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SELF-OTHERING: A SELF-ORIENTALIST PERSPECTIVE OF KAMILA SHAMISE'S BEST OF FRIENDS

Wajid Riaz	Assistant Professor (English) The University of Lahore, Sargodha Campus
Dr. Hafiz Mansoor Ahmad*	Assistant Professor (Persian) University of Sargodha corresponding Email: mansoor.ahmad@uos.edu.pk
Laiba Anwar	M. Phil Scholar (English) The University of Lahore, Sargodha Campus
Muhammad Ahsan Ali	M. Phil Scholar (English) The University of Lahore, Sargodha Campus

ABSTRACT

Self-Orientalism refers to the act of portraying the Orient from an Oriental viewpoint, employing an Orientalist techniques and styles. Self-Orientalism is predominantly rooted in the act of representing the Orient in a stereotyped and clichéd manner, hence viewing the oriental and orient as the Other. This process, known as Self-Othering, entails the portrayal of the Orient in Oriental discourses. The present research involves analysing the Best of Friends from a Self-Oriental viewpoint. The researcher utilised the theoretical framework of Self-Orientalism by Dirlik (1996) and Daura (1995), adopting a qualitative and analytical method. According to the research, Kamila Shamsie's Best of Friends has the same difficulties that Orientalists have already highlighted in their writings. The main text is filled with stereotyped depictions of Oriental individuals, and the study notably shows that Oriental individuals aspire to relocate to the Western world in order to assimilate with Western culture. The reason for this is that the West enjoys privileges and actively supports the Orient, while the Orient is portrayed as deformed and subservient in contrast, as illustrated in the book. The text exemplifies the process of Self-Othering of the Orientals from a self-Orientalist standpoint in Kamila Shamise's Best of Friends.

Keywords: Self-Orientalism, Self-Othering, Orientalism, Orient, Occident, Best of Friends

Introduction and background of the study

Self-Orientalism refers to the Self-Othering, where the colonised individuals are pressured or by choice to adopt the language of the colonisers. This adoption implicitly acknowledges the legitimacy of colonial modernity and imitates its traits, regardless of whether they accepted or opposed colonialism (Dabashi, 2006; 2011). In his book, Dabashi demonstrates a high level of skill in the process of self-representation, which he labels as self-Orientalism. The traditionally marginalised individual deliberately plans, carries out, and presents this process within their own social and cultural practices, even though it incorporates the elements of conventional and classical Orientalism, as described by Edward Said in his book *Orientalism* (1978). Recently, Orientalist discourse has increasingly embraced a more self-reflective stance.

Self-Orientalism is based on the behaviours of individuals who identify as "Orientals" and embrace Orientalist terminology and cultural customs. This shift changes "the Orient" from a passive receiver of Orientalism to an engaged contributor in its evolution. Self-Orientalism is a useful tool for analysis, but its use in academia has been restricted to studying East Asian media discourse and cultural studies (Iwabuchi and Muecke 2002; Chan 2004; Chung 2006; Suter 2012; Umbach and Wishnoff 2008). Tourism studies expressly examine Asia and the Middle East to analyse the process of Self-Orientalism (Yan and Santos 2009; Feighery 2012; Jafari 2012). Nevertheless, these studies highlight the need of recognising that powerful cultural institutions that uphold divisions and hierarchies are accountable for upholding and participating in narratives of self-Orientalism within the realm of religion. As a result, these patterns lead to the formation of pre-established ways of thinking and acting (Berger, 1967; as seen in Feighery, 2012: 281-282). Nevertheless, the issue stems from the positive depiction of the (re)productions as a way to communicate and/or obtain economic benefits, without recognising the possibility of ongoing alteration of one's identity through the creation of a standard narrative. Thus, the East incorporates Self-Orientalism into the West's contemporary advantages (Daura 1996).

The concept of self-Orientalism aims to renegotiate the relationship between those who create cultural representations and those who are impacted by them. It does so by acknowledging the importance of religious groups as influential cultural intermediaries, thereby adopting a more critical viewpoint. Self-Orientalism refers to a deliberate tactic used by cultural creators to classify, subjugate, and hide their own works in order to get political benefits (Daura, 1996). An intriguing paradox emerges from the fundamental essence of the "self" within the context of self-Orientalism. It is not connected to the individuals who initiated the discourse, but rather to the origins from which they obtain authority. The common symbols of religious identification that are simplified and emphasised assist to validate depictions of oneself. Nevertheless, the notion of homogeneity masks the underlying political advantages that fuel self-Orientalism, as well as its impact of generating separation (Daura, 1996).

According to Salgado (2011), self-representation may worsen and reinforce the divisions created by orientalist language, so increasing the prevailing forces of orientalism instead of breaking them down (201). Therefore, the subjective sense of one's own familiarity can be misleading, giving the impression that a discourse is logical and significant, when in fact it is influenced by personal biases and creates division. The legitimacy of such inventions amplifies their ability to exert dominance. The connection is based on a careful analysis of nationalism, which is particularly relevant in the postwar period, as uncontrolled displays of political power are common and the Orientals are marginalised, a process referred to as Self-Othering.

Self-Orientalism is a manner of representation in the United States that periodically challenges the prevalent picture of Arabs and the Middle East. It seeks to support one group while considering the others as the "Other." According to Amira Jarmakani, the United States has portrayed the Middle East in many ways, which has become a common perception (44). The region has been described as a primitive area with

several countries and peoples in war, while yet being recognised as the birthplace of Western culture and the site of the Christian Holy Land. Moreover, it is renowned for its mysterious and imaginative stories, characterised by the presence of genies, concubines, and tyrannical political schemes, as shown in *Arabian Nights* (45). Arab American Christians in the United States constantly used self-Orientalist imagery in the 20th century to bolster favourable Arab portrayals. This involved highlighting the biblical significance of the Middle East as the Holy Land and promoting the *Arabian Nights* as a representation of an exotic and genuine "other".

Self-Orientalism, in its pursuit of an authentic Arab identity, sometimes reinforces negative narratives that depict Arabs and the Middle East as primitive or backward. In the second half of the 20th century, a notable movement called Antiochian self-Orientalism emerged. Its main goal was to establish the genuine cultural Arab identity of the "ancient Arab." This movement aimed to separate the experiences of modern Arabs from the influence of U.S. imperial activities in the Middle East (47). From the late 1960s onwards, Hollywood films, the nightly news, and political cartoons have often portrayed wealthy Arabs and Palestinians as "terrorists" wearing Kaffiyehs. However, Arab Americans made a conscious effort to prioritise a more favourable depiction and presentation of Arabs. Despite the fact that *Arabian Nights*-style imagery was no longer relevant and did not adequately represent the lives of Arab Americans, they were able to showcase their food and religion in the non-political realm of diversity by portraying themselves as exotic and detached from historical context. Nevertheless, self-Orientalism can be intentionally embraced within the context of multiculturalism in its most discerning manifestation. The phenomenon of Arab American self-Orientalism might be likened to Spivak's notion of "strategic essentialism" when examining the role of foodways in the framework of liberal multiculturalism (48).

Nevertheless, other academics, such as Spivak, contend that strategic essentialism loses its effectiveness when the dominant group internalises and firmly establishes a self-essentialized and Self-Othered identity (49). The prevalent narratives in the culinary and foodways sector often promote the idea of Arabs as exotic persons. This is particularly evident in the context of Arab American self-Orientalism. When writing restaurant reviews and festival descriptions, non-Arab Americans often employ phrases like exotic, delicacy, *primaeval*, desert, fantasy, and similar expressions to characterise the culinary traditions of Arab American culture. This is very apparent.

Arab American religious and community leaders not only promoted the idea of exoticized Arabness to the general public, but also engaged in politicised acts to support the Lebanese and Palestinians. These groups were portrayed as victims of Israeli's Zionist policies. This politicised action directly contradicts the ideas of liberal multiculturalism, which advocate for the exclusive use of cultural diversity in a politically unbiased marketplace (50).

The notion of the West is defined by a diverse range of favourable attributes, such as advancement, growth, intellectual illumination, and logical reasoning. On the other hand, the East stands in direct opposition to these principles, characterised by

irrationality, economic underdevelopment, poverty, and corruption. The West perceives the East in a rigid and essentialised manner. In contemporary culture, the Western world actively endorses and promotes Oriental writers who continue to uphold these values, while lacking the ability to fight for marginalised populations. The concept of indigenous persons taking on positions of authority to fight for their marginalised communities first generated great interest and held the world's attention for a long time. Writers like Sara Suleri and Gayatri Spivak have recognised the underlying contradiction that exists in all kinds of resistance writing. Spivak highlighted the paradox of postcolonial literature, criticising scholars for their neglect in seeing that their privilege is really harmful to them. According to Spivak (1988), when someone is given the chance to speak up for the disadvantaged, they cease to be their spokesperson.

The author describes the burden of representation as a type of epistemic violence due to its tendency to diminish the variety of marginalised persons. The existence of essentialism necessarily raises questions about its validity. In his study, Huggans (1994) examines how the Western literary market tends to exploit the distinctive qualities of marginalised persons and their cultures, thereby participating in a type of "intellectual tourism" (27). This intellectual tourism is extended to persons who are writing from a Western viewpoint with the intention of portraying the Orient in a similar fashion to how Orientalists have historically done.

In modern culture, the literature often known as Oriental holds a special attraction for those who have a predilection for a distinct sense of foreignness. Western readers avidly seek for everything that is distinctive and surprising, thereby reinforcing their imagined dominance over the less advanced Eastern nations. In their joint publication "Re Orientalism and South Asian Identity Politics: The Oriental Other within" (2011), Lisa Lau and Anna Cristina Mendes noted that Self-Orientalist publications tend to focus on specific themes, often at the cost of a holistic understanding. The authors of these publications also highlighted the intentional act of differentiating oneself from others (Lau & Mendes, 2011: 13). The word "Re-Orientalism" was created to describe the process of cultural producers with eastern affinities reconciling with an orientalised East. It is comparable to the concept of Self-Orientalism, which refers to the same process. This can be achieved by conforming to the standards and preferences of western readers, working along with them, or completely contradicting them (2011: 3). Both Lau and Huggans are against the manipulative promotion of authors of South Asian origin, which entails idealising the East in order to turn them into commercial products. It seems that Western Market pundits and indigenous writers have a deep understanding, yet the indigenous writers choose to portray their culture in a very limited way. In his work, Lau (2009) argues that individuals from Oriental cultures may perceive their position on the perimeter as a hidden advantage, allowing them to deliberately uphold the notion of the east as a separate and unique identity. The objective is to serve as intermediates, acting as interpreters between different cultures. Interpreters are particularly well-suited for the job assigned to them, since it grants them a heightened sense of importance. They play a crucial role in facilitating the

transmission of information between the Eastern and Western regions. The degree of representation of the two alienated cultures impacts the possibility for closing gaps between them. However, they skilfully utilise this position by creating limited communication channels, therefore maintaining the distinctiveness of their jobs and strengthening the credibility of their opinions.

Both Pakistani and Indian literature have seen the simultaneous rise of utilising a foreign and different culture for the goal of exoticizing. Both nations have a shared historical background of colonialism. Meenakshi Mukherjee (1993), an Indian critic, has voiced her disdain of Indian authors' preoccupation with depicting a genuine portrayal of India in their literary works. The speaker underscores that English is not only a language, but rather a language that was utilised by our colonial oppressors and remains the language associated with authority and advantages in the present day. The speaker expresses alarm over this pattern. This language is not commonly utilised in marginalised contexts or across all socioeconomic groups (Mukherjee, 1993: 168). In his work, Mukerjee (1993) clearly acknowledges that there is a lack of differentiation among a significant portion of Anglo-Indian authors. They make a deliberate and focused attempt to infuse their literary works with a feeling of quasi-Indianness, even if they have challenges in meeting the exceptional benchmarks set by authors such as Rushdie and Rao. These writers have faced allegations of various transgressions, such as embellishment, pigeonholing, perpetuating stereotypes, romanticising other cultures, pandering to Western tastes, complying with Western standards and expectations, disloyalty, pursuing financial gain, and pandering to the audience. In addition, they have faced allegations of engaging in intricate distortions involving totalising, essentialising, subalternism, marginalisation, and, most recently, Self-Orientalizing.

The aforementioned arguments critique English literature in India for its lack of precision and thoroughness in depicting the subject matter. They argue that English literature is prone to intentional misrepresentation, as well as inaccurate, incomplete, and selective portrayals. Occasionally, they may even engage in overt treachery (Lau, 2009: 30). The scenario bears resemblance to the literary environment in Pakistan. The indigenous Indians, who are the target audience, are unimpressed with Indian authors who are unduly fixated on demonstrating their genuineness. Providing a simplified view of Oriental culture to the western reader is crucial, and this may be achieved by relying on the insights of local Orientalists. Engaging in subversive critique of one's own traditions or portraying the Orient in an exotic manner might be seen as an attempt to please the colonial rulers. This story is consistently reproduced across international borders with minor variation.

Postcolonial literature has undergone a substantial metamorphosis in contemporary culture, signifying a notable deviation from its prior purpose. In the past, it served as a means of resistance, including all of the distinct attributes and historical circumstances. In its attempt to demonstrate the esteemed culture of the colonised to its colonial masters, it has inadvertently revealed its vulnerability to the powerful Western market, which is currently seeking something distinctive. Presently, this important organisation

is actively endorsing literary works that cater to the corrupt inclinations of Western readers. The West has always been fascinated by the East because of its inherent enigmatic nature. The former can be seen as the direct opposite of the latter in terms of plurality. The notion of the West is defined by a diverse range of favourable attributes, such as advancement, growth, intellectual enlightenment, and logical thinking. Conversely, the East is characterised by irrationality, economic underdevelopment, poverty, and corruption, which are the complete opposite of these principles. The West perceives the East in a rigid and essentialised manner.

The scenario bears resemblance to the literary environment in Pakistan. The indigenous spectators, who are the target audience, are unimpressed by Pakistani authors who are unduly fixated on demonstrating their genuineness. Providing a simplified view of Oriental culture to the western reader is crucial, and this may be achieved by relying on the insights of local Orientalists. Engaging in subversive critique of one's own traditions or portraying the Orient in an exotic manner might be seen as an attempt to please the colonial rulers. This story is consistently reproduced across international borders with minor variation. The said characteristics can be found in Kamila Shamsie's novel *Best of Friends*, which will be covered in more detail in a later section. *Best of Friends* in this regard contemplates the same which is a story of the migrated people who living as immigrants in the West who are facing different problems, creating a diasporic strain to distort their existence, however, this is caused by the binaries i.e US and them, Superior and Inferior, white and Brown/Black vice versa. The first stance of difference has been envisaged and developed on Edward Said's Orientalism, and the idea was deconstructed in his famous book *Orientalism* (1978), however, it was not Edward Said but others who highlighted the issues but Said was the first to identify the differences of the West and East, primarily constructing the Orient as Other, and the debate is more tension based debatable in the diaspora (Ashcroft, 2002). Therefore, the current research deals with the concept of Self-Othering from the perspective of Self-Orientalism in Kamila Shamsie's *Best of Friends*.

Research Statement:

Diaspora or diasporic strains are usually linked with the people who are living in the West, either migrated by choice or force, but largely they are looking a future prosperity both economically and politically which the burning debate of postcolonial literature is also. Although, Oriental people reserve their position with successful attempt to have a place in the West, getting political and economic prosperities but still they are the victim of labeling to be called other neither accepted by West not by the West. These people turn to more victimized or marginalized position which is due to diasporic strains. Also, they are living in the country are identified with the same stereotypes and they are called other which from the perspective of self-orientalisation is called self othering. In the similar vein Shamise's *Best of Friends* seems to be full of the identical issues to be explored and analyzed from the perspective of postcolonialism with reference to the phenomenon of self-Orientalism whereas the Orient has been depicted as other which is called Self-Othering.

Research Objectives:

1. To explore Shamise's *Best of Friends* to show the representation of the Oriental people.
2. To show the existence of Oriental people living in the West/East in Shamsie's *Best of Friends*.
3. To show the self-othering images in Shamsie's *Best of Friends*, annexed with oriental people.

Research Questions:

- How Oriental people are represented in Shamsie's *Best of Friends*?
- How the existential position of the Oriental, living the west/East is shown in Shamsie's *Best of friends*?
- How stereotypical images are annexed with the oriental people in Shamsie's *Best of Friends*?

Significance of the research:

The research is worth important from the perspective of postcolonialism, showing the distorted images of the Oriental people who are living diaspora/home. These are actually the diasporic strains which are taking the disaporic people to settle in the mid of crises neither accepted by the West nor by the East, however, they are Orientalized in the process of there representation and their representation is called from the perspective of self-orientalist as self-othered. Therefore, the research is worth important for the students of literature and literary researchers to investigate the same phenomenon in other literary works to comprehend comprehensively, and may be it be applicable to the greater extend to practical life situation.

A SELF-ORIENTALIST PERSPECTIVE OF KAMILA SHAMISE'S SELECTED FICTION

Through her latest literary work, *Best of Friends*, Kamila Shamsie, received the Women's Prize for Fiction, explores the complexities surrounding power dynamics and ethical considerations within the framework of a long-lasting female relationship. The work explores themes of integrity, loyalty, and platonic love, focusing on two central characters, Zahra and Maryam, who navigate the tension between their domestic and external lives. The work serves as a portrayal of diaspora representation, wherein the characters are intertwined with various postcolonial forces. This literary approach is commonly referred to as postcolonial. In the course of an interview pertaining to the work, Shamsie articulated her objective as follows: "to subject a longstanding friendship to significant pressure". In the novel *Best Friends*, she achieves this objective by performing a comprehensive examination of how women encounter both authority and subordination in a politically and socially inequitable environment, principally resulting from the dichotomy between the Eastern and Western worlds.

The narrative is presented through the viewpoints of two female characters, Zahra and Maryam, who encounter one other at a renowned educational institution in Pakistan during their youth and thereafter achieve remarkable success and professional accomplishments in the United Kingdom. This analysis explores the internal mechanisms of both individuals, with a particular focus on pivotal moments in their lives occurring at the ages of 14 and 45, respectively. The summary of the book

suggests that it is conceivable to foresee the presence of stereotypical elements in the portrayals of Zahra and Maryam's femininity, as well as their relationship. Zahra's parents, both individuals with progressive inclinations, are employed in many sectors such as education and the media. Consequently, she has inherited their intellectual acumen and diligent work ethic. Maryam is protected by her affluent family, although her money, sexual allure, and popularity.

Discrimination, racism, and Otherness (Self-Othering)

Despite moving to their new country, individuals belonging to the diasporic community persist in upholding their own practices and traditions, which consequently exposes them to prejudice. Parekh argues that it is impossible for any community to provide complete equality for all of its cultural minorities (411). In Asian society, demonstrating deference towards older individuals and unfamiliar individuals is regarded as suitable conduct, however in Western culture, such behavior is regarded as peculiar. In her book *Disappearing Moon Café* (1990), Sky Lee examines the various cases of prejudice faced by Chinese women upon their immigration to Canada. Initially, the Canadian government exclusively granted permission for Chinese males to labor in Gold Mountain. These workers were required to be single bachelors, as failure to do so would have necessitated their separation from their families in China. Subsequently, the legislation in Canada was modified to permit Chinese workers to accompany their spouses. A significant number of women who relocated to Canada experienced mistreatment perpetrated by Canadian immigration officials. In order to curtail unauthorized immigration, the authorities implemented measures to detain the immigrants. Consequently, a significant proportion of Chinese women were incarcerated. The novel *Best of Friends* depicts the experiences of diasporic women who face many forms of prejudice, as such problems were already highlighted by Sky Lee (1990). In the same way, the book *Best of Friends* (2022) presents a narrative about a Muslim school girl in the United Kingdom. The novel begins with Maryam clicking on a hyperlink in the initial email, which states,

"Maryam clicked on the link in the first of the emails, "Imij almost killed by child: ran the headline over a picture of a girl in hospital room, bandages around her wrist... a thirteen years old schoolgirl had attempted suicide because of bullying, much of which had taken place on Imij. The schoolgirl in question was Muslim and overweight" (Ibid, 2022, 132).

The young woman was referred to as 'piggish' and her image was altered on social media, featuring a scarf, and was used to ridicule the Muslim community. This is a racial-based assault on the Muslim community residing in Western countries. Muslim individuals are often perceived as an ethnic minority when residing in Western societies, despite being granted equal citizenship rights. The two people that receive the most favorable circumstances in the UK are still depicted as being different from others.

Discrimination is illuminated through the utilization of the terms 'piggish' and 'Hijab', which serve as indicators of racial bias present in the text. These terms are employed as a means to identify even the most minute pretexts for inflicting harm and adversity

onto those belonging to the diasporic community. They acknowledge that if a comparable incident were to occur again to a female member of their group, it would likely go unnoticed. Diasporic societies are commonly perceived as subordinate within the framework of the established culture. Various diasporic communities are grouped together and assigned characteristics that are typical of their category, and all the minority groups are portrayed as a single entity: "she could slip between her Nigerian half and her English half with absolute ease, depending on whether it was to her advantage to play immigrant or native, member of the elite or put-upon minority" (Ibid, 2022, 120). It signifies that if all ethnicities from all nations are Muslims, they are unified and shown as a one group.

Furthermore, despite the prolonged residence and adherence to cultural norms of the established society by members of the diasporic community, the settled society will continue to hold a negative perception of the diasporic group, characterized by suspicion and contempt. Consequently, the female characters in the novel have assimilated the cultural norms of the settled country, with sexuality serving as a prominent theme. This is evident in the repeated mention of the female characters' reluctance to be perceived as racially marginalized in the United Kingdom: "if she'd just been a little more concerned with how awkward, sometimes impossible, it would be for them to reveal to their friends that they had a lesbian daughter with a black partner and a child born from some sperm donor of unknown family background whom they'd found in a binder" (Shamise, 2022, 129). People are compelled to relinquish their traditional customs in their place of origin, and it is unavoidable for them to embrace and incorporate the cultural remnants of diaspora due to the potential for severe criticism and occasional physical and verbal harassment from extremists who espouse religious fundamentalism.

When a well-established civilization encounters a political or economic conflict with a nation, it may promptly enforce restrictions on individuals belonging to the diasporic community who have ancestral ties to that nation. This book depicts the adversity and catastrophic consequences of colonial remnants on postcolonial societies that are in urgent need of economic advancement. The novel is replete with economic prosperity that has been achieved through the United Kingdom's sanctuary for diasporic individuals, despite their marginalized status.

The work also explores the pervasive injustice faced by Pakistani individuals at the hands of the global community. The implementation of repressive measures by government officials has led to the fragmentation of numerous Muslim communities and families, resulting in a lack of reconnection for some of these families. Despite Zahra's efforts as a Director representing them, her endeavors have been futile: "too much noise" she says, in a characteristically understand way of talking about the death threats and trolling that inevitably, and depressingly, attach themselves to a migrant Muslim women who has become the voice of Britain's consciousness since she took on the position of Director at Britain's oldest civil liberties organization a decade ago. (Ibid, 101).

They were regarded as the remaining People. Within the literary work, the protagonists, Maryam and Zahra, have a sense of alienation from their respective communities, leading them to undergo a process of displacement. Despite occupying esteemed and esteemed positions, the remaining individuals are subjected to marginalization and oppression. In addition to encountering instances of prejudice, those residing in the local community encountered challenges in their daily lives due to minor theft and other illicit activities. This is evident when Zola expresses her desire to get outdoors and Maryam recounts her experience of being abducted, posing the question, "why only to the park entrance?" Zahra asked... no CCTV in the park" ... Ten-year-old Maryam wouldn't have believed the worrywart you'd grow into. No one's going to kidnap her" (Shamsie, 2022, 145). As a result, parents of Pakistani-British descent were constrained to reside in unwelcoming surroundings and were obligated to advocate for their own survival. A significant proportion of people compelled to repatriate to Pakistan subsequent to the looting and confiscation of their residences. Racial prejudice is an inevitable problem in the settled society for diasporic groups. Individuals residing in the established society may possess elevated educational attainment, although this does not absolve them from being susceptible to prejudice. In the book, the main characters Maryam and Zahra are grappling with the issue of racism. They believe that racism is partially observed, but the country's laws provide adequate surveillance to combat it. "Zahra's superior laugh emerged, the one that said she understood the world better than Maryam did, "I promise you the police aren't going to go searching through CCTV footage to find someone who makes a Black kid feel uncomfortable on the streets of London" (Shamsie, 2022, 146).

Discrimination is perpetrated not only on the basis of an individual's race, but also on the basis of their faith. The established societal framework does not support the involvement of the diasporic population in any additional religious ceremonies or activities. The local authorities often take into account other solutions. Despite the implementation of comprehensive governmental efforts, achieving complete eradication of the prevailing prejudice among the established community would remain unattainable. The presence of affluent and highly educated individuals within a diasporic society may potentially lead to a decrease in the extent of prejudice they encounter. The issue of prejudice faced by individuals within the diasporic community is not well addressed in relation to the characters of Maryam and Zahra. However, the remaining characters are subjected to unfair treatment due to the belief that technology, unlike human beings, may be enhanced as noted in the novel that "tech, unlike people, can be improved. The Imij facial tagging feature doesn't discriminate by race." Or not to the degree that all other facial recognition software did, at any rate." "Not to mention the impact of constant surveillance on a society" (Shamsie, 2022, 147). The narrative notably shows prejudice based on the protagonists' places of origin and religious convictions, with a particular emphasis on race. To provide an example, particularly among those belonging to the second generation, the issue of discrimination might give birth to an identity crisis. Certain individuals prefer to preserve the distinctiveness of their native land, whereas others opt for the identity of

the existing territories, and some desire to assimilate. When the government exhibits prejudice towards individuals belonging to racial minority groups, it has a psychological effect on those from developing countries. The persistence of historical instances of prejudice in Western societies is evident, despite the implementation of stringent surveillance measures aimed at eradicating such biases. Second and third-generation individuals of Pakistani descent residing in Western countries face more significant challenges compared to the first generation. Due to their birth and upbringing in the UK, they see the UK as their country of origin. When individuals within their own nation exhibit hostility against them, they demonstrate an inability to withstand the resulting pressure. Nevertheless, while being citizens of a developed nation, their presence is neither acknowledged or embraced by either the developed or developing nations. Consequently, a significant proportion of individuals belonging to the second generation go on the journey of identity exploration upon reaching adolescence, as they encounter a multitude of conflicting societal norms that their parents observe within their community. They acquire the ability to embrace and integrate both cultures, adopting a lifestyle that combines elements from both. Modood examines this specific aspect and asserts that they did not expect it to result in distinct social lives, as they desired to live in a culturally diverse manner. Most of the Asian second generation aimed to preserve a fundamental heritage, a combination of familial unity, religious beliefs, and language, likely in a modified manner. The occurrence of segmented social lives was not anticipated by them (110).

Economic and political Survival of West and Distortion of Orient leading to Hybridized culture

The diasporic population faces a notable challenge in terms of adapting to and thriving within the dominant society. In the literary *Best of Friends*, nearly every character is confronted with this particular dilemma. All characters, who are Pakistani students studying in the United Kingdom, believe that the funds they receive from their families in Pakistan are inadequate to meet their living needs. The quantity in Pakistan is significantly smaller when compared to that in the United Kingdom. Consequently, individuals are compelled to engage in various occupations in order to generate income. Conversely, the characters provide financial support to their families in Pakistan, and the current currency rate between the pound and rupee is significantly high. This amount is considered extravagant in comparison to the prevailing standards in Pakistan. It is highly probable that the family held the belief that they were leading a life akin to that of royalty within the United Kingdom.

As per the legislation in the United Kingdom, immigration students were prohibited from engaging in employment to generate income for themselves. Initially, it is challenging to cope with economic challenges. However, with time, Maryam and Zahra gain popularity and attain a distinguished position in both the political and economic spheres.

During her tenure in the United Kingdom, Maryam Khan garners significant popularity. She attains a highly esteemed position in the technological sector and emerges as a prominent figure in enhancing the country's economy. She achieved the 13th position

nationwide and now aims to extend her company's operations to the New York coast. In addition, the novel portrays Pakistan as a politically and economically unfavorable country which is done through self-othering. Consequently, the protagonist, who holds a prestigious position in Pakistan, chooses to join the diaspora and establishes herself in the United Kingdom. She obtains a degree in software engineering from Imperial College and quickly becomes a millionaire. Despite her current popularity, there was a period in the UK when she faced financial constraints that prevented her from affording flat rent. However, over time, she has emerged as a highly influential economic personality.

In the early sections of the story, it is evident that Maryam Khan is struggling to survive due to her inability to cope with her surroundings. She embarks on various occupations and ultimately attains a millionaire status. As a female protagonist, she assumes a subjective role in the novel, primarily driven by the need for survival. However, she also brings about a significant contribution to the country as noted that "Khan believes the tech industry is trending in the right direction when it comes to greater inclusion for women, though she recognizes there's a long way to go" (Shamsie, 2022, 122).

The nation is not only conducive to technological advancements and other economic prosperity-oriented practices, but it is also ensuring equal opportunities for every individual. The role of women has become more prominent, with their existence and survival no longer being a subject of debate. Women are provided with ample opportunities to compete in the market. It is imperative for women to be willing to assert their demands and occupy more space. Naturally, cultural influences impede women's progress, underscoring the significance of having positive role models as noted that "women must be willing to make demands and take up more space. Of course there are cultural forces that hold women back from doing so and that's why it's important to have role models. I had Margret Wright, who continues to be a trusted adviser even now that she's retired, and I hope I have played and will continue to play a similar role to young women in tech" (Shamsie, 2022, 122).. Similarly, Zahra holds the same status in the UK, as previously mentioned.

This analysis further illustrates that diasporic populations, despite their numerous settlements in various societies, are not merely characterized as persisting hardships in their whole. In the majority of cases, individuals belonging to the diasporic community maintain the perspective that the host nation provides a conducive setting for personal growth and career progression. In the story, the main characters choose to make the United Kingdom their home due to the unstable political climate in their home country. Additionally, the current economic prosperity in the UK is so significant that they are unable to return to Pakistan.

During the later phases of their life, a significant proportion of the characters in the chosen work adopt an attitude of acceptance towards the established society. Despite the initial efforts made by early members of the diasporic group to assimilate into the dominant society and its culture, they eventually become reluctant to depart from it during their later stages. Individuals strive to integrate into the prevailing societal framework by acknowledging and adjusting to the various obstacles and hardships

they encounter. They perceive it as a land with promising prospects for their children and are reluctant to permanently relocate their children to their home countries due to this notion.

As previously said, the dispersed populations exhibit a reluctance to relinquish their customary lifestyles and traditions. They accomplish this by endeavoring to construct "maginary homelands" as noted by Said (1978), in the new land they have inhabited, which are locations that bear cultural and historic resemblance to their previous homes. Zahra's desire to marry Ali in the novel was met with reluctance because to her inability to tolerate the cultural accumulation of the country. She contemplated multiple times whether to support her husband or remain apart. Nevertheless, despite his widespread popularity and money, Zahra ultimately divorced her husband.

Ali left a successful career as a barrister specializing in human and immigration to join CCL in 2009. "There was a change in my personal life that made me think of what other kind of changes I could make, in that clichéd way." The way personal change was the end to a six-year marriage. "My husband was offered a job in New York, which he didn't feel he could turn down. When I decided to stay in London, the marriage ended." If this seems a curiously dispassionate way of talking about matters of the heart, it may be symptomatic of how carefully she guards her private life". (Ibid, 100).

Both Zahra and Ali possess a shared culture that encompasses various dimensions, including economic, political, and cultural aspects. Zahra and Ali cultivate several Pakistani connections throughout the narrative, and they endeavor to develop their own Pakistani community in that location. They would regularly organize social gatherings for their acquaintances with the purpose of fostering acquaintanceship. Conversely, it seems that most of the time they only engage with individuals from their own group, as revealed by the tales in various ways. Individuals belonging to the second generation exhibit a heightened degree of interpersonal connection and a greater degree of social involvement in comparison to individuals from the preceding generation. Maryam, the main character of the novel, simultaneously embraces both traditional culture customs and Western cultural practices in order to prioritize the well-being of her children. It depicts the amalgamation of the two distinct civilizations. The presence of clandestine relationships among women in the novel as a means to derive pleasure from sexual experiences is deemed futile. Zahra Khala is transgender. Maryam's father expressed his approval: "anyway, Nani, there's no point. Zahra Khala is asexual." "Good good," Maryam's father said". "Your Zahra Khala is single by choice, Zola. That's not the same thing," Layla said in the conversational tone she used whenever Zola let slip a new concept that Maryam didn't see any reason for someone of her age to know. "People can be responsible about having sexual partners without-" (Shamise, 2022, 126).

The key theme that initiates cultural appropriation, adaptation, and ultimately modification in the work is the portrayal of sexuality. Hence, the people in the narrative actively immerse themselves in the realm of the first world, thereby transforming their lives from being perceived solely within the third world to being integral members of the second citizen city of the first world, while yet maintaining acceptance.

Consequently, the characters are compelled to embrace Western culture. Culture adaptation encompasses various aspects such as attire, manner of speech, educational background, employment in diverse organizations, promotion of technology progress, and numerous other factors. Despite their unwavering commitment to their indigenous traditions, individuals belonging to diasporic communities have challenges when attempting to assimilate into the dominant society of the host country. The individuals in question exhibited an inability to fully grasp the profound importance and influence of one's cultural heritage, a phenomenon that endures indefinitely. Upon her initial attraction to the West, they disregard the disparities in their countries of origin, religious beliefs, and cultural customs, opting instead to embrace the Western influences in order to enhance their rich status.

As a consequence, their ability to sustain their relationship has been compromised. Similarly, the bond that has been established among women belonging to the White group is tense throughout. In the majority of instances, the diasporic population encounters challenges in effectively navigating substantial cultural disparities. In a second place, they are shocked by the contrast as well. Thirdly, they come to the judgment, for whatever reason, that all of the customs of the society in which they seek to settle are bad. As a result of this, they desire to bring up their children in accordance with the customs and traditions of their own people. In the story the aim of Maryam of relocating her children in UK and raising them up there is the vey example of cultural adaptation, and also holding the native one is leading to hybridized identity. She is particularly anxious that they will not adjust well to the culture of UK and she fully stayed successful. She places limitations on her girls' capacity to be friends with the Whites. She scolds them by reminding them that the fewer times they see those white females, the better off they will be. They do not tend to have many mates. Simply make an attempt to be friendly in order to get along with them in school. Therefore, her children are speaking fluent English and having the ability to integrate with the white culture.

In the story, the character Zahra has also the opinion that London is not an ideal atmosphere for her community as Muslim women have different challenges which have been included into her renowned position as a director. Zahra makes her remark regarding the cultural patterns which are as it is so entwined in the fabric of society. If you drink alcohol at home, you run the possibility of being shunned by your peers. In London, the repercussions of not drinking are the same as those of drinking. When they reach that period, it is when drinking gets dangerous, and when they start at such a young age, it is simple for them to become alcoholics although sexuality has already been discussed which is consistent to the mentioned. Therefore, she makes the decision to stayed at UK and fix out the problems rather than leaving the country because the country is entirely fit and suited for grooming and growth.

Some people of the second generation are beginning to trash their lives because of the cultural baggage that their parents and grandparents carry. The bulk of second generation as younger daisporic individuals are proven to be motivated towards sexuality and other advancement which are outlawed in their culture. This finally leads

in a big conflict of cultures due to the fact that parents adhere to a different culture and custom inside the home than they do outside the home. It frequently has a psychological influence on them.

In many parts of Asia, it is considered undesirable to date or simply have male companions. Even marriage with a non-consort is taboo in our society. As a result, members of the first generation of the diasporic community found it difficult to embrace the idea that their children should have male or female companions because they believed it would negatively effect the development of their progeny. In the novel Maryam desires for her daughter include preventing her from sexuality and preventing her from having male companions as the child reproduction process has been noted by Shamise "if she'd just been a little more concerned with how awkward, sometimes impossible, it would be for them to reveal to their friends that they had a lesbian daughter with a black partner and a child born from some sperm donor of unknown family background whom they'd found in a binder" (2022, 129).

This procedure is still adoptable in the west but it is unable to be accepted in their home society. The first generation of a diasporic group places a larger emphasis on marriage than future generations do because of the cultural disparities that exist between them and the first generation. They place a higher priority on enjoying a happy and comfortable life than getting married. The protagonists of the novel cohabit with Art for a number of years without getting married to spouses. They consider this relationship to be entirely normal, however, Zahra is impacted by it and it frequently causes her distress. Even the second generation does not believe that marriage is a commitment that lasts forever: They have not felt it their obligation to stay married, as the Khala's sexuality has been derided. They do not believe that marriage is a commitment that lasts forever. They are not prepared to endure, make modifications, or settle for something that is less than what they regard to be the ideal sort of happiness.

Joint family systems are extensively prevalent in the countries of Asia. Without considering the viewpoints of others, a single person cannot decide anything. In contrast, the value of an individual's opinions and decisions is increased in the countries of the first world. Despite the fact that members of the first generation of the diasporic group want their children to live in community with others, although they get along well, they both want to live their lives in their own manner. This produces psychological discomfort for character, just as it does for Maryam. Maryam feels a tremendous degree of emotional suffering as a result of Layla and Zola's choice to restrict the number of times to different realms of life. Having been robbed of the companionship of her own parents upon migrating to UK, her children's independence, their need to keep their distance from her, is something she will never comprehend in genuine meanings, although, both children are living with her. Because both parents and children of diasporic community members are born and nurtured in various cultures and societies, the practice of cultural difference between them cannot be stopped by either one of them.

Conclusion

Best of Friends (2022) was the selected text written by Shamsie, narrating the story of diasporic people who are not happy in their mother land because of the distorted and conservative practices, forced the characters to flee abroad and seek asylum. This is what the reason of writing of the novel to show a mutual stance outside the native country to develop friendship that is more trustable and cohesive. The country Pakistan is represented as classical Orient where General Zia's regime is aristocracaly running the country. The people are shown oppressed and marginalized, therefore, they need a survivor like West which is a best place. In the context of the novel the country Pakistan is misrepresented and its people are Othered which is done from the perspective of Self-Orientalism, and their Othering is called Self-Othering.

In the context of the novel it is also intended to express that Western community and culture may be a glimpse of both support and repression. This is something that is being done simultaneously. Consequently, this has motivated to study the ways in which power, liberty, and assimilation play a part in the politics of identification, as well as the ways in which subjectivities continually fight against, rebel against, or adapt to the representations that are currently in place. In the process of identity building, subjectivities are said to transgress racial, gendered, social, and cultural categorizations. However, the degree of success that these subjectivities achieve in doing so varies depending on the circumstances. At the same time, however, these subjectivities are inextricably linked to these socially constructed categories, and they experience the repercussions of their participation in them which is provided by the West. Without West the subjective identity and disposition is not inevitable. Although, the characters in their country were objective entities while in the context of the novel West holds this capacity to give a subjective position to the Oriental people and Othered its country Pakistan.

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