
Globalization, Silence and Strategic Ambivalence in Kamila Shamsie's Home Fire and Burnt Shadows: A Postcolonial Analysis

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Abstract

This article explores the interrelatedness of themes in the context of globalization, silence, and strategic ambivalence in Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* (2017) and *Burnt Shadows* (2009) from a postcolonial perspective. It claims that globalization, as depicted by Shamsie, is a multi-faceted phenomenon which alters identities, memories and political orientations across national and cultural lines. Using postcolonial notions of hybridity, ambivalence, and subaltern representation, the work examines the ways in which her characters negotiate issues of displacement, trauma, and belonging within transnational spaces. Globalization and migration in Shamsie's fiction have been made the subjects of recent scholarship, which has focused on the hybrid subjectivity that emerges from this, defined by cultural plurality and multiple loyalties (Aurangzeb & Saeed, 2025). The article continues to delve into silence as an active negative strategy of resistance, memory, and emotional life. Narratives of unspoken histories and repressed memories in both novels generate alternative spaces for marginalised voices and challenge dominant political narratives. While *Home Fire* reveals the consequences of surveillance, exclusion and Islamophobia in post-9/11 Britain, *Burnt Shadows* explores the personal impact of trauma and its connection to wider histories of war, colonialism and global conflict. The analysis shows how characters can struggle against unequal structures of power through the power of silence and how they can keep other forms of agency aside from official discourse. Furthermore, the study argues that strategic ambivalence is a key central tool of storytelling that helps Shamsie to reject binary oppositions (such as East and West, victim and perpetrator, homeland and diaspora). She introduces morally and culturally ambiguous characters, creating a foregrounding of the instability of identity in the modernity of today's global context. The results in this study indicate that these three interrelated forces of globalization, silence, and ambivalence challenge the essentializing approach to nation and culture and to belonging. Finally, the article opens up new possibilities for postcolonial literary research by providing a comprehensive analysis of Shamsie's fiction and embedding personal accounts in broader frameworks of historical violence, migration and transnational power dynamics.

Keywords: Globalization; Silence; Strategic Ambivalence; Postcolonialism; Hybridity; Kamila Shamsie; *Home Fire*; *Burnt Shadows*.

Introduction

Globalization has been a phenomenon of unprecedented magnitude in the twenty-first century, which has had many different aspects, impacting the world economy, politics, culture, and human mobility. Globalisation has led to technological development, transnational communication, economic integration,

but has also enhanced inequalities, cultural displacement, surveillance, forced migration, identity crisis, especially in colonized societies. Globalization, for postcolonial nations, is not only an economic process but a re-presentation of the power of imperialism, through new mechanisms of political colonization, cultural assimilation and neoliberal management. Postcolonial literature has thus become an important intellectual domain for the study of the complexities of globalization and its effects on communities that remain in the margins in that unequal global power structure where identities remain in flux.

In recent times, Pakistani English literature has been more focused on these concerns, depicting the lived reality of people who have to deal with colonial heritage, religious identity, migration, terrorism and geopolitical conflicts. Kamila Shamsie is one of the most prominent contemporary Pakistani writers for her ability to meditate upon the themes of history, displacement, transnational belonging, and political violence. Her novels span the borders, as she incorporates multiple geographical locations such as Nagasaki, Delhi, Karachi, London, New York and Syria into a tapestry that shows how events on the world stage affect individual lives from one generation to the next. Globalization is not a uniform process of progress but a paradox, as Shamsie shows, one that promises a connected world while also creating, sustaining, and enacting violence, exclusion and surveillance.

The novel is also rich with a historical sweep that extends across over six decades, from the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, in 1945, to the Partition of India, the Cold War, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the events of 9/11, 2001, and the ensuing War on Terror, with the novel's protagonist Hiroko Tanaka serving as a vehicle for examining the impact of global conflicts on people's lives and how they shape their identities and memories. Also, *Home Fire* (2017), a contemporary adaptation of Sophocles' *Antigone*, looks at the lives of a British Pakistani Muslim family whose lives are impacted by issues of citizenship, radicalisation, Islamophobia, surveillance, and national loyalty in post-9/11 Britain. The novels both highlight the lives of diasporic subjects whose lives are deeply affected by the processes of globalisation but who are nonetheless subject to threat of exclusion and suspicion due to race, religion and colonial histories.

The idea of strategic ambivalence can be said to be closely connected to the concept of silence and it is a key concept in the theory of postcolonial identity, which was mainly developed by Homi K. Bhabha. The colonial authority is always an unstable one, which requires not only the production of subjects who imitate, but also those who resist dominant norms, argues Bhabha (1994). Ambivalence thus becomes a state in which identities are not stable or immutable, but rather fluid and contradictory, and continuously negotiated. In the modern world of

globalization, strategic ambivalence helps a marginalized person move around in a way that allows them to carry out multiple cultural expectations without conforming to dominant cultural ideals. Liminality is a characteristic of the characters in Shamsie's novels. Between East and West, tradition and modernity, religion and secularism, citizenship and exclusion, they do battle, revealing the fragility of national and cultural fixities.

Even though much work has been done on the diaspora, hybridity, migration, Islamophobia, terrorism, and identity in *Home Fire* and *Burnt Shadows*, little has been explored about how these are linked as postcolonial strategies of globalization, silence and strategic ambivalence. Current research often investigates these issues separately without considering the interplay between silence and ambivalence as resistance to the current colonial expressions. Furthermore, while these two novels are studied together, the focus tends to lie on historical or political dimensions, rather than on a study of the influence of globalisation on the narrative and character in terms of strategic silences and hybrid identities.

This study fills this scholarly void by examining the use of silence and strategic ambivalence as narrative and political means of representing the complexities of globalization in postcolonial context in the work of Kamila Shamsie. It claims that globalization is not a totally liberating or a totally oppressive condition in Shamsie's oeuvre, but rather a contested landscape whose struggle for identity, membership and resistance is constant, enacted by marginalized characters.

2. Literature Review

This paper examines the portrayal of globalisation and silence in Kamila Shamsie's novel *Home Fire* (2017) and *Burnt Shadows* (2020) with a postcolonial perspective. In this paper, I would like to examine the representation of globalisation and silence in Kamila Shamsie's novel *Home Fire* (2017) and *Burnt Shadows* (2020) from a postcolonial viewpoint. Kamila Shamsie is considered one of the most significant Pakistani English novelists of our times who writes critically about colonial history, globalization, migration, identity, terrorism and trans-national belonging. Her novels *Burnt Shadows* (2009) and *Home Fire* (2017) have been the subjects of numerous scholarly investigations, particularly for their examination of the legacy of colonialism and the socio-political economy of the post-9/11 world. These novels have been analyzed by different theories, such as postcolonialism, diaspora studies, feminism, trauma theory, nationalism, hybridity, cosmopolitanism and globalization. The study of Shamsie's literary vision has led to the publication of many works; however, few works have focused on the connections between the concepts of globalization, silence, and strategic ambivalence. The present study examines the already available literature to establish the gap in existing research and to formulate the theoretical dimension to analyze these issues in the comparative post-colonial context.

Kamila Shamsie's fiction is an attempt to move beyond the traditional post-colonial narratives that centre only on the resistance of the colonized towards the colonizer, to a more comprehensive exploration of globalization and its ongoing influence on post-colonial societies. Contemporary postcolonial literature considers the impact of imperial domination on the emergence of new modes of political, economic and cultural domination under globalisation, as Boehmer puts it (2005). Just like Huggan (2001) claims that the writers of the postcolonial period reveal the unequal power dynamics that permeate globalization through foregrounding marginalized life and transnational experiences, the same applies to this text. In the same manner, Huggan (2001) argues that the writers of the postcolonial period present the power structures that are unequal and embedded in globalization by emphasizing on the voices of the margins and the transnational experience, as is the case here too. The novels of Shamsie embody these issues as characters from his novels are impacted by world wars, migration and historical violence in different geographies.

One of the main themes in *Burnt Shadows* as well as *Home Fire*, is the concept of globalization. Arjun Appadurai (1996) defines globalization as a cultural process resulting from the intermingling of cultural flows of people, media, technology, finance and ideology. His theory may serve as a valuable tool to read Shamsie's transnational stories. Hiroko Tanaka's tale of traveling from Nagasaki to Delhi, then on to Karachi, Afghanistan and New York in *Burnt Shadows* reveals the impact of world events on personal identity in various cultures and eras.

Similarly as in *Home Fire*, London, Pakistan and Syria are melded together to show how global politics can impact people at a personal level. This new scholarship extends this knowledge.

Awan and Ahmed (2022) claim that in a globalized world as depicted in *Home Fire*, there are opportunities for mobility and education, but there are also tight surveillance, racial discrimination and marginalization of Muslim communities. Likewise, Khan (2023) argues that the novel *Burnt Shadows* illustrates how these international events, such as Hiroshima, the Partition of India, the Afghan War, and the War on Terror, are historically related, and that globalization enables the flow of not only economic capital but the movement of violence and trauma. While they are able to expose the issue of globalization from their studies, the major studies are mostly based on migration and transnational mobility to the detriment of giving little attention to the link between globalization and silence and ambivalent identity development.

Hybridity and ambivalence are two of the postcolonial notions that have been discussed in abundance in connection to Shamsie's fiction. In Homi K. Bhabha's (1994) theory of hybridity, identities are being formulated in the "Third Space" where cultures are engaged in a process of negotiation and create meaning. Hybridity is destabilizing of the binaries of "East" vs. "West" and of "colonizer" vs. "colonized". Bhabha also makes a point that colonial discourse is inherently ambivalent in that it is both imitative and different,

creating fluid and unstable identities.

Several scholars see the characters in *Home Fire* as representing hybrid identities, using Bhabha's framework. Malik (2021) states that Isma struggles to fit into one cultural space as a British citizen, Pakistani Muslim, academic and as a daughter, she will not fit into one identity. Likewise, Hassan's (2020) treatment of Karamat Lone is of an ambivalent political figure who advocates for British nationalism but avoids his Muslim identity, and thus demonstrates Bhabha's notion of mimicry. Hiroko Tanaka has been referred to often as a transnational artist, who has a multilingualism and cross-cultural contacts that represents hybrid identity in globalization. .

The field of diaspora and migration is also an important one of research on Shamsie's novels. Stuart Hall (1990) proposes that cultural identity is not stable, but is continually constructed historically and socially. The theory of Hall has been broadly followed in the study of Shamsie's fiction as characters come across several cultural connections, but do not necessarily feel attached to any particular nation. The conflicts of identity for Isma, Aneeka and Parvaiz arise from the questioning of their loyalty to British society by British people, both when they are citizens of Britain and when they move to a new country, as do Hiroko's, as she moves from Japan to India to Pakistan to the U.S. and back again. In a similar manner, Gilroy (1993) developed the idea of transnational identity that deals with interrelated histories and cultures and not with national histories alone. While diaspora research is useful in understanding diaspora identity formation, it seldom focuses on how individuals use silence as a tactic for coping with issues of discrimination and exclusion. Silence is not a topic that has been widely studied in the research of Shamsie's fiction compared to the influences of globalization and hybridity.

Theoretical lenses can now be used to understand the silence as a tactic of survival that is exercised by Muslim characters in *Home Fire* in the context of surveillance and Islamophobia since the 2012 release. One of the main insights from Isma's interactions with airport officials and government bodies is that she was able to avoid exacerbating her marginalization through her silence. Similarly, the characters in *Burnt Shadows* hesitate to express what they have seen and heard from Hiroshima and the wars that followed, suggesting that silence is necessary to protect the memories of traumatic events outside of language. While these conversations continue to be embedded in more general trauma and identity analyses, these reflections, however, are not integrated into more comprehensive trauma and identity analyses.

Shamsie has also focused on the themes of trauma and historical memory. Cathy Caruth (1996) suggests that events of trauma may defy representation because they are too beyond the means of language. As such, trauma often manifests itself in disjointed stories, repetition and silence.

Trauma scholars read *Burnt Shadows* as a historical novel that weaves together Hiroshima, the Partition of India, Afghanistan and the War on Terror through the long-remembered scars of trauma. Hiroko's scarred body represents the physical and psychological trauma that is passed down through generations. Likewise, *Home Fire* is about the shared trauma of British Muslims caused by recent terror attacks, Islamophobia and political marginalization. Trauma scholars recognize the power of silence but they tend to see it as a sign of psychological pain and a self-reliant strategy for political resistance. In recent scholarship on *Home Fire*, increasing attention has been paid to the surveillance and Islamophobia in *Home Fire*. The critics point out that the post-9/11 security policies turn Muslim identities into "objects of suspicion" in the airport, in citizenship debates, and in counterterrorism legislation. The studies draw on Foucault's theory of disciplinary power, which posits that surveillance promotes self-regulation and that silence is an "obligatory mode of functioning" to ward off institutional "surveillance. Foucault's theory of disciplinary power is used as a basis for these studies, which propose that the presence of surveillance promotes self-regulation and that silence is a way to protect oneself from institutional scrutiny. First, the examination of globalization has focused on migration and transnational mobility, while yet silence and identity negotiation have not been explored.

Second, silence has typically been discussed in the context of trauma and subaltern theory, but not as an

active tactic of struggle against surveillance and hegemony. Third, while Bhabha's idea of ambivalence is well-known, it is not usually thought of as a conscious strategy by which postcolonial subjects navigate multiple identities under globalisation. The present study thus seeks to redress this imbalance by investigating Kamila Shamsie's usage of globalization, silence and strategic ambivalence as interrelated postcolonial strategies in *Home Fire* and *Burnt Shadows*. Based on the theories of Homi K. Bhabha, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Arjun Appadurai, this study suggests that silence and ambivalence are not just symptoms of oppression and uncertainty, but also active strategies of resistance that help diasporic subjects to construct identity, belonging and power in a globalizing and more unequal world. The research brings a fresh approach to the current postcolonial studies, and enhances critique of Kamila Shamsie's fiction, through incorporating and examining the concepts in a comparative context

3. Research Objectives

This study aims to analyze the concepts of "globalization," "silence," and "strategic ambivalence" in Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* (2017) and *Burnt Shadows* (2009) using a postcolonial approach. The project aims to explore the impact of globalization on the lives of people, their identity, cultural attachment, and to examine migration, displacement and a sense of belonging. It's looking to dissect not only Shamsie's depiction of globalization as an economic and cultural merger but also as a phenomenon that engenders inequality, surveillance, political tension, and identity crises, especially among postcolonial and diasporic peoples.

Another significant goal of this study is finding out the importance of silence in the chosen novels as a literary and political tool. The study will explore the meaning of silence as a means of resisting, surviving and protecting oneself, rather than just as a sign of weakness or oppression. It aims to explore the ways in which characters use silence to deal with trauma, social marginalization, police surveillance and cultural stigma, uncovering the voices and voices not heard of outcasts in a globalized world. The study also tries to analyze the concept strategic ambivalence by looking at how characters negotiate various identities and conflicting affiliations with various cultures, nations and religions. Informed by the theory of ambivalence and hybridity developed by Homi K. Bhabha, this research examines the presence of the "Third Space" in Shamsie's characters, in which they immerse themselves in and yet challenge the norms of the dominant culture. The study reveals the strategic ambivalence as an active survival and counter-hegemonic way of resisting political and cultural structures. In addition, this research aims is to compare the depiction of globalization in *Home Fire* and *Burnt Shadows*, as well as the issue of silence and strategic ambivalence. It looks at the similarities and differences in the depiction of colonial legacies, transnational migrations, identity formation, terrorism, Islamophobia, war, and global political conflicts through a comparative analysis. A comparison of this will give one a better comprehension of Shamsie's developing literary vision and her criticism of the globalization and postcolonial realities of the present times.

Last but not least, the study is expected to make a significant contribution to the existing postcolonial literary criticism by providing detailed analysis of the intertextuality of the themes of 'globalization', 'silence' and 'strategic ambivalence' in Kamila Shamsie's fiction. It aims to make a significant contribution to the current state of scholarship by showing that the strategic use of silence or the adoption of an ambivalent approach is not only a psychological or narrative strategy but that it can be a postcolonial tactic that involves the ability to negotiate identity, oppose hegemonic discourses and to challenge global power relations. Finally, this research aims at enhancing the knowledge and understanding of the contemporary Pakistani English literatures and offers a fresh insight into the Shamsie's depiction of identity, resistance and belonging in a world that is hyper-globalized and polarized politically.

4. Research Questions

1. How can we see globalization in the novel *Home Fire* and *Burnt Shadows*?

2. In the novels chosen, how is silence used as a mode of resistance and survival from Shamsie's perspective?
3. How do the characters use strategic ambivalence to negotiate their cultural, national and religious identities?

5. Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the concept of post-colonial theory as it is an effective tool to explore the interweaving of globalization, identity, silence and strategic ambivalence in Kamila Shamsie's works: *Home Fire* (2017) and *Burnt Shadows* (2009). The postcolonial theory examines the cultural, political, and psychological effects of colonialism and delves into the ongoing influence of colonial power on identity, social systems, and global relationships beyond its formal closure. Both novels examined the experience of negotiation of multiple identities during migration, war, terrorism and globalization, which makes postcolonial theory a suitable lens for engaging with the experience.

In *Home Fire*, Isma, Aneeka and Parvaiz are trying to balance British nationality with being a Pakistani Muslim. Likewise, Karamat Lone displays a hybrid identity, using British political values, but rejecting his ethnic and religious heritage. The characters represent Bhabha's view of a process of negotiation which is not purely Eastern or Western, but instead a negotiation.

Similarly, Hiroko Tanaka's journey from Japan to India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and the USA in *Burnt Shadows* depicts how globalisation makes identity a transnational and hybrid experience. Shamsie shows how identity is always re-constructed in between geographical, political, and cultural space via these characters. Another key term he borrowed from Bhabha is the term ambivalence. According to Bhabha, the colonial discourse is inherently unstable because it calls for imitation and difference from the colonial paradigm. This contradiction generates ambivalent identities which question and uphold dominant power structures. In the current investigation, ambivalence is defined not only as uncertainty, but also as a negotiated (strategic) sense of ambivalence representing a conscious negotiation or play of multiple identities to navigate through inequalities within political and cultural structures. Neither of the novels completely rejects nor fully accepts dominant ideologies. Rather, they intentionally use social and political contexts to help shape and change their identities. This is a strategic negotiation in which they can defy the assimilation of culture, yet have their freedom in the globalized societies.

Arjun Appadurai's theory of globalization (1996) in his book *Modernity at Large* is also used in this study because it helps to understand the larger socio-political context that underlies Shamsie's novels. Appadurai defines globalization as the flow of people, technology, media, capital and ideologies across national boundaries. He recognizes five dimensions of global cultural flows: *ethnos capes*, *Media's capes*, *techno capes*, *finances capes* and *ideoscapes*. These interwoven flows are changing cultural identities and relationships between nations and people.

This is because Appadurai's model can be applied to the transnational contexts of *Burnt Shadows* and *Home Fire*. The characters constantly cross geographical boundaries and face various political, cultural and ideological systems. Thus, the theoretical approach taken in this study shows that the concepts of globalization, silence and strategic ambivalence are not mutually exclusive postcolonial concepts but are instead part of a larger interconnected whole. The research project draws on the combined insights of Bhabha, Spivak and Appadurai, and investigates the critical verbiage of Kamila Shamsie, whilst also exploring the survival strategies of the marginalised who negotiate their identity, memory and belonging in an ever-globalizing but not globalizing world. In addition to serving as a background for the analytical study of *Home Fire* and *Burnt Shadows*, this framework also provides a multi-faceted perspective on globalization and how it affects identity formation, resistance and cultural negotiation, which could be used to inform ongoing postcolonial scholarship.

6. Textual Analysis

The book, *Burnt Shadows*, explores the theme of globalization and transnational identity. *Burnt Shadows* deals with the topic of globalization and transnational identity. In Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows*, globalization is not just an economic process but a historical, political and cultural one which reshapes identities, memories and human relations between continents.

Whereas traditional narratives about globalization laud it as a vehicle of progress and connection, Shamsie sees it as a paradoxical process that offers opportunities for movement and also generates violence, displacement, surveillance, identity crises, and more. The novel's protagonists, Hiroko Tanaka among others, show how the shadows of colonialism still cast over the world and individual lives. It covers over six decades of history and travels from Japan to India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and the USA, highlighting the links between different societies and the reproduction of unequal power in an era of globalization, with a focus on the imperial history of these societies. This is in line with Appadurai's understanding of "global cultural flows", in which people, ideas and ideologies are constantly in motion across national boundaries creating identities and social realities. ([plhr.org.pk] [1])

The novel starts with the bombing of Nagasaki in 1945, a moment which represents the start of the modern international order in a violent way. Hiroko Tanaka escapes the blasts, yet the marks on her back in the shape of a bird serve as a reminder of nuclear war and the empire. These scars are not physical wounding's, they are a representation of the long-lasting effects on individuals as a result of global political decisions. For Shamsie, globalization is tied to historical violence that sees technological progress and military force used as a means of domination and not liberation. Hiroko's misfortune is the example of the impact of decisions made by powerful countries that cross international lines. After the bombing her life never is the same as it begins a journey through several countries and cultures and the idea that global history has to be told in terms of more than national stories. Hiroko's transnational identity is initiated when she leaves Japan for Delhi after her fiancé dies. In India she finds a colonial society in which the British imperially regulate life. But her connection with Sajjad Ali Ashraf helps her break down the barriers of nation and culture. Hiroko no Kensetsu is not about a single national identity, but is a negotiation with new cultural affiliations. This transformation is in line with Homi K. Bhabha's theory of hybridity that identities are not static but are created through cultural interaction. Hiroko is not a Japanese woman in denial of her nationality, but rather one who has integrated the unique aspects of new languages, traditions and experiences. Her multilingualism and openness towards other cultures are examples of the development of a hybrid identity that calls into question fixed notions of east and west. Scholars have also noted that the novel is a postcolonial text that plays with hybridity as a means of challenging essentialist constructions of identity.

The Partition of India in 1947 is another critical event in the novel's journey into globalization. Shamsie's interpretation of Partition is a regional historical event, but she also sees it as part of a larger global process that was driven by colonial policies. As they move to Pakistan Hiroko and Sajjad show how politics carved up by colonial powers continue to impact human lives.

Migration in the novel is thus not free but is forced by political violence and history, respectively. This displacement highlights the fact that globalization can come as a result of fighting, not free movement, so casting doubts on the idea of global mobility. Pakistan is another place where Hiroko is rebuilding her identity. She adjusts to the new cultural context while retaining her sense of Japan and India. The ethnos capes of Appadurai are evident in her life in Karachi because it's about people being distributed across borders, forming transnational communities. Hiroko's experiences show that globalization becomes a continuous process of negotiation of identity. She is a part of several cultures, but not completely accepted by any single culture. This is the space between, the 'Third Space' as studied by Bhabha, an identity which is continually constructed in the process of cultural interaction. The Afghan conflict is also included in the novel's global perspective. In the midst of Soviet invasion and its ensuing geopolitical tensions, Pakistan becomes a strategic hub of global politics. Through military action and ideological competition, Shamsie

shows the influence of the global superpowers on local realities. Everyday people fall victim to wars waged by faraway politicians. The novel through the characters of Raza and Abdullah illustrates how an interconnected web of intelligence agencies, militant groups and international governments are formed as a result of globalization. Political violence is no longer limited to a country and to its citizens but has become transnational, impacting on people from different continents.

After the events of 9/11/2001, a different side of globalization is laid bare with the focus on the U.S. itself. In the War on Terror, migration becomes monitored and deemed with suspicion. When characters are investigated due to their cultural or religious backgrounds, they used to be used to crossing borders the same way. Globalization, Shamsie argues, has created interconnected systems of surveillance in which national security policies have become more and more significant in controlling transnational mobility. Globalization does not create a universal citizenship but strengthens the barriers between those deemed to be 'legitimate' citizens of the world and those who are considered a threat to the world. More recently, it has been suggested that *Burnt Shadows* deconstructs the unequal political systems that underlie globalization and unearths the lingering presence of colonial thinking in modern international politics. To sum up, *Burnt Shadows* offers a multi-layered view of globalization, both to stimulate mobility and consolidate inequality. Kamila Shamsie shows how identities are continually negotiated across cultures and historical periods as Hiroko Tanaka travels through them. A

reading of the novel through Appadurai's theory of globalization and Bhabha's ideas of hybridity and the Third Space brings to light the novel's indictment of the unequal power dynamics of globalization and the strength of individuals who form multiple identities within a global sphere that is at the same time interconnected and divided. This analysis demonstrates how globalization in *Burnt Shadows* not only sets the backdrop for the story, but also is the main driving force in the formation of identity, belonging, memory, and postcolonial resistance.

6.1 Globalization and Identity Crisis in Home Fire

In *Home Fire*, the theme of globalization and identity crisis are intertwined. Globalization and identity crisis are intertwined in *Home Fire*. In *Home Fire*, Kamila Shamsie paints a portrait of globalization as a multifaceted and at times paradoxical phenomenon that affects people as they move across the globe, access new spaces, are watched by the state, and encounter other cultures. Whereas the conventional notions of globalization are positive and consider it as a means of economic development and national unification, Shamsie sees it as a system that produces exclusion, discrimination, identity crises and politically marginalizes the population. The novel is set in post-9/11 Britain, exploring how the impact of globalization has altered the notions of citizenship, belonging, and national identity for Muslim communities in Western societies.

Shamsie examines the difficulties of living with a multiplicity of identities in a more globalized but politically fractured world through the eyes of Isma, Aneeka, Parvaiz, and Karamat Lone.

Three British-Pakistani siblings' lives form the core of the novel as they navigate the complexities of globalization and postcolonial history. They are British citizens, but are also very much Pakistani Muslim in culture. This is a conflict of identity because British society is not always sure of their loyalty and belonging. The experiences are a reflection of the philosophy of Homi K. Bhabha on what he calls hybridity, the idea that postcolonial identities are not set but instead constantly negotiated as a result of cultural interactions. The siblings "live" in what Bhabha calls the Third Space: they belong to several cultures, but are not accepted by either of them.

Immediately the first chapter tells about the impact of globalization as Isma embarks on a trip from London to the United States to pursue her studies. As positive consequences of globalization, international education, travel, and communication is offered. Suspicion and surveillance, however, stand in the way of these opportunities. Being a Muslim woman in hijab, Isma is interrogated in great detail by security at

Heathrow Airport. Before she can travel, she is asked questions about her family, beliefs and personal life. The episode demonstrates the presence of discrimination even in a context of globalization, and its reinforcement of systems of surveillance directed toward certain communities. Globalization enables the free flow of movement of people across the borders, however it also enables new modes of control which impact minorities disproportionately.

The scene is a representation of the idea of surveillance, which refers to the way individuals are controlled by observing and monitoring them within a system of institutions, as proposed by Michel Foucault. It also helps to support Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's notion that marginalized communities are typically underrepresented in the dominant political system. Isma's lack of response during the interrogation is not weak, but rather a tactic to prevent additional suspicion. She knows that going against the powers that be could make things worse. In this way, in *Home Fire*, globalization is a world of mobility in which states are becoming more surveillance-obsessed. The novel also outlines the confusion of the British Muslims' identity with globalization. The characters are born and raised in Britain yet are continually asked questions about their loyalty to the nation. They are legally citizens but their religious identity is often more significant than their legal citizenship. This battle clearly shows that globalization has not succeeded in providing truly inclusive societies. Rather, social acceptance remains hinged on cultural and religious differences. Isma represents a balanced approach to negotiating multiple identities. She shows respect towards the British laws and values, and is committed towards her Pakistani Muslim roots. She does not give up on her cultural identity, nor does she reject the society in Britain. Bhabha's notion of hybridity is reflected in her character, which is not defined, but is being continually re-constructed. She manages to live in two worlds, and that hybrid identities are compatible in spite of political tensions. Parvaiz, however, has a major identity crisis. He begins to feel isolated and apart from British society and is vulnerable to competing narratives of extremism offering him a sense of belonging and purpose. His recruitment by Farooq is a case in point which highlights the way in which globalization not only brings about an exchange of culture but also the movement of extremist ideas around the world. Digital media and transnational networks enable radical groups to exploit the sense of exclusion of young Muslims. Radical organizations use digital media and transnational networks to play on the feelings of being excluded among young Muslims. Shamsie says that politics has played a major role in radicalization apart from religion.

Parvaiz's journey to Syria is about the dark side of globalization. In today's world, advances in communication technology, transportation and social media enable extremist groups to recruit members from other countries. The concept of Ideoscapes by Arjun Appadurai describes the spread of political ideologies across the world via media and digital. Extremist ideology proliferates easily, transcending borders and affecting those seeking identity and sense of belonging. So, globalization has a positive effect on education, economic development, and the diffusion of violence and political extremism. Karamat Lone's other view of globalization and identity. He is the first Pakistani Home Secretary of the British government and has been successful in British politics. But he separates himself from his Muslim identity, and openly advocates for harsh national security measures targeting Muslim communities. His character represents Bhabha's theory of mimicry, in which the subject of the colonization takes up the values and conduct of the dominant culture in order to be accepted. However, when faced with questions about his ethnic background, despite his political authority, Karamat is still unable to get rid of them, which means that full assimilation doesn't automatically lead to the end of discrimination. In *Karamat*, Shamsie challenges the notion that "to be successful" in the West is the same as "to be accepted" in the West. The psychological effect of being in the societies he rejects would be his rejection of his cultural background, since many minorities are faced with the necessity of hiding certain parts of their identity to get recognized in the majority society.

This is an expression of "strategic ambivalence" since Karamat constantly oscillates between his Pakistani identity and his British political identity. Additionally, the relationship between Aneeka and Eamonn further

exemplifies the effects of globalization on identity and belonging. Aneeka is a practicing Muslim and Eamonn is the son of the British Home Secretary, and are of different cultural and political backgrounds. Their relationship is a representation of intercultural understanding in a globalized society. Eventually, though, political realities tear apart the bond between them, establishing that personal relations can be fragile in the face of larger ideological differences. In this sad love affair, Shamsie suggests that globalization has brought people into contact at a greater level than ever before, but has not eradicated historical prejudices and political divisions. Religion is also an important factor in the novel's creation of identity. After September 11, Islam comes to be seen more and more in the political discourses of the west as a terrorist movement. Because of this, Muslim identity is often seen in a suspicious light instead of a sense of cultural diversity. Shamsie shows how globalization has exacerbated Islamophobia, in effect, enabling the rapid transmission of political narratives and media images across national borders.

6.2 Strategic Ambivalence in *Home Fire* and *Burnt Shadows* a post-colonial reading

Strategic ambivalence is one of the most important postcolonial terms to use for *Home Fire* and *Burnt Shadows* by Kamila Shamsie. The concept has its origins in Homi K. Bhabha's theory of ambivalence, from his book *The Location of Culture* (1994). Bhabha suggests that the notions of colonial and postcolonial identity are never singular or definite, but are always negotiated in terms of cultural interaction. Ambivalence is the state of having opposing or conflicting emotions, identities, and loyalties. Ambivalence is not just a mental struggle in Shamsie's novels, however. It becomes strategic, in that characters deliberately and consciously struggle to negotiate their identity in order to survive, to resist oppression, and to acquire a sense of belonging in unequal political and cultural systems. By means of this strategy, Shamsie demonstrates the malleability, flexibility, and effects of globalization upon the concept of postcolonial identity.

One of the most prominent examples of strategic ambivalence is found in *Home Fire*'s character, Isma. *Home Fire*'s character, Isma, is one of the most prominent examples of strategic ambivalence. She is a British citizen and a Pakistani Muslim, a university student, and the eldest sister who is responsible for her family. Isma does not choose one identity over another, but rather uses a pragmatic approach to balance these identities in various circumstances. She lives according to British laws and values democratic values and is committed to further education, she is also very religious and is committed to her Pakistani culture. Her identity is thus neither British nor Pakistani but rather in Bhabha's Third Space, a space where identities are negotiated continuously. Ambivalence is indeed a practice at the airport, as is evident from Isma's behavior. She participates in the process of security interrogation, but is aware of the discrimination she is facing as a Muslim woman. She doesn't confront the authorities openly or totally embrace their premises. She, however, selects a more measured response that is thoughtful and cautious, and which does not raise issues of personal dignity, but, instead, protects personal dignity. This is intentional balancing of complying and resisting, which is strategic ambivalence. In Isma, Shamsie makes the case that sometimes marginalized people live by the dominant systems, and with some secretiveness maintain their own identities. A second significant instance is the British Home Secretary, Mr. Karamat Lone, and a Pakistani. Karamat openly advocates for British nationalism and for a tough stance on counterterrorism, arguing that assimilation is the top priority for Arabs if they are to become part of British society, and that they must avoid any public displays of Muslim identity. He condemns Muslims whose behavior in his view is a failure to assimilate with the British culture, and calls on them to be loyal to the state rather than the religion or ethnicity. The subject of his political position is the concept of mimicry, which Bhabha associates with the colonized subject taking up the values and actions of the dominant culture in order to be accepted.

But, Karamat's plan also shows what assimilation is not. Politically, he is in a high position, but he still exists and is recognized by his ethnic and religious background. He tries to get away from his Pakistani

background but the suspicion or difference among the public remains. Shamsie therefore shows that strategic ambivalence can be a way of achieving social mobility, but it cannot displace colonial perceptions of race, religion and identity altogether. Karamat is an insider/outsider, revealing the ambivalent nature of postcolonial subjects in the political institutions of the West. Parvaiz is another aspect of strategic ambivalence. As against Isma, he has a problem with the negotiation of his dual identity. He feels a sense of alienation from British society, and is tormented by his father's past, making him susceptible to extreme narratives that offer purpose and belonging. This journey to Syria is due to his quest for identity and his attempt to find one single identity through ideology. But this denial of hybridity only ends in his annihilation. Shamsie argues that the folly of rejecting ambivalence in favor of the dogmatic certainty can bring about tragic consequences, through Parvaiz. His story is also a different one from Isma's, as he shows how negotiating multiple identities is critical to living in a globalization.

Learning to bridge cultural differences is what Hiroko has done, so strategic ambivalence can be a positive survival strategy. She is reverent towards Japanese traditions and simultaneously accepts Indian and Pakistani customs, establishing a transcending approach to the national boundaries. Whereas characters in search of the single correct identity are looking for absolutes, Hiroko embraces ambiguity. She is not confused but acknowledges multiple identities as a result of globalization and migration. Part of the novel also deals with the issue of strategic ambivalence in the character of Sajjad Ali Ashraf whose identity is shaped by the Partition of India. With the shifting of political boundaries, the concept of home and belonging is something that Sajjad must reimagine and redefine. The example of his migration to Pakistan shows that people's identities are not just geographical but historical and political as well. He doesn't fight change, he adapts to it, but he still holds to his cultural beliefs. He has been in so many situations that he embodies the idea of "adaptable" postcolonial identity.

The two novels both illustrate the need for strategic ambivalence in the context of globalization. Migration of peoples, cultures and ideas across national borders helps to shape identities that become more diverse and interconnected. Globalization also brings with it surveillance, discrimination, nationalism and political exclusion, however. This makes it impossible for characters to find their identity for safety and validation. Rather they have to constantly struggle with their cultural, religious, and national identity. Practical solutions to these new realities are strategic ambivalence. The differences between the two novels underscore the important ways in which ambivalence plays a different role. Citizenship, Islamophobia, surveillance and contemporary British politics are the main factors that form ambivalence in *Home Fire*. The characters enter into conflict over identity issues in the aftermath of 9/11 and multicultural society. Ambivalence is found in *Burnt Shadows* in the form of historical displacement, war, migration & the colonial legacy. Throughout many decades, Hiroko's identity changes as a result of her exposure to the various political conflicts and cultural environments she encounters. The essay by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak? The idea of silence in Shamsie's fiction is an important one that one can gain from the insights of (1988). Spivak believes that marginalized individuals, especially those living under neo-colonial or colonial systems, are denied representation, especially in political, cultural, and historical realms, by dominant institutions. The lack of voice of the subaltern is thus a symptom of unequal relations of power, not a failure to speak. The significance of silence in Shamsie's novels is that the voices of the marginalized are not listened to, not trusted or if they are listened to, are deliberately filtered out. Many characters choose not to speak their truth in a society that would not hear them, but they are silent as a means of survival and resistance.

This is what Isma embodies the most in *Home Fire*. She is subjected to a lengthy security interrogation at Heathrow Airport at the start of the novel, before departing for the United States. As a Muslim woman wearing the hijab she is repeatedly asked by airport officials about her personal life, religious beliefs and family background despite her legal citizenship from the UK. Isma is careful not to speak too much, doesn't argue during this interrogation. She knows that any reaction, from a smile to a frown, can stimulate

suspicion or cause further problems. The silence of the women is not a sign of fear, but a conscious act to try to safeguard themselves in an institution where they are already believed to be guilty. This episode also spells out the idea of 'surveillance' that was put forward by Michel Foucault, who stated that modern institutions discipline and restrict people by observing them at all times. People in a situation of supervision tend to change their own behavior because they realize that they are being monitored. The example of silence is shown in the case of Isma. She understands that the security system is more powerful than she is and that silence is a powerful method of communicating with unequal power. In modern international politics, Silence can be a sign of intelligence, restraint and survival, and not helplessness, as Shamsie proves. Silence also influences the relationship between Isma and her personal relationships. In the entire novel she puts aside her own desires to safeguard her younger children. When her parents died she takes on the role of both sister and guardian. She doesn't get cranky or upset, she gives up her own dreams for the benefit of Aneeka and Parvaiz. This silence is an emotional one, another form of resistance. But instead of letting hardship tear her family apart, Isma is able to find strength in her silence, patience, and endurance. Her actions are examples of resistance being not only loud and confrontational, but also resilient and self-controlled.

Silence is also a tactic that Aneeka uses for resistance. She has not given up on her demand for justice even after Parvaiz's death due to political pressure. She goes out publicly to advocate for her brother's return, but does not express much of her anguish in her public engagements. By not drawing attention to herself and her grief, she maintains the dignity of the pain she feels in her own heart. By not drawing attention to herself and her grief, she maintains the dignity of the pain she feels in her own heart. In this sense, silence becomes a means of safeguarding memory from its politicization. Silence is inextricably bound up with trauma and history in *Burnt Shadows*.

Surviving the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, Hiroko Tanaka's back has the unmistakable marks of birds. She has this physical memory for her life, but doesn't talk about the bombing much. Her silence is the powerlessness of words in the face of more than the human can withstand. Some experiences can't be explained, because they're beyond regular modes of communication.

Shamsie therefore shows silence as an affirmation that trauma frequently is unspeakable. Silence of Hiroko is also respect for the memory. She doesn't have to keep telling people about her pain; she lets her scars and actions do the talking. Scars stand as silent witnesses to war's and imperial violence's devastating effects. Shamsie argues that memory isn't only kept alive through speech, but silence, physical experience, and personal strength as well, via Hiroko.

Similarly, in the political struggles around the Partition of India and then the War on Terror, the lack of a clear position from the Indian state is another important instance. Emotional pain involving historical experiences often is not discussed because they can be overwhelming. But their silence is not indicative of forgetfulness. Rather, it is evidence of the lingering effects of historical trauma on the individual and collective identities. Shamsie is showing that when women and girls are silenced, they say so much more than when spoken, allowing readers to see the emotional burden they carry from being silenced by violence. In both novels silence is thus seen to serve several purposes in postcolonial societies. It shields people from surveillance, safeguards traumatic memories, brings across cultural differences and disrupts prevailing political narratives. Shamsie rejects the idea that silence is a sign of submission and believes it is a way of agency for those whose voices are not heard due to unequal power structures.

6.3 Evaluate and compare the novel *Home Fire* and the short story *Burnt Shadows*. Compare and evaluate the novel *Home Fire* and the short story *Burnt Shadows*.

Approached from a postcolonial perspective, globalization, silence, and strategic ambivalence constitute the basis for this consideration. Globalization, silence, and strategic ambivalence are the basis of this consideration when approached from a postcolonial perspective. *Home Fire* (2017) and *Burnt Shadows*

(2009) are important works in modern postcolonial fiction that explore how globalisation, colonial past and political strife is affecting lives at different points in history. While the novels' geographical, historical and narrative contexts vary, both depict the intricate intersections between identity, migration, silence and strategic ambivalence. A comparison shows that Shamsie views globalization as a process that "both enables transcultural connections and sustains inequality, surveillance and exclusion from a culture. Both novels expose this dynamic postcolonial identity through the constant negotiation of identities in the unequal power structures of the global realm, drawing on the theories of Homi K. Bhabha (concept of hybridity and ambivalence), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (theory of the subaltern) and Arjun Appadurai (theory of globalization). The idea of 'globalisation as a paradox' is one of the most obvious parallels between the two novels. Globalisation proceeds in the wake of key historical events like Nagasaki's atomic bombing, Partition of India, the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union and the war on terror. These events link various parts of the world, and show that the impact of political decisions on powerful countries has an impact on ordinary people on different continents.

Likewise, *Home Fire* represents globalization through migration, foreign education, digital communication and global counterterrorism policies. Globalization allows people to move around and communicate with others across cultures but also exacerbates surveillance, racial profiling, and Islamophobia. In both novels, Shamsie refuses to believe in the positive perspective that globalization makes for equal opportunities for all. Rather, she says, the internationalization of the world can reinforce the model of colonial domination and inequality.

The novels share this similarity but they differ in their historical content. *Burnt Shadows* explores the period of globalization over six decades, and the impact of colonial history on today's global politics. The novel links Hiroshima, Partition, Afghanistan and the War on Terror, highlighting their historical connection. *Home Fire*, on the other hand, focuses much more on the world after 9/11, a world in which Muslim communities in Britain are affected by terrorism, surveillance and Islamophobia. Both *Burnt Shadows* and *Home Fire*, then, provide a wide-ranging historical look at the process of globalization, but the latter takes a more modern examination of the political and social implications.

Silence is also a central theme in the two novels, as it is a powerful form of postcolonial resistance. Hiroko's voice is seldom heard on the suffering of Hiroshima in *Burnt Shadows*, for there is more to experience than language can convey. Her silence helps to remember; she is a symbol of the emotional effect of war. She doesn't forget, but carries it in silence throughout her life. In *Home Fire*, the use of silence is intricately linked with surveillance and political discrimination. At the airport, Isma's careful silence during her interrogation exemplifies the way marginalized people work out power differences, by remaining non-confrontational. In the same way, Aneeka's quiet determination following her brother's death shows that sometimes quiet is a more powerful expression of dignity and resiliency than public protest. In both novels silence is an active strategy and not passive submission, and as Spivak suggests, marginalized voices are all too often limited by dominant structures of power.

The other common ground is the notion of strategic ambivalence. Shamsie's characters are not tied to a cultural stance but are instead juggling a range of identities. Hiroko is Japanese, Indian, Pakistani and western, but never has forgotten who she is. Likewise, Isma embraces her British citizenship co-exists with her Pakistani Muslim identity. The characters are used to illustrate Bhabha's theory of ambivalence, which means that identity is negotiated through our interactions, not as fixed categories. But Shamsie also shows the potential pitfalls of unsuccessful negotiations over identity. Both Parvaiz's struggle to balance his dual identities and Karamat Lone's attempt to be completely devoid of his Muslim identity lead him toward extremism to some extent. Parvaiz's conflict between his two selves pushes him toward extremism, and Karamat Lone's effort to stay away from his Muslim identity altogether fails to earn full acceptance in British society. The striking parallels between these two types of examples show that strategic ambivalence is not merely a state of confusion but is a necessary way of life in

a multicultural society. In addition, the novels share a critique of the colonial legacies. While the formal colonization has ended, it still lives on in the political institutions, the security policy or the international power relations. The colonial choices, like the Partition of India, still impact generations of displaced people in *Burnt Shadows*. Postcolonial prejudice is manifested in *Home Fire* as institutions of surveillance and suspicion towards Muslim communities. Globalization, says Shamsie, has not ended colonial hierarchies but rather made them new - increasingly political and cultural. This is consistent with how postcolonial theory sees colonialism which states that colonialism continues after independence through economic, ideological and institutional structures. It also underscores Shamsie's humanistic outlook in the comparison. The novels, despite their depictions of war, terrorism, migration and political conflict, highlight the importance of empathy, cultural understanding, and shared humanity.

Personal relationships are often transnational, transcultural, and Tran's religious, indicating a place for human relationships even in divided societies. But there are also political ideologies and institutional power that can threaten these relationships as pointed out by Shamsie also.

To summaries', *Home Fire* and *Burnt Shadows* offer two different perspectives on globalization and post-colonial identity. One concerns historical globalization, and another concerns the globalization of today—but both make the point that globalization is contradictory. It provides mobility and cultural exchange opportunities, and reinforces inequality, surveillance and exclusion. In Shamsie's work, the themes of silence and strategic ambivalence help her portray the process in which marginalised people struggle for identity and the ways in which they challenge the dominant power structures.

7. Conclusion

The present study focused on the interrelated issues of globalization, silence and strategic ambivalence in the novels, *Home Fire* and *Burnt Shadows* by Kamila Shamsie, from a postcolonial point of view. The analysis shows that globalization in Shamsie's fiction is not confined to the realm of economy or technology, but is a historical and political process of reconfiguring identities, cultural affiliations and experiences of belonging. Through the lives of characters whose lives are affected by migration, colonial past, war and transnational mobility, Shamsie brings to light the complexities of existence in a world that is more interconnected and more unequal.

The research also confirms silence as an important storytelling tool, beyond being simply "no talking. In both novels, silence is a way to communicate trauma, to hold onto memory, to defy oppression and to navigate political and emotional differences. The actors' silence reveals the shortcomings of the dominant political discourses and the experiences of those whose voices are often silenced in the global power system. The same is true of Shamsie's narrative style: his use of a strategic ambivalence. Her characters are undomesticated and defy the binary oppositions, like East vs. West, victim vs. perpetrator, homeland vs. diaspora. Rather, they live in liminal and liminoid places where identity is not fixed or predetermined, but rather is dynamic and negotiated, being continually negotiated, in which identity is fluid. The narrative complexity of this demonstrates the reality of globalization, as well as the postcolonial position that identity is constructed in a historically, culturally, and politically negotiated manner rather than within a given category.

The comparison between the two narratives of *Home Fire* and *Burnt Shadows* shows that both novels are set at different times but both condemn the unequal distribution of power in the related globalization of the present. In *Burnt Shadows*, the impact of colonialism, war and forced migration across generations is explored, while *Home Fire* focuses on the long-term effects of surveillance, Islamophobia and contested citizenship in the post-9/11 world. The novels present a panorama of how the world's political systems remain relevant to people's lives and their personal identities. This study, in general, advances postcolonial literary scholarship by combining the themes of globalization, silence and strategic ambivalence in one analytical framework. It claims that Shamsie's fiction resists essentialist perspective on the nation, culture

and identity and foregrounds the fortitude of the marginalised as they grapple with the global systems of power. The framework could be expanded for other modern postcolonial authors and examined for ambivalence and silence in world literature in various political and cultural contexts.

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