn to a mythologized ideal of their homeland, like Nazneen's lover, Karim, who has also never visited Bangladesh. Within the novel, Shanana frequently complains about her lack of agency: she tells Chanu that she did not ask to be born in England, and does not want to leave the country; she even tries to run away. The character of Shahana demonstrates the pressure children of migrants may be placed under by their parents to preserve their culture and religion:

*“Parental expectations about transmitting their religious faith to their children can present an undue pressure on the children who are living in Western culture. The pressures children feel have increased even more, in lieu of more recent increases in racism and religious hatred toward Moslem families. In addition to their normal developmental tasks, these children have to witness parental mourning of their lost motherland. They are expected to learn religious principles, as well as practicing them on a daily basis.” (Mann, 2008)*

The psychological outcome of immigration is also related to the nature of the country or region one has left behind. Migration from a poor country may trigger unconscious guilt. For example, refugees may feel guilty for surviving while others have not a phenomenon known as "survivor guilt". On the other hand, migrating from an affluent country to a less affluent one may also be related to unconscious guilt. Guilt is common among immigrants from Israel, for example. They feel guilty for leaving 'the Promised Land' and believe that sooner or later they will go back (Akhtar, 1999, p.18). In *Brick Lane*, Nazneen continually feels guilty for leaving Hasina in Bangladesh: "What was Hasina doing? This thought came to her all the time. *What is she doing right now?* It was not even a thought. It was a feeling, a stab in the lungs. Only God knew when she would see her again" (*Brick Lane*, p.16). A male immigrant coming from a Muslim country in which there is little interaction between men and women to a Western country may find women's behavior towards him inappropriate. Also, the concept of punctuality may be perceived differently between Eastern and Western cultures, since for the former time is associated much more with sharing something with others, while for the latter it is related with gaining commodities or wealth, as a consequence of capitalism and industrialization:

*“For the East, relatively speaking, past, present, and future merge into one another; for the West, they are discrete entities. For the East experience in time is like water collected in a pool; for the West time is more like water flowing in a stream, and one is acutely aware that what flows away, flows away forever.” (Pande, 1968)*

In *Brick Lane*, Nazneen remembers breaking down when the staff on the airline as she travels to England offer her breakfast cereal, a hitherto unknown food. Food plays a major part in the novel. For example, Nazneen first begins to be reconciled to Chanu when she discovers that he can cook. When they visit Dr. Azad and his wife, they are deeply shocked when they are served British convenience food. Perhaps the language barrier is the most difficult one. The inability to speak her mother tongue gives the immigrant pain. According to Julia Kristeva, the migrant has:

*“To live with sounds, logics, that are separated from the nocturnal memory of the body... You learn to use another instrument, like expressing yourself in algebra or on the violin... You have the impression that the new language is your resurrection: a new skin, a new sex. But the illusion is torn apart when you listen to yourself.”*  
(Kristeva, 1988)

For Nazneen, gradual entry into the new culture and language, rather than depriving her of her true self, enables her to realize a new, more powerful identity. For the immigrant, these factors increase a sense of cultural unbelonging and desire to search for his or her roots. Reception by the host population is another influential factor in shaping the outcome of migration. The more mono-ethnic the society, the more difficult it is for the immigrant to integrate into that community. Before the post-war immigration wave, the British community was a broadly homogenous culture. Therefore, the first major wave of post-war immigrants faced a lot of obstacles. As Akhtar has said, the newcomer might be seen as an interloper who will deprive the natives of economic opportunities and life resources, or, maybe seen as the ones who provide the workforce for the country. The result may be prejudice and xenophobia on the part of the host culture. For example”

*“And in religious instruction what will your child be taught? Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John? No. Krishna, Abraham, and Muhammad. Christianity is being gently slaughtered. It is ‘only one’ of the world’s ‘great religions’. Indeed, in our local schools, you could be forgiven for thinking that Islam is the official religion.”* (*Brick Lane*, 207)

This quotation emphasizes the group’s struggle to keep the society homogenous, an aim that can also be related to Volkan’s theory of “the need to have enemies and allies”, As *Brick Lane* emphasizes, the children of immigrants are affected badly by these conflicts. Because of the double stress stemming from their seclusion from the host culture, and accusations of cultural or religious disloyalty from home, they may turn to drugs or alcohol. According to Akhtar, children who are born in the new land help the parents to develop ties to the adopted country by bringing the norms of the new culture home, especially when they begin to go to school (Akhtar, 1999, p. 26). Akhtar also analyzes the effects of bodily characteristics on responses to migration. Firstly, if there is a great difference in skin color, eyes, and body between the newcomer and host community then the immigrant’s acceptance by the host group will be slower. Abbasi notes that:

*“There can hardly be a more striking example of the negative power of blackness than the current plight of the black Ethiopian Jews in Israel... These are Jews who were brought back to Israel in 1991 and were extended full citizenship. However, their condition in Israel is already complicated by the development of ghettos, welfare dependence, and poor education. Even as a Jew, being black has become a problem for these people in a country that ostensibly welcomed them home.”*  
(Abbasi, 1998)

The novel, therefore, emphasizes women's resourcefulness in difficult circumstances; Nazneen eventually makes a success of her life in England once she makes contact with others outside her home. "However, many studies of women's lives after migration suggest that women are frequently doubly disempowered in diasporic communities: first as migrants within the wider society, and secondly, within their community, a devalued other" (Baluja, 2002). Women are subject to intense pressures: girls' styles of dress are of great concern to parents and husbands, while they often do not care about boys'. As Laurie et al have shown, in Eastern migrant diasporas even younger brothers can make trouble for their sisters at home: when interviewed about this subject, young British Asian girls living in London describe their problems:

*"I had all these split ends and I asked one of my friends to cut my hair And she trimmed it for me. When I got home my mum noticed and she had a fit. My brother was sitting there, he's a year younger than me, and he started saying, "you'd better control this girl. She's getting out of hand. She's cut her hair. She might start wearing mini skirts tomorrow and going out with boys." (Laurie, 1999)*

In *Brick Lane*, Bangladeshi women, especially the older ones, support the oppression of women in their culture. The rich moneylender, Mrs. Islam, continually attempts to control Nazneen, especially by trying to take over the upbringing of her baby son. "They do what they want. It is a private matter. Everything is a private matter. That is how the white people live" (*Brick Lane*, 60). In their article, "Islam, Sex, and Women", Siassi and Siassi suggest that Islam's rules about sexuality and cultural norms are interpreted differently within different cultures, and are frequently distorted; however, elderly women are often the first to inhibit the sexuality of younger women, and to insist on masculine supremacy (Siassi, 2008).

### **Findings**

This paper represents a contribution to the critical debate about *Brick Lane*, one of the most influential novels to be published in England in recent years. This paper reflects the hidden psychological aspects of immigration, including survivor guilt, integration problems, conflicts between groups and the reasons of these conflicts, mourning process, the meaning of dreams, the factors affecting migration, the living conditions of female immigrants and the roots of the personality disorders represented in the major characters. It can be said that Monica Ali deliberately draws attention to these issues by exploring the psychic structures of immigrants. Akhtar has studied the psychological causes and effects of migration on individuals. The work of these theorists can enable a more profound understanding of *Brick Lane* to emerge. Psychoanalytic theory helps to illuminate the differences between the characters, who despite coming from the same broad community are strongly differentiated in terms of their personalities and the experiences that have shaped them. An understanding of the psychoanalytic background to the process of grief and mourning is also vital for a true understanding of the novel since Nazneen is not only an immigrant, Muslim or Bangladeshi grieving for her homeland, but also a grieving daughter, mother, and sister, who has not been allowed to come to terms with her losses. Volkan's analysis of the psychological reasons for group identification of enemies or allies illuminates the treatment of cultural, religious and ethnic conflict in *Brick Lane*, and the sense of anguish Chanu, and Nazneen's lover, Karim, experience when they are unable to decide where they belong. Masterson's theories of personality development, which he portrays as a quest for a "real self", are also particularly important for understanding Ali's characters. Nazneen's early life and cultural inheritance have formed her in terms that strongly resemble the 'schizoid' character who withdraws from contact with others and retreats into fantasy and self-reliance to survive. Nazneen's sister, Hasina, is also strongly depicted in psychological terms. She is never directly encountered in the novel but only through her letters, which are written in a kind of broken language that has confused some critics. Like Nazneen, Hasina's life choices are partly dictated by her gender. Her attempts at self-determination, for example, by choosing her husband and then choosing to leave him, fail partly because of her cultural environment. However, they also fail because of her personality, which is strongly contrasted with that of Nazneen. While Nazneen keeps her psychic self apart from Chanu, Hasina is unable to resist fusing her identity with others: the men who finally betray and reject her. The broken language of Hasina's letters, rather than reinforcing a gendered and racial stereotype, as some critics have suggested, expresses her damaged self, which she never gains insight into, and is therefore never able to repair. Nazneen and Hasina are contrasted in the novel partly in terms of their circumstances and environments, but also terms of their personalities and responses: Nazneen has internalized the message her mother gave her: "don't try to resist your fate."

However, Hasina has rejected her family's outlook and attempted to forge her path. Ironically, it is Hasina who is destroyed while Nazneen eventually succeeds. Chanu's continual attempts to gain attention from others reflect his search for belonging and recognition, and his divided allegiances between British and Bangladeshi culture express his search for a real, integrated self. His narcissistic characteristics can be connected with his subjectivity as a formerly colonized other trying to live in the West. At the end of the novel, Chanu feels that he must leave Britain, despite his years working to establish identity there. However, Nazneen, who early in the novel has felt herself completely

alienated from the British environment, is finally able to construct a hybrid self-capable of a form of integration. It is this seeming praise of the West that has alienated some of Ali's critics. This paper has attempted to explore Ali's most important achievement: a form of psychological realism rather than political polemic.

### **Conclusion**

Most of the characters in *Brick Lane* are female. If we categorize them as weak or dominant, we see that the dominant ones (such as Mrs. Islam), or those who become powerful later (such as Nazneen and Razia) achieve their goals by gaining economic independence from men. There are two solutions to this gender problem: bringing up psychologically and intellectually educated women and providing a means for their economic freedom. Like Akhtar, therefore, Ali suggests that if they are given the chance women are more successful in acculturating than men. Nazneen integrates more successfully into British society than Chanu after she begins to work. This suggests that, if they are given opportunities rather than being insulated from society, women can be much more successful than men at setting targets and achieving them in immigrant societies. The novel emphasizes women's resourcefulness in difficult circumstances; Nazneen eventually makes a success of her life in England once she makes contact with others outside her home. In *Brick Lane*, Chanu complains about the double standards of his boss concerning promotion and says he will not be promoted unless he paints his skin pink and white. Second, the degree to which one uses one's body and the functions it is asked to perform vary from culture to culture. Third, the degree to which body parts can be exposed, or conversely have to be covered up, varies from culture to culture. While swimming suits or bikinis may be welcome in Western cultures, they may be regarded as disturbing, or even obscene, in some sexually repressive cultures. Similarly purdah, the chadar, hijab, sari, or kimono may be seen as restrictive and silly in Western cultures. In such circumstances, the newcomer pays attention to such bodily signs as gestures and facial expressions. If enough attention is not paid, communication between members of the same genders may also cause uneasy consequences. In some cultures, two males' displays of intimacy, like hugging or kissing, may not be welcome. In *Brick Lane*, Nazneen is surprised at the Westernized appearance and confrontational speech and behavior of Dr. Azad's wife, who deliberately rejects the Bangladeshi female code of deference to the male.

### **Recommendations**

- This research explores Monica Ali's novel, *Brick Lane* (2003), and cultural issues related to migrant diaspora living in London. Upcoming researchers can explore the same problems and issues in different South Asian diasporic texts.
- This research demonstrates and attempts to construct a postcolonial critique of the migrant experience. New researches may be conducted in a comparative analysis style between the diasporic texts of two countries like Pakistan and India.
- The selected novel constructs a detailed exploration of the psychological responses of particular individuals to the traumas of migration and marginalization, alongside an investigation of the psychological roots of the current conflicts between different ethnic and religious groups. The same conflicts lie in Pakistani and Indian diasporic texts, which can be taken as primary texts for upcoming researches to explore the psychoanalytical dimensions of the selected texts.
- This research represents an interdisciplinary study, combining a detailed reading of *Brick Lane* with recent psychoanalytic analyses of personality development and the effects of geographical displacement and migration on the individual and collective psyche. This research provides a solid ground to explore the Pakistani and Indian diasporic texts in the post-partition context which will be a research asset in the future.
- In uncovering the connections between the psychological and political issues raised in the novel, this research offers an original contribution to the debate concerning *Brick Lane's* status in what has been termed the "New English literature."

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