GOMBE SAVANNAH JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES VOL. 5 NO. 2 DECEMBER, 2024

GOMBE SAVANNAH

JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES (GOSAJOLLCOS)

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
GOMBE STATE UNIVERSITY

Volume 5 Number 2
December, 2024

SAVANNAH JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES (SAJOLLCOS)

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH GOMBE STATE UNIVERSITY

VOLUME 5, NO. 2, DECEMBER 2024

ISSN: ONLINE: 2811-2261, PRINT: 2787-0286

A Publication of Department of English Gombe State University, Gombe State

ISSN: 2787-0286 Print & 2811-2261 Online

Printed in Nigeria @Six-Sweet Printers and Publishers
GSU, Gombe, Gombe State.
Phone No: +2348039511789
E-**mail**: alameenalfira@gamil.com

The Journal

Gombe Savannah Journal of Language, Literature and Communication Studies (GOSAJOLLCOS) is a peer-reviewed journal of the Department of English, Gombe State University. The journal is committed to the development of communication arts through researches in Language, Linguistics, Literature, Theatre Arts, Cultural Studies, Creative Arts, Media and Communication Studies. It has both print and online versions. The Editorial board hereby calls for thoroughly researched papers and articles on the subject areas already mentioned. Submissions of papers are accepted all year round but publication is expected to be done in May/June annually. All manuscripts should be accompanied with the sum of ten thousand (10,000) naira only. On acceptance of any manuscript, contributors will pay the sum of twenty five thousand (25,000) naira only as publication fee.

Editorial Committee

Advisory Board

Editorial Policy

Savannah Journal of Languages, Literature and Communication Studies is Produced by the department of English and Literary Studies, Gombe State University, Gombe Nigeria. It invites scholarly and well researched articles on any topic related to language, literary and communication studies. Authors of article(s) should adhere to the following requirements:

- Manuscript(s) should be double spaced on A4 paper with 12 points, Times New Roman.
- Manuscript(s) length should not exceed 5000 words, including titles,

references and/or notes.

- Abstract(s) should not be more than 250 words, followed by four to five keywords.
- Manuscript(s) sent to SAJOLLCOS must be original and previously unpublished.
- Manuscript(s) should adopt either the APA 7th edition or MLA 8th edition format
- Title(s) and subtitles should conform to the adopted referencing style.
- Manuscript(s) would be subjected to editing and peer reviews prior to acceptance and publication.
- Author(s) should provide a bio-data of not more than three sentences at the end of their paper stating their rank, affiliation, research interest and email address.
- All Manuscript(s) for consideration should be accompanied with non-refundable sum of ₦6,000.00 assessment fee.
- On acceptance of any manuscript, author(s) will pay the publication fee of ₦25,000.00
- Creative work publication fee of ₦5,000.00
- All editorial correspondences should be directed to:

The Editor,
Savannah Journal of Language, Literary and Communication Studies, Department of English,
Gombe State University, Gombe.
Email:sajollcos@gmail.com
Website: https://gombesavannahjournal.com

For further enquiries, please contact: Editor-in-Chief
SAJOLLCOS, HOD's Office,
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Gombe State University, Gombe
sajollcos@gsu.edu.ng,
C/o: amgombe2@gsu.edu.ng

CONTENT

SECTION A: LANGUAGE

SECTION B: LITERATURE

SECTION C: COMMUNICATION

SECTION D: CREATIVE WORKS/BOOK REVIEW

Savannah Journal of Language, Literature and Communication Studies (SAJOLLCOS)
Vol. 5 No. 2: December, 2024 ISSN: 2787-0286 & 2811-2261 (Online & Print)

Arab-Muslim Immigrants and the Limits of Cultural Citizenship in H.M. Naqvi's *Home Boy*

[1]Olamiposi Oyeleye, Ph.D.
Department of English and Literary Studies, Osun State University, Osogbo, Nigeria
ORCID iD: 0009-0009-7197-6792
olamiposi.oyeleye@gmail.com

[2]Oladiran Damilola Peju, Ph.D.
Department of English and Literary Studies, Osun State University, Osogbo, Nigeria
damilola.oladiran@uniosun.edu.ng

[3]Patrick Charles Alex, Ph.D.
Department of English and Literary Studies, Osun State University, Osogbo, Nigeria
ORCID iD: 0000-0003-4028-184X
charlespatrick282@gmail.com

Abstract
This paper examines the negotiation of cultural citizenship and identity among Arab-Muslim immigrants in H.M. Naqvi's Home Boy, set against the backdrop of post-9/11 America. Through the experiences of the protagonist, Chuck (Shehzad), and his friends AC and Jimbo, the novel explores the erosion of the American Dream for immigrants who face systemic discrimination, racial profiling, and cultural alienation. By analysing key moments of conflict, arrest, and disillusionment, this study argues that Home Boy critiques the limitations of multiculturalism and the failure of cultural citizenship in addressing the lived realities of Arab-Muslim immigrants. Drawing on theories of cultural citizenship and postcolonial identity, the paper highlights how Naqvi's narrative challenges dominant narratives of belonging and exclusion, ultimately revealing the transformative impact of 9/11 on immigrant identities. The study concludes that Home Boy serves as a powerful counter-narrative to the myth of America as a land of opportunity, exposing the fragility of cultural integration in a post-9/11 world.

Keywords: Arab-Muslim immigrants**,** cultural citizenship, cultural alienation, racial profiling

[1] First author
[2] Second author
[3] Corresponding author

Introduction

H.M Naqvi's *Homeboy* tells the story of Chuck, the protagonist and of his friends - Ali Chaudhry, aka AC and Jamshed Khan (Jimbo). It reflects socio-cultural effects of the 9/11 on the characters.. On the superficial level, the plot of *Home Boy* exhibits characters moving from near-Edenic state of innocence and bliss of pre-9/11 realities to chaos for no apparent justification other than the expression of their social identity that differs from the one accepted in the post-9/11 America mainstream society.

Narrated in the first-person voice of the protagonist Chuck, *Home Boy* tells the story of three "Metrostanis" (99) - young Pakistani men resident in New York, who are possessed of the idea of America as an immigrant's paradise until certain disconnected but similar experiences occasioned a discarding of not only their belief in their American Dreams but also their desire to be assimilated into the American society. Prior to the occurrence of 9/11, they had a great life as Pakistani immigrants in America's cosmopolitan city of New York, also known as the Big Apple. Where they used to roam the city's clubs and towns free, unhindered, and unnoticed, their realities become caught in a rude awakening after the event, with the protagonist, a New York University educated banker got fired from his job and had to become a cab-driver to make ends meet.

The central event in the novel that catalyses the experience of the three characters, propelling them to embark on a re-evaluation of their sense of place and cultural identity is the arrest and interrogation of the three by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for visiting their friends, interrogating them along the line of their religious and ethnic identity, being locked up indiscriminately for no apparent reason other their affinity to Islam and the Koran, and being told in the process that they have no rights because they are not American.

At the end of the novel, Chuck, the protagonist, becomes disillusioned and angry with the idea of cultural freedom in America, leaves for Pakistan to settle, and embraces radical Islam to underlie his rejection of America.

The aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks profoundly reshaped the socio-political landscape of the United States, particularly for Arab-Muslim immigrants who became targets of suspicion, discrimination, and state surveillance. H.M. Naqvi's *Home Boy* offers a poignant exploration of this experience through the lives of three Pakistani immigrants—Chuck (Shehzad), AC, and Jimbo—whose dreams of assimilation and success in America are shattered by the post-9/11 climate of fear and intolerance. Narrated in the first person by Chuck, the novel traces their journey from a near-utopian belief in the American Dream to a stark realisation of their outsider status in a society that views them as perpetual suspects. This paper investigates the concept of cultural citizenship as a lens for

understanding the experiences of Naqvi's characters, arguing that *Home Boy* critiques the failures of multiculturalism and the systemic exclusion of Arab-Muslim immigrants in post-9/11 America. By analysing key moments of racial profiling, cultural alienation, and identity crisis, this study highlights the tensions between assimilation and cultural preservation, offering a nuanced perspective on the challenges faced by immigrants in a hostile socio-political environment.

Theoretical Framework

Cultural citizenship and postcolonial theory have emerged as critical frameworks for understanding identity, belonging, and power dynamics in diverse and historically marginalized societies. Cultural citizenship expands the traditional notion of citizenship beyond legal and political rights to include cultural participation, recognition, and representation. As Rosaldo argues, cultural citizenship emphasizes how individuals and communities negotiate their identities and claim belonging within socio-cultural spaces, particularly in contexts marked by migration, globalization, and multiculturalism (57-64). This framework highlights the role of culture in shaping access to rights, resources, and social inclusion, while also addressing the exclusionary practices that marginalize minority or subaltern groups. Stevenson further elaborates on this by examining how cultural citizenship raises "cosmopolitan questions" about identity and belonging in a globalized world, underscoring the importance of cultural rights and recognition (3).

Postcolonial theory, on the other hand, interrogates the enduring legacies of colonialism, imperialism, and Eurocentrism in shaping global power structures, cultural hierarchies, and knowledge production. Edward Said's seminal work, *Orientalism*, critiques the Western construction of the "Orient" and its implications for perpetuating power asymmetries between the colonizer and the colonized (12). Similarly, Gayatri Spivak's essay, *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, interrogates the silencing of marginalized voices and the complexities of representation in postcolonial contexts, asking whether subaltern groups can ever truly articulate their experiences within dominant frameworks (271-313). Homi Bhabha's concept of hybridity, as explored in *The Location of Culture*, further complicates notions of identity by highlighting the "third space" where cultural meanings are negotiated and transformed, offering a lens to understand resistance and agency in postcolonial societies (37).

When integrated, cultural citizenship and postcolonial theory offer a robust framework for examining how marginalized communities navigate and resist systemic inequalities in their quest for cultural and political agency. Ong, for instance, demonstrates how immigrants negotiate racial and cultural boundaries in the United States, linking cultural citizenship to

postcolonial struggles for recognition (737-762). This intersection reveals the tensions between globalizing forces and local identities, as well as the ways in which cultural practices and representations are shaped by colonial histories and power asymmetries. Isin and Wood further emphasize the relationship between citizenship, identity, and culture, particularly in postcolonial and diasporic contexts, where the legacies of colonialism continue to influence belonging and exclusion (15).

In summary, the synthesis of cultural citizenship and postcolonial theory provides a critical tool for understanding the complexities of identity, representation, and belonging Arab-Muslim immigrants as explored in Naqvi's *Home Boy*. It underscores the importance of cultural rights and recognition in achieving social justice, while also highlighting the need to dismantle colonial legacies that continue to marginalize and exclude. This framework is particularly relevant in analyzing the experiences of diasporic communities, indigenous peoples, and other subaltern groups who strive to assert their cultural citizenship in the face of ongoing structural inequalities that compose the focus of this study.

Literature Review

H.M. Naqvi's *Home Boy* (2011) has garnered significant critical attention for its exploration of the lives of three Pakistani immigrants — Chuck, Jimbo, and AC — whose experiences in post-9/11 America reflect the broader struggles of Arab-Muslim immigrants navigating cultural alienation, racial profiling, and systemic discrimination. The novel's portrayal of their journey from assimilation to disillusionment has been analysed through various lenses, including diaspora studies, identity politics, and postcolonial theory. This literature review synthesises existing scholarship on *Home Boy*, highlighting its contributions to the discourse on cultural citizenship and immigrant identity in a post-9/11 context.

Ahmed (2012) commends Naqvi for amplifying the voices of young, educated Arab-Muslim immigrants, a demographic often overlooked in post-9/11 narratives. Ahmed notes that *Home Boy* captures the "angst" of this group, whose experiences of self-invention and cultural integration are disrupted by the pervasive suspicion and hostility following 9/11. The novel's protagonists, who initially revel in the cosmopolitanism of New York, are forced to confront their outsider status as their identities are reduced to markers of difference and threat. Ahmed's analysis underscores the novel's significance in representing the nuanced experiences of a generation caught between their aspirations for belonging and the realities of exclusion.

Sanai (2011) of *The Independent* highlights the irony of immigrants who "feel like Westerners but do not look like one." Sanai praises Naqvi for depicting the internal conflict faced by immigrants who strive to assimilate into

American society while grappling with the expectations of their cultural heritage. The novel's exploration of this tension — between familial and cultural obligations and the desire for individual freedom — resonates with broader themes of identity and belonging in diaspora literature. Sanai's review emphasises how *Home Boy* critiques the superficiality of multiculturalism, revealing the fragility of cultural integration in a society increasingly defined by fear and division.

Mujawar (2012) examines the diasporic implications of the novel, framing it as a story of loss, love, and dislocation. Mujawar argues that the protagonist Chuck's journey reflects the broader experience of Arab-Muslim immigrants who, despite their initial embrace of American ideals, are forced to confront their marginalisation in the wake of 9/11. The novel's portrayal of Chuck's return to his religious identity, Mujawar contends, signifies the "defeat of America's claim to secularism" (p.9), exposing the limitations of cultural citizenship in addressing the complexities of immigrant identity.

Cincotta (2011) situates *Home Boy* within the tradition of immigrant sagas and coming-of-age narratives, noting its exploration of the "Pakistani man in America." Cincotta highlights the novel's picaresque structure, which mirrors the protagonists' journey from youthful optimism to disillusionment. By framing the novel as a coming-of-age story, Cincotta underscores its broader relevance to the experiences of second-generation immigrants who navigate the tensions between their cultural heritage and their aspirations for integration.

Chandra (2011) offers a comparative analysis of *Home Boy* and Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, arguing that both novels challenge the notion of hybridity as a framework for understanding immigrant identity. Instead, Chandra draws parallels between the protagonists of these novels and the "Tragic Mulatto" trope in Euro-American literature, emphasising their experiences of alienation and disillusionment. Chandra's analysis highlights how the "unacceptable Muslimness" of these characters renders them perpetual outsiders, exposing the racial and religious hierarchies that underpin cultural citizenship in the West.

Mansoor (2012) focuses on the construction of the "terrorist" identity and its impact on Chuck's sense of self. Mansoor critiques the racial and religious profiling that reduces Arab-Muslim immigrants to stereotypes, arguing that *Home Boy* exposes the dehumanising consequences of such practices. The novel's portrayal of Chuck's arrest and interrogation, Mansoor contends, reflects the broader erosion of civil liberties and the criminalisation of cultural and religious difference in post-9/11 America.

While these studies provide valuable insights into *Home Boy*'s exploration of identity, diaspora, and post-9/11 politics, there remains a

gap in the scholarship regarding the novel's engagement with the concept of cultural citizenship. Existing analyses have yet to fully examine how *Home Boy* critiques the limitations of multiculturalism and the failures of cultural citizenship in addressing the lived realities of Arab-Muslim immigrants. This paper addresses this gap by analysing the novel's portrayal of cultural alienation, systemic discrimination, and the negotiation of identity, offering a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by immigrants in a post-9/11 world.

Cultural Citizenship and the Chucking of Transnational Sensibilities

Chuck, the first-person narrator of the novel captures the cultural agitation that this study intends to expound in the opening paragraph of the novel:

> We'd become Japs, Jews, Niggers. We weren't before. We fancied ourselves boulevardiers, raconteurs, renaissance men, AC, Jimbo and me. We were self-invented and self-made and certain we had our fingers on the pulse of the great global dialectic (1).

According to Mansoor (2012), this passage not only speaks of the transition that has taken place in the life of the first-person narrator, Chuck, it also reflects the sense of the missed ideal past – the time of "cultural openness that was the hallmark of the American dream" (21). A consideration of the cultural history of the ethnic groups mentioned in this passage, and to which the narrator concludes that he (and his ethnic group) now share similar socio-cultural experience with, points to the difficult situation that immigrants of Arab-Muslim origins are confronted with in the wake of 9/11.

According to Hirsh Sawhney, people of Arab-Muslim linkages suffered a preponderant increase in experience of state violence in the aftermath of the destruction of the Twin Towers:

> In the year following the terrorist attacks of September 2001, US hate crimes against Muslims increased by 1,600%. Law enforcement agencies detained more than a thousand Middle Eastern or south Asian immigrants. Government officials sometimes physically abused detainees and denied them access to a lawyer, even though the majority of these people had no connection to terrorism (18).

And it is this crumbling of their individual American Dreams of hope for freedom and a place where they could belong without a sense of fear that underscores how this observation sums up the conclusion that the story sets out to reach as it affects cultural citizenship of Arab-Muslim immigrants in this post 9/11 fiction.

Many instances abound in H.M Naqvi's *Home Boy* that reflects the negotiation of cultural citizenship by this ethno-cultural group. One of this is the decision of the major characters not to identify themselves by their Pakistani names of Shehzad, Jamshed Khan, and Ali Chaudhry but rather an anglicised name of Chuck, Jimbo, and AC (initials of Ali Chaudhry) instead. Far from cultural inferiority, this decision reflects the desire of these immigrant characters to blend into the multicultural paradise that New York embodies in their imagination. It shows a willingness to belong, to be part of the cultural mosaic that the US has come to signify in their understanding.

Things began to take a downward slide for the characters after 9/11 in the novel when they were insulted and beaten at Jake's bar in New York because of their cultural difference. This altercation, which began in the immigrant characters the rude awakening from their firmly-held view of their place as welcomed people in America despite their cultural difference was started when they were referred to as "A-rabs" (23) by another customer at the pub. The scene was captured in the following conversation:

> Repeating the word in my head, I realized it was the first time I'd heard it spoken that way, like a dagger thrust and turned, the first time anything like this had happened to us at all… This was different. 'We're not the same,' Jimbo protested.
>
> 'Moslems, Mohi-cans, whatever,' Brawler No.2 snapped…
>
> Then for some reason that remains inscrutable to me, I rose as if I had just been asked to deliver an after-dinner speech… with uncharacteristic chutzpah, proclaimed, 'Prudence suggests you boys best return to your barstools __ ' Then there was a flash, like a lightbulb shattering, a ringing in my ears, the metallic taste of blood in my mouth. I didn't quite see the fist that knocked me flat on my back (24).

After this brawl, the narrator and his friends' disenchantment with the idea of America as a place of cultural openness begins to evaporate.

Another instance that emphasised the cultural trauma of these Arab-Muslim immigrants is the event narrated earlier in the story where the protagonist, Chuck, meets a Venezuelan "Girl from Ipanema" (11) who has just immigrated to America with her family because of political persecution at her home country (Venezuela), and thus declares herself American: "They take all

Papa's houses. We are leaving. We are American" (13). After interacting with the lady, Chuck becomes quite smitten with her and decides to marry her. However, his advances were rejected when the lady discovers that he is not an Italian man as she had assumed, but a Pakistani from a Third world country. This event left him numb.

This experience was even compounded when Jimbo's wealthy white girlfriend – the Duck - begins to exhibit hints of Islamophobia towards them after the occurrence of 9/11. On one occasion when they paid a visit to her, she makes a remark that elicited the following reflection in the protagonist quoted below:

> There was something in the tenor of the phrase, in the way she said you guys, that got me hot and bothered. It might have been the offhand suggestion that we eluded her despite all the time we had spent together or that we had somehow mutated overnight. Although I felt no different, I had this feeling that the Duck wasn't the same (72).

This changing in someone they used to share an intimate bonding with until the occurrence of 9/11 disclosed the suspicion that the Arab-Muslim immigrants became subjected to by the mainstream American society after 9/11. As he concludes in the paragraph that "the Duck wasn't the same [anymore]" (72), it indeed turns out the same way as the relationship between Jimbo and the lady comes to an end after this event.

Perhaps the most impactful event that made Chuck's mind up for him with regard to the culturally uneven ground that Arab-Muslim immigrants inhabits in the US is the arrest, interrogation, and detention that he and his friends undergo when they decided to pay a visit to a "Pakistani Gatsby" (148) friend of theirs – a Mohammed Shah, aka Shaman, that they haven't heard from since the occurrence of 9/11:

> ... on 9/11 we frantically dug up each other's numbers, scrawled on the backs of receipts and folded scraps of notebook paper, and called to exchange disyllabic assurances and expressions of disbelief... (36).

In order to visit him, the three Pakistani friends piled into Chuck's cab and drove to Connecticut to find out his whereabouts. On getting to his place, they did not find him at home, but entered nevertheless because they assumed it is their friend's place, drank his beer, watch his pornographic movies and cooked Pakistani food in his house until FBI agents show up at the door to arrest

them. They were then incarcerated at the Metropolitan Detention Centre, a place where Chuck refers to as "America's own Abu Ghraib" (105) for the offence of merely staying in their friend's house. Writing on the implication of this arrest as it affects their sense of identity, Asma Mansoor captures it in the following words:

> While the FBI arrests AC, Jimbo, and Chuck for being at their friend's house, the irony becomes more pronounced because as the arrests are put in effect, both AC and Jimbo are drunk and merely fooling around. So while the impact of George Bush's speech stands nullified by the irrational, even paranoiac, Hollywood style arrest of three Pakistani youngsters, it would become a major stimulant, compelling Chuck to re-define his Self vis a vis "the notions of collective identity"

Knowing that he wasn't the only Pakistani being subjected to such political harassment, since the media reported such events with great frequency, he realizes that being Pakistani "no matter what [he] did, [he] couldn't change the way [he] was perceived" ... This realisation becomes the fulcrum that tilts the lever of his identity. The open hypocrisy of the American promise of religious freedom and the exploitation of expatriates in the name of the "Material Witness Statute" makes the pointer of his identity slide further towards a more religion-affiliated pole… (31)

At the Detention Centre, he is interrogated by a police officer whose main preoccupation is to exact a confession to terrorism from him:

> Grizzly: You are a terrorist?
>
> Chuck: No, sir.
>
> Grizzly: You a Moslem?
>
> Chuck: Yes, sir.
>
> Grizzly: So you read the Ko-Ran?
>
> Chuck: I've read it.
>
> Grizzly: And pray five times a day to Al-La?
>
> Chuck: No, sir. I pray several times a year, on special occasions like Eid.
>
> Grizzly: Drink?
>
> Chuck: … Yes, sir
>
> Grizzly: Won't Al-La get mad? … What's important to Him…?
>
> Chuck: (…) Well, I suppose… that I'm good… to people […]
>
> Grizzly: I want to know does the Koran sanction terrorism?
>
> Chuck: I've read it. I'm no terrorist

> Grizzly: Then why do Moslems use it to justify terrorism?
>
> Chuck: It's all a matter of interpretation… I mean take the Bible. It's interpreted differently by, like, Unitarians and Mormons, Lutherans, Pentacostals …
>
> Grizzly… Look. All I want to know is why the hell did they have to blow up the
>
> Twin Towers?
>
> Chuck: Your guess, sir, is as good as mine.
>
> Grizzly: Can't you put yourself in their shoes?
>
> Chuck: No, can you? (113-117)

An examination of this interrogation reveals a preoccupation with Chuck's culturo-religious affinities, - a preoccupation that betrays a phobia for his culture because of its difference from the predominant Western culture approved of by the policing system that obtains in America. In the eyes of the interrogator, a representative of the Western culture, all it takes to be a terrorist is to read the Quran five times a day and pray to Allah – activities that sincere Muslims are expected to carry out in order to be accepted by their god. Thus at the end of the interrogation, he makes the following conclusion about him: "Boy's excitable…Defended Islamic religion, terrorism (117). He is told by the police: 'You're not American!' he's told, 'You got no fucking rights.' (111). He is denied a phone call and placed in solitary confinement, a treatment that forces him to re-evaluate his cultural and religious filiations.

When AC, 'the New-Jersey DJ who uses urban catchphrases such as "fo shizzle, ma nizzle"' (Sawhney, 2011), and apparently "the most American of the trio" (Mirashami, 2011) is arrested on charges of terrorism and for possessing cocaine, we learn later that the charges are dismissed, yet he is sent to fifteen years imprisonment:

> […] although the terrorism charges against AC were dismissed __ the bomb-making manual and the sinister Arabic literature turned out to be The Anarchist Cookbook and Ibn Khaldun's Muqaddimah, respectively__ the authorities four and a half grams of cocaine on his person. 'The penalty for possession in New York is the same for second-degree murder (193).

Chuck becomes so distressed by this turn of event that he contemplates responding with violence by breaking AC out of prison "like ninjas" (195). However he could not carry this out as he suffers an epileptic seizure at the sight of a

policewoman – a development that symbolises the highly ingrained fear he has come to develop for America where there used to be trust and openness:

> The authorities gave me existential heebie-jeebies. They had become what scarecrows or clowns were to some kids, avatars of the Bogeyman. At that moment, however, I realized I couldn't take a walk in the park, much less walk into a prison… (197).

This feeling contrasts sharply with the desire to assimilate himself into the American culture that is noticeable at the beginning of the novel, underscored by his declaration - "I'd since claimed the city and the city had claimed me" (3).

The unjustness of this treatment becomes pronounced when we are made to realise afterwards that the Shaman, the missing friend being sought by the three friends and on whose accounted they are arrested, is among the people that got killed in the collapse of the Twin Towers on 9/11. This is made even worse by the realisation that the police has for some time been watching Shaman's movements on the suspicion that he is terrorist. His unravelling as a hardworking man who dies a hero's death at the collapse of the Twin Towers therefore reveals the simplistic modalities with which people are categorised as terror suspects in post 9/11 America – merely one's cultural/religious background. Michael Leonard, a character in the novel, voices this observation in the following inimitable words:

> … 'Everybody thinks all Muslims are fundamentalists,' said Michael Leonard, a coworker. 'Muhammad wasn't like that. He was like us, like everybody. He worked hard, played hard.'[…] Mr. Shah was attending a conference at the World Trade Centre when tragedy struck. He called Mr. Leonard to ask him to cover for him. A plane had hit the building, he said. He was going to be late.
> […] The story was simple, black-and-white: the man was a Muslim, not a terrorist (213-214).

Fed up by the discrimination due to the lack of cultural tolerance through which he could fully express his uniqueness and individuality without societal reproach, Chuck makes the decision to chuck his embracement of America in favour of his city of birth – Karachi in Pakistan. It is thus unsurprising that he gives no second thought to his decision of rejecting a new job offer he unexpectedly gets in a prestigious institution, having been fired for no just cause from his first banking job by "the Invisible Hand"(31).

Another action of Chuck that underlies his rejection of America is his refusal to stay in America despite the entreaties of his girlfriend Amo, the sister of his friend Jimbo. He has come to see himself as a cultural outcast and that America has become a police state. Being Pakistani, he realises that "no matter what [he] did, [he] couldn't change the way [he] was perceived" (103). He discloses his fear for the new era of America's unfriendliness to Arab-Muslim immigrants on after deciding to leave Amo, his lover behind in America to relocate to Pakistan:

> […] there's sadness around every corner? There are cops everywhere? You know, there was a time when a police presence was reassuring… but now I'm afraid of the, I'm afraid all the time. I feel like a marked man. I feel like an animal. It's no way to live. Maybe it's just a phase, maybe it'll pass, and things will return to normal, or maybe, history will keep repeating itself. (206)

Soon after, Chuck calls his mother to announce his decision to leave America and return to Pakistan (207). For person that does not fancy "wear[ing] [his] identity on his sleeve" (55), it amounts thus to a significant transition in outlook and weltanschauung for Chuck to embrace religion, as he takes up Islam to protest the intolerance of the American society towards his cultural roots and as a way of rediscover and express his identity that is about to be forcibly squelched by the iron-clad intolerance of the post 9/11 United States and New York City. He drops his Western name, and goes back to his cultural Shehzad when he is laughed at by a little girl, thus further stripping himself of markers of hybridity in favour of provinciality:

> 'Chuck,' she chuckled. 'What kinda name is Chuck?'
> 'Well … I suppose, it's American.'
> 'Are you American?'
> 'Um, no … I'm actually Pakistani.'
> 'Why'd ya have an American name when you're Pakistani?' (188)

In many ways, Chuck and his friends' problems can be located in their inability to merge or "reconcile their Muslim identities, sympathies and Pan-Islamic allegiances with their fidelity and devotion to their host countries (Mansoor, 2012). Despite their many attempts to be found agreeable to the western cultural milieu in which they find themselves in America, they still become rejected as a result of their difference. In the heat of the emotional flares occasioned by 9/11, the humanity of these Arab-Muslim immigrants becomes undermined, as they are categorised as enemies of the state simply because of the cognitive dissonance that their cultural standing evinces in the mainstream society.

The implication of this finding is that the American society needs to be more open, recognising that just as the mainstream Western culture and civilisation suffers from 9/11, these immigrant group also shared in the pain, bewilderment, and loss that 9/11 has come to symbolise in memory. These losses can be accounted for in the loss of freedoms, agency, trust, and friendliness with which they were once received in the post 9/11 cultural scenario of America as immigrant groups. It is perhaps to underscore this loss that makes Chuck print an obituary for his dead friend the Shaman, proclaiming a loud protest:

> Mohammed 'Mo' Shah
>
> No Friend of Fundamentalism (213)

And it is the contention - the protest in the words of this Shaman's obituary that brings home the pain and the point that these representatives of the Arab-Muslim immigrant community in this novel are passing through and trying to make: "We are not terrorists!"

The theoretical frameworks of cultural citizenship and postcolonial theory illuminate the ways in which *Home Boy* critiques the limitations of multiculturalism and the systemic exclusion of Arab-Muslim immigrants in post-9/11 America. By analyzing key moments of conflict, arrest, and disillusionment, we can see how the novel challenges dominant narratives of belonging and exclusion, ultimately revealing the transformative impact of 9/11 on immigrant identities.

For instance, the scene in which Chuck and his friends are arrested and interrogated by the FBI can be read as a critique of the exclusionary logic of cultural citizenship. The interrogator's fixation on Chuck's religious practices reveals how cultural citizenship is contingent on conformity to dominant cultural norms. This moment underscores the fragility of cultural citizenship for Arab-Muslim immigrants, who are denied full participation in society based on their cultural and religious identities.

Similarly, Chuck's eventual rejection of America and return to Pakistan can be read as an act of postcolonial resistance. By reclaiming his cultural and religious identity, Chuck challenges the dominant narrative of assimilation and asserts his right to define himself on his own terms. This act of resistance highlights the ways in which postcolonial theory can illuminate the experiences of marginalized groups in a globalized world.

In conclusion, *Home Boy* serves as a powerful critique of the limitations of cultural citizenship and the myth of the American Dream for Arab-Muslim immigrants in post-9/11 America. By drawing on the theoretical frameworks of cultural citizenship and postcolonial theory, we can better understand the novel's exploration of identity, belonging, and exclusion, ultimately revealing

the transformative impact of 9/11 on immigrant identities.

Conclusion

H.M. Naqvi's *Home Boy* provides a compelling critique of the limitations of cultural citizenship and the myth of the American Dream for Arab-Muslim immigrants in post-9/11 America. Through the experiences of Chuck, AC, and Jimbo, the novel exposes the fragility of multiculturalism, revealing how systemic discrimination and racial profiling force immigrants to confront their outsider status. The characters' journey from assimilation to alienation underscores the failure of cultural citizenship to address the complexities of identity in a globalised world. By rejecting America and embracing their cultural roots, Chuck and his friends symbolise the broader disillusionment of Arab-Muslim immigrants who find themselves caught between two worlds. *Home Boy* challenges dominant narratives of belonging and exclusion, offering a powerful counter-narrative that highlights the transformative impact of 9/11 on immigrant identities. Ultimately, the novel calls for a reimagining of cultural citizenship that recognizes the humanity and dignity of all individuals, regardless of their cultural or religious background. In doing so, *Home Boy* contributes to the ongoing discourse on immigration, identity, and belonging in a post-9/11 world.

Works Cited

Ahmed, Bashir. Review of *Home Boy* by H.M. Naqvi. The Express Tribune, 2012.

Ashcroft, Bill, et al. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*. Routledge, 1989.

Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. Routledge, 1994.

Bilici, Mucahit. "Finding Mecca in America: American Muslims and Cultural Citizenship." University of Michigan, 2008. Unpublished thesis.

British Broadcasting Corporation. "The Power of Nightmares." YouTube, 2006, www.youtube.com.

Cincotta, Howard. "Pakistani Novelist H.M. Naqvi – Writing in a Multicultural World." *IIP Digital, 2011*, iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/article/2011/01/20110120164 6.

Cunningham, G. William, Jr. "Terrorism Definition and Typologies." Terrorism: Concepts, Causes, and Conflict Resolution, (revised ed.), vol. 1, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, 2003.

de Pedro, Jesús Prieto. "Democracy and Cultural Difference in the Spanish Constitution of 1978." In *Democracy and Ethnography: Constructing Identities in*

Multicultural Liberal States, edited by Carol J. Greenhouse and Roshanak Kheshti, State University of New York Press, 1999, pp. 61–80.

Delanty, Gerard. "Two Conceptions of Cultural Citizenship: A Review of Recent Literature on Culture and Citizenship." *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, vol. 1, no. 3, Mar. 2012, pp. 60–66, www.ethnopolitics.org/ethnopolitics/archive/volume_I/issue_3/delanty.pdf.

---. "The Idea of a Cosmopolitan Europe: On the Cultural Significance of Europeanization." *International Review of Sociology*, vol. 15, no. 3, 2005, p. 418.

Dreyfus, Hubert L., and Paul Rabinow. Michel Foucault: *Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (2nd ed.), University of Chicago Press, 1982.

Freud, Sigmund. *Civilization and Its Discontents*. Norton & Co., 1961.

Herrero, Laura. "The Cultural Component of Citizenship." Access to Culture: A Fundamental Right of All Citizens, European House of Culture, Dec. 2010, pp. 1–16, citizenhouse.eu/.

Isin, Engin F., and Patricia K. Wood. *Citizenship and Identity*. SAGE Publications, 1999.

Jameson, Fredric. "Notes on Globalization as a Philosophical Issue." in *The Cultures of Globalization*, Fredric Jameson and Masao Miyoshi (eds.), Duke UP, 1998, pp. 54–77.

Joppke, Christian. "Multicultural Citizenship" in *Handbook of Citizenship Studies*, SAGE Publications, 2003, www.sage-ereference.com/view/hdbk_citizen/n15.xml.

Kaplan, Amy. "In the Name of Security." *Review of International American Studies*, vol. 3, no. 3–4, 2008, p. 35, iasaweb.org/uploads/85269a7a29636329bf5b99704b4d5257/RIAS_3_3-4.pdf.

Kymlicka, Will. *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*. Clarendon Press, 1995.

Li, Quan, and Drew Schaub. "Economic Globalization and Transnational Terrorist Incidents: A Pooled Time Series Analysis." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 48, no. 2, 2004, pp. 230–258.

Majaj, Lisa Suhair. "Arab-American Literature: Origins and Developments." *American Studies Journal*, no. 52, 2008, p. 40, www.asjournal.org/52-2008/arab-american-literature-origins-and-developments/.

Mansoor, Asma. "Post 9/11 Identity Crisis in H.M. Naqvi's Home Boy" *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, vol. 50, no. 4, 2014, pp. 448–460.

Miller, Toby. "Cultural Citizenship." *MATRIZes,* vol. 4, no. 2, 2011, pp. 57–74, researchrepository.murdoch.edu.au/26858/1/cultural_citizenship.pdf.

Modood, Tariq. "Multicultural Citizenship and Muslim Identity Politics." *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2010, pp. 157–170, dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369801X.2010.489688.

Mujawar, Anisa G. "*Home Boy*: An Interpretation." *Cyber Literature*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2012, pp. 1–17.

Naqvi, H.M. *Home Boy*. Penguin, 2011.

Ong, Aihwa. "Cultural Citizenship and Subject Making: Immigrants Negotiate Racial and Cultural Boundaries in the United States." *Current Anthropology*, vol. 37, no. 5, 1996, pp. 737–762.

Perner, Claudia. "US-American in outside Perspectives in Global Anglophone Literature." Universität Duisburg-Essen, 2011. Unpublished thesis.

Rosaldo, Renato. "Cultural Citizenship in San Jose, California." *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, vol. 17, no. 2, 1994, pp. 57-64.

Rex, John, and Gurharpal Singh. "Multiculturalism and Political Integration in Modern Nation-States." *International Journal of Multicultural Studies*, edited by Matthias Koenig, UNESCO, vol. 5, no. 1, 2003, pp. 1–105, unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001387/138796e.pdf.

Sanai, Leyla. Review of *Home Boy* by H.M. Naqvi. The Independent, 2011.

Spinner-Halev, Jeff. *Surviving Diversity: Religion and Democratic Citizenship*. Johns Hopkins UP, 1994.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, University of Illinois Press, 1988, pp. 271-313.

Stevenson, Nick. *Cultural Citizenship: Cosmopolitan Questions*. Open UP, 2003.

Woodward, Kath. *Questioning Identity: Gender, Class, and Ethnicity* (2nd ed.), Routledge, 2008.