



**A POSTCOLONIAL STUDY OF IDENTITIES NAVEED'S *ALL OF MY HEART*
(2012)**

**Asif Ali Farooqi¹, Syeda Urooj Farheen², Hadiqa Bakhsheesh³, Muhammad Azam⁴,
Muhammad Ishaq⁵**

^{1,2}Lecturer of Linguistics and English Literature at Riphah International University, Attock
Campus

³English Teacher at Army Public School and College, Attock

^{4,5}M.Phil Scholars at Northern University, Nowshera

⁵GPS Asmat Abad Charsadda

Email: ¹asleehan555@gmail.com

Abstract

This research explores Sara Naveed's *All of My Heart* through a postcolonial lens, focusing on how the novel engages with postcolonial themes while portraying identities shaped by colonialism. Using a qualitative method, the study explores the text to reveal how the characters experience cultural duality, navigating feelings of belonging to two worlds shaped by tradition and modern influences. The novel highlights historical legacies, showing how colonial pasts continue to shape the characters' present identities and choices. A significant aspect of the narrative is the struggle to balance cultural traditions with the desire for change, illustrating the complexities of maintaining heritage while adapting to evolving societal expectations. Their journey reflects a quest for belonging, showcasing the challenges of existing between inherited cultural values and contemporary realities. Additionally, the study shows cultural adaptability, emphasizing how characters develop resilience while adjusting to varied cultural settings. Through these portrayals, *All of My Heart* offers insight into the lived experiences of postcolonial individuals, capturing their efforts to reconcile the past with the present while forging their identities within a space marked by the remnants of colonial influence and the demands of modern life.

Key Words: Colonial, Colonialism, Orientalism and Postcolonial

INTRODUCTION

This study analyzes Naveed's *All of My Heart* (2012), using Orientalism as a theoretical framework to examine how the novel engages with postcolonial themes of identities and portrays the construction of identities within a postcolonial context. Set in South Asia, the novel intertwines personal themes with broader cultural and historical concerns, depicting characters that assemble their identities from elements of different cultures, reflecting the dynamic and layered nature of postcolonial identities. The narrative highlights the tension between honoring the past and seeking change as characters strive to shape their futures while carrying the legacies of colonial histories. It scrutinizes the impacts of colonialism on societies and individuals, emphasizing issues of cultural identity, power dynamics, and cultural interactions in postcolonial contexts (Prakash, 1994). Literature serves as a medium for articulating these complexities, and *All of My Heart* offers profound insights into how individuals, much like the characters in the novel, navigate inherited cultural burdens while adapting to contemporary challenges. This study aims to explore how the novel reflects the impacts of colonialism and



examines the portrayal of postcolonial identities analyzing characters' experiences and the cultural contexts shaping their stories, thereby contributing to postcolonial discourse.

Background of the Study

Sara Naveed, a contemporary Pakistani author, has emerged as a significant voice in South Asian literature, particularly in romantic fiction, drawing deeply from the cultural and social fabric of her homeland (Ali, 2016). Her works are rooted in the lived realities of Pakistan, a country shaped by its colonial past and diverse cultural heritage, which is evident in the settings and themes she explores. Naveed's transition from a career in banking and finance to a full-time writer reflects her dedication to storytelling, with her debut novel *Undying Affinity* (2014) marking her successful entry into the literary field (Khan, 2019). Her narratives, while centered on love and relationships, subtly address broader societal and cultural issues within Pakistan, including the tensions between tradition and modern aspirations. *All of My Heart*, one of Naveed's most acclaimed works, is set in contemporary Pakistan, using its rich cultural context not merely as a backdrop but as an integral element in shaping characters and plotlines. The novel delves into themes of love, destiny, and societal expectations while exploring contemporary issues such as family dynamics and societal pressures, offering a nuanced portrayal of Pakistani life. Naveed's writing, characterized by emotional depth and relatable characters, positions *All of My Heart* within the evolving canon of South Asian literature, contributing to a more diverse and authentic representation of the region in global literary discourse.

Research Objectives

- To examine the ways Naveed's *All of My Heart* engages with postcolonial themes through its portrayal of postcolonial identities

Research Questions

- How Sara Naveed's *All of My Heart* engages with postcolonial themes through its portrayal of postcolonial identities?

Statement of Problem

Despite the rich postcolonial discourse within South Asian literature, there is limited, focused analysis on how contemporary Pakistani novels, particularly Sara Naveed's *All of My Heart*, engage with postcolonial themes and portray the construction of identities shaped by colonial legacies. This gap limits a deeper understanding of how modern South Asian narratives reflect the complexities of identity negotiation and cultural hybridity within a postcolonial context. There is a need to explore how Naveed's work weaves postcolonial themes into its narrative structure, revealing the struggles of individuals navigating inherited cultural histories alongside contemporary societal expectations. Addressing this gap contributes to postcolonial literary studies by highlighting how contemporary Pakistani fiction articulates the lived experiences and challenges of postcolonial identities in a rapidly changing society.

Significance of the Study

This study focuses on Naveed's *All of My Heart* as a key text to demonstrate how contemporary South Asian literature grapples with postcolonial themes and identities. It underscores how identities in this work and others like it mirror colonial legacies and the formation of cultural



identity under the influence of historical and social forces. The research provides a unique perspective on contemporary South Asian experiences, thereby enriching postcolonial literary studies and contributing to the global understanding of South Asian literature.

Rationale of the Study

While postcolonial studies often focus on renowned South Asian authors, there is limited exploration of popular contemporary writers like Naveed, whose narratives reflect the lived experiences and cultural negotiations of postcolonial identities in Pakistan. By analyzing how *All of My Heart* engages with postcolonial themes and constructs identities shaped by colonial histories, this study aims to reveal how contemporary South Asian literature contributes to postcolonial discourse. This analysis will provide deeper insight into how themes of cultural hybridity, tradition versus modernity, and identity formation are represented in popular literature, enriching the understanding of postcolonial experiences in a society still grappling with its colonial past while embracing modernity.

Limitations of the Study

The analysis is limited to *All of My Heart*, which may restrict the applicability of its findings to other postcolonial texts or contexts. Additionally, the interpretation of postcolonial themes reflects the researcher's perspective, and other literary or socio-cultural dimensions may not be fully explored.

LITERATURE REVIEW

South Asian literature, viewed through Postcolonialism, explores the enduring impacts of colonial rule and the complexities of identity. According to Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (1989), postcolonial literature amplifies marginalized voices to share their histories. Arundhati Roy's use of magical realism critiques colonial legacies, intertwining personal and national stories to reveal fractured postcolonial identities.

Mohanty (1984) critiques Western feminism's tendency to generalize, urging recognition of the diverse experiences of women in postcolonial societies. This perspective is reflected in Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* (2017) and Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Interpreter of Maladies* (1999), which explores how gender, identity, and displacement shape women's lives after colonialism. Spivak's work offers critical insights into postcolonial themes in South Asian literature. In *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1988), she questions whether marginalized groups can be heard within colonial and postcolonial power structures. Her critique of Western frameworks highlights how South Asian literature often reflects the silenced struggles of those marginalized by colonial histories.

Bhabha's concept of 'hybridity' in *The Location of Culture* (1994) has greatly shaped the understanding of postcolonial identity, emphasizing how identities form at the intersection of cultural influences. This idea is particularly useful in analyzing South Asian literature, where cultural fusion and identity negotiation are central themes. Similarly, Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) critically examines Western portrayals of the East, providing essential tools to understand how South Asian literature challenges and subverts colonial representations. Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe* (2008) challenges Eurocentric historical frameworks, advocating for perspectives that recognize the distinct experiences of postcolonial societies like South Asia. This approach underscores the importance of valuing indigenous narratives within South Asian literature. Similarly, Chatterjee's *The Nation and Its Fragments* (1993) analyzes how colonial and postcolonial nationalisms shape identities, offering a framework to



understand how South Asian literature explores issues of nationhood, modernity, and marginalization.

Ahmad (1994) critically examines how class and nation intersect within postcolonial South Asian literature, challenging Eurocentric literary theories and highlighting literature's role in reflecting and contesting social structures. Similarly, Marx (2004) explores how postcolonial literature challenges and reshapes the Western literary canon, emphasizing the importance of incorporating diverse voices. Thamarana (2015) underscores the relevance of postcolonial literature in understanding power dynamics and cultural identities, highlighting its role in fostering empathy, critical thinking, and global awareness.

Vidal (1993) examined colonial and postcolonial discourse through the lens of literary criticism, exploring their conceptual frameworks. His work highlights how colonial discourse maintains hegemonic power structures while postcolonial discourse seeks to deconstruct them. Vidal's analysis deepens the understanding of how power, identity, and cultural representation are shaped within literary texts. Furthermore, Chindoga and Johnson (2021) explored how nativism affects nation-building in rural Zimbabwe, revealing its impact on national identity and cohesion. Similarly, Mbah, Bailey, and Shingruf (2023) examined relational research methods within Indigenous contexts, emphasizing the need for respectful, reciprocal engagement and recognition of Indigenous knowledge systems. Both studies contribute to understanding nation-building and research practices in contexts marked by cultural specificity and historical complexities.

Hogarth and Fletcher (2018) highlight how postcolonial legacies and racial dynamics affect individuals' sense of inclusion in multicultural societies. This work deepens understanding of the challenges and possibilities associated with diversity and multiculturalism in postcolonial contexts. Fru and Wassermann (2017) analyzed Anglophone Cameroonian history textbooks to understand how historical narratives shape perceptions of national identity and unity. Their study highlights the role of historical knowledge in influencing collective memory and socio-political dynamics. Similarly, Tallapessy et al. (2020) used multimodal critical discourse analysis to examine postcolonial themes in Black Panther, demonstrating how popular culture engages with and reflects discussions on colonial legacies. Silalahi (2018) examined Edward Said's concept of Orientalism, focusing on the relationship between Western capitalism and Eastern exoticism. His study highlights how Western narratives use Orientalist stereotypes to maintain power over Eastern cultures. By exploring these dynamics, Silalahi's work deepens discussions on cultural representation and power relations between the East and the West.

The study on *All of My Heart* by Sara Naveed differs from the reviewed literature by focusing on how postcolonial identities are constructed within contemporary Pakistani popular fiction rather than within acknowledged South Asian texts or broad theoretical analyses. Prior studies examine postcolonial impacts through theoretical frameworks applied broadly across regions and genres, the researcher uses Edward Said's Orientalism specifically to interpret intimate character dialogues and emotional conflicts in Naveed's work. This allows the researcher to ground abstract postcolonial theories in the lived realities and emotional landscapes of Pakistani characters in a Western context, illustrating how colonial legacies shape individual identity crises and cultural negotiations in daily life. By doing so, the study highlights how postcolonial discourse is not limited to elite literary spaces or political discussions but is actively present in personal, relational, and societal struggles depicted in contemporary Pakistani fiction. This focus provides a nuanced, localized contribution to postcolonial literary analysis, enriching the field with insights into how romance fiction also becomes a site for exploring the postcolonial condition.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative research design, utilizing textual analysis to explore postcolonial themes in Naveed's *All of My Heart*. The research focuses on systematically examining the novel's themes and character development to identify how postcolonial identities and histories are represented. Data is collected through close reading and thematic coding, enabling the identification of recurring motifs related to cultural hybridity, identity formation, and colonial legacies within the text. The analysis is rigorously guided by postcolonial theory, a critical tool in interpreting the findings and ensuring that the study remains aligned with its objective of understanding how contemporary South Asian literature engages with postcolonial discourse.

Data Collection

In this study, the researchers collect data directly from Naveed's *All of My Heart* by selecting excerpts where characters reflect on their experiences, engage in conversations, or navigate challenges. These excerpts allow the researcher to trace the intriguing evolution of the characters' perspectives and how they respond to the impacts of colonial legacies. By closely examining the characters' words and situations, the study uncovers deeper layers of their thoughts and emotions, revealing how postcolonial themes are embedded within the narrative.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in Edward Said's (1977) concepts of Postcolonialism and Orientalism. Said's work *Orientalism* provides a lens for examining how *All of My Heart* (2012) by Sara Naveed represents colonial and postcolonial identities and cultural discourses. His concept of Orientalism, which critiques the West's historical construction of the East as exotic, inferior, and uncivilized, guides this analysis in exploring how the novel engages with similar dynamics within a postcolonial context. This study applies Said's framework to assess whether Naveed's narrative challenges or perpetuates orientalist tropes by critically analyzing characters, settings, and narrative voices to understand how postcolonial identity and cross-cultural interactions are portrayed.

Beyond *Orientalism*, Said's broader postcolonial theory is essential for understanding the power relations and cultural negotiations depicted in the novel. Postcolonial theory examines the enduring impacts of colonialism on both colonizers and the colonized and the ways former colonies articulated their identities after independence. This perspective directs the analysis of how Naveed's text engages with themes of cultural identity, displacement, and hybridity, which are central to postcolonial experiences. Additionally, Said's critique of binary oppositions, such as East/West and tradition/modernity, informs this study's examination of whether the novel subverts or reinforces these divides in its depiction of Eastern societies and their interactions with the West.

Furthermore, the study employs Said's concept of "contrapuntal reading," which emphasizes recognizing both colonial and colonized perspectives within literature. This approach allows for an exploration of how Naveed's narrative intertwines diverse cultural and historical viewpoints, addressing the legacies of colonialism within contemporary Pakistani settings. Said's theories on Postcolonialism and Orientalism thus provide a comprehensive framework for critically analyzing *All of My Heart*, enabling the study to uncover how the novel engages with cultural identity, power dynamics, and colonial legacies while demonstrating the continued relevance of Said's theories in contemporary postcolonial literary analysis.



DATA ANALYSIS

Zynah, a second-generation immigrant, grapples with the intricate web of her hybrid identity within a postcolonial and orientalist framework. Her profound connection to her Pakistani heritage is juxtaposed with the shaping influence of British society, a reflection of Said's concept of how Eastern identities are both constructed and confined within Western discourses. Her internal battles over identity and belonging lay bare the ongoing tensions spawned by orientalist representations, where cultural duality becomes a battleground for negotiating tradition and modernity. Through the lens of Rehan and Zynah's experiences, the novel vividly portrays how postcolonial individuals navigate the intersecting pressures of cultural heritage and Western expectations, thereby underscoring the enduring relevance of Said's Orientalism in contemporary postcolonial literature.

The theme of love in *All of My Heart* carries profound postcolonial implications deeply intertwined with Said's *Orientalism*. The relationship between Rehan and Zynah transcends a mere personal bond; it metamorphoses into a powerful metaphor for the convergence of the "Orient" and the "Occident," offering a beacon of hope for bridging cultural divides in a society still under the sway of colonial legacies. Their love, a testament to the human spirit, surmounts challenges shaped by orientalist structures, including societal expectations and cultural differences, thereby revealing how personal relationships can triumph over the broader power dynamics that position Eastern identities within Western frameworks.

The novel's setting in London, a city steeped in its colonial history and contemporary multiculturalism, serves as a battleground for the tensions Said describes between the East and West. London, a living, breathing entity within the narrative, symbolizes the persistent presence of colonial structures while also providing a space where postcolonial identities grapple for visibility and belonging. The characters' interactions with this environment bring to the fore the ways colonial histories continue to shape individual experiences, mirroring how orientalist discourses inform perceptions of immigrants and their identities.

Through the story of Rehan and Zynah, *All of My Heart* illuminates the personal and societal impacts of colonialism. It showcases the complexities of cultural identity, migration, and relationships across cultural boundaries within a postcolonial context. The novel reveals how individuals seek reconciliation and understanding while negotiating the Orientalist legacies embedded in Western societies, thereby demonstrating the continued relevance of Said's *Orientalism* in analyzing postcolonial narratives.

Zynah, sometimes I feel like we're caught between two worlds, neither fully Pakistani nor entirely British... It's like we carry the weight of our ancestors' colonial past while trying to shape our own future (Naveed, p.7).

This quote reflects the postcolonial identity crisis faced by Rehan and Zynah as they navigate their cultural positioning within the frameworks shaped by colonial histories. Rehan's feeling of being "caught between two worlds" illustrates the complexities of hybrid identities within an orientalist context, where individuals from formerly colonized societies are positioned between their indigenous heritage and the Western influences imposed upon them. The statement about not feeling "fully Pakistani nor entirely British" (Naveed, p.7) embodies the tensions created by Orientalist constructions that view Eastern identities through a Western lens, leading to internal conflicts over belonging and self-definition.

Said's *Orientalism* helps unpack how these personal struggles of Rehan and Zynah, with their dual identities, are not just individual but are rooted in the ongoing power dynamics established



during colonial rule, which continue to shape perceptions and societal expectations. Rehan and Zynah's dual identities symbolize the broader postcolonial struggle to assert Indigenous cultural identities while negotiating the persistent influence of British colonial legacies, reflecting how orientalist structures continue to define and complicate postcolonial existence. Additionally, the mention of carrying the "weight of our ancestors' colonial past" (Naveed, p.7) alludes to the intergenerational trauma and historical baggage that postcolonial societies often bear.

The characters' recognition that their current experiences are deeply connected to their nation's colonial past reflects the enduring orientalist structures that continue to shape postcolonial identities. This acknowledgment illustrates how colonial legacies persist within the collective psyche of Pakistanis, where the cultural identity is formed under the shadow of Western dominance and representations. Rehan's sentiments resonate with many in postcolonial Pakistan, revealing how Western systems and values, introduced during colonial rule, continue to coexist with indigenous traditions, creating a landscape of cultural duality that complicates the sense of belonging.

Zynah's reflection on carrying the "weight of our ancestors' colonial past" underscores the intergenerational trauma tied to the orientalist impositions of the colonial era, where exploitation and cultural disruption have left a lasting imprint on societal structures and individual perceptions. This burden reveals how colonial histories continue to influence present realities, aligning with Said's argument on how the West's constructed representations of the East impact self-perception and cultural identity long after the end of formal colonial rule.

Additionally, the narrative's reference to the dichotomy experienced by those with both British and Pakistani heritage exemplifies the complexities of hybrid identities within an Orientalist framework. These individuals often find themselves negotiating between the cultural expectations of the colonizer and the colonized, illustrating the fragmented nature of postcolonial identities shaped by historical interactions under colonial dominance, a process that Said's *Orientalism* critically interrogates.

The theme of identity crisis in *All of My Heart* extends beyond individual struggles to the societal level, reflecting the ongoing and urgent struggle of postcolonial nations like Pakistan to define their national identity under the enduring influence of orientalist structures. Said's *Orientalism* helps illuminate how debates around language, religion, culture, and politics are shaped by colonial legacies that positioned the West as a model while casting the East as the "other," making it challenging for postcolonial societies to assert identities free from Western constructs. This identity crisis is further intensified by Pakistan's regional and ethnic diversity, which complicates the pursuit of a cohesive national identity.

The notion of shaping "our own future" (Naveed, p.7) aligns with the postcolonial aspiration for independence and self-definition within a world still informed by orientalist frameworks. Since independence in 1947, Pakistan has worked to build its political, educational, and cultural systems distinct from colonial impositions. However, as Said argues, the legacy of colonialism and the orientalist narratives that persist continue to create tension between embracing indigenous heritage and navigating modernity, revealing the complexities of postcolonial nation-building and identity formation in a world shaped by historical power imbalances.

The dialogue between Rehan and Zynah captures the layered complexity of postcolonial experiences within the framework of Said's *Orientalism*, illustrating how individuals and societies navigate identities shaped by the lingering power structures and cultural perceptions inherited from colonial rule. Their conversation reflects that the postcolonial journey is an ongoing process of negotiating the tension between indigenous heritage and Western



influences, a tension created and perpetuated by orientalist narratives that position the East as the "other." Pakistan's evolving postcolonial narrative, influenced by political upheavals, globalization, and periods of reclaiming indigenous culture, demonstrates the continuous struggle to assert a cultural identity free from the shadow of Western hegemony.

Furthermore, this struggle extends beyond cultural identity to economic and political dimensions, where the unequal structures established during colonial rule continue to influence resource distribution and social hierarchies, reinforcing the orientalist frameworks critiqued by Said. Zynah's hybrid identity as a second-generation immigrant in Britain embodies the complexities of living within these intersecting worlds, highlighting the internal conflicts of belonging and identity that are shaped by the historical and ongoing dynamics of Orientalism. Through Rehan and Zynah, *All of My Heart* offers a lens to examine how postcolonial subjects confront and negotiate the persistent impacts of colonialism while striving to shape futures rooted in cultural sovereignty and self-definition.

Rehan and Zynah's love story in *All of My Heart* embodies postcolonial themes, serving as a metaphor for the possibility and challenges of cultural convergence within a world still marked by colonial histories. Their relationship reflects the intricate complexities of navigating cultural differences, societal expectations, and personal histories, illustrating how intimate connections in a postcolonial context remain shaped by the enduring structures of Orientalism that position Eastern identities within frameworks defined by Western norms. This demonstrates the difficulties faced in forming relationships that cross cultural boundaries, where individuals must reconcile the influence of colonial legacies with the desire for mutual understanding.

The setting of London, a city shaped by its colonial past and contemporary multicultural realities, further deepens the postcolonial narrative. The interactions between characters and the city reflect how the remnants of colonialism continue to shape daily lives and community dynamics, aligning with Said's critique of how Western spaces perceive and interact with the "Oriental other." Through Rehan and Zynah's experiences, the novel reveals the ongoing struggle within postcolonial societies to negotiate identity, belonging, and self-definition while contending with the residual impacts of colonial discourse.

Rehan's identity, shaped by his Pakistani heritage and life in London, embodies the duality and hybridity central to postcolonial experiences described by Said, reflecting how individuals are caught between resisting and adapting to Western cultural frameworks. Zynah's perspective highlights the intergenerational transmission of colonial legacies, illustrating how postcolonial subjects continue to feel the weight of historical subjugation while striving to forge autonomous identities within a world where the influence of Orientalism persists.

In the exchange, "Our traditions are important, but so is our desire for independence" (Naveed, p. 21), the tension between tradition and modernity becomes clear, illustrating a key postcolonial dilemma. Zynah's acknowledgment of familial expectations to uphold traditional customs reflects the persistence of precolonial cultural practices, while Rehan's emphasis on independence reveals the push towards modernity shaped by postcolonial realities. This tension aligns with Said's *Orientalism*, where colonial legacies continue to position Eastern traditions as static while framing modernity through Western paradigms, forcing individuals and communities to navigate the complexities of preserving cultural heritage while seeking autonomy within structures still shaped by colonial discourses. The conversation thus captures how postcolonial subjects must reconcile inherited traditions with aspirations for change in a world where colonial power dynamics continue to influence perceptions of progress and identity.



Rehan's statement about wanting to "honor our roots" while giving their children "freedom to be whoever they want to be" (Naveed, p. 32) captures the postcolonial struggle to preserve cultural heritage while adapting to modern realities shaped by a globalized world. This tension aligns with Said's *Orientalism*, as the characters navigate identities constructed within colonial discourses that often depict Eastern traditions as static and incompatible with modern progress. Zynah's response underscores the difficulty of balancing inherited traditions with contemporary aspirations, illustrating the complexity of postcolonial identities as individuals seek to reclaim agency while resisting orientalist frameworks that continue to shape perceptions of the East. Together, these reflections reveal how postcolonial narratives explore cultural duality, the intergenerational impacts of colonialism, and the pursuit of autonomy within structures still marked by colonial legacies.

Analyzed through Said's *Orientalism*, Rehan's lament—"Do you ever feel like we're trying to fit into a mold that was never meant... by a history that wasn't our own" (Naveed, p. 43)—captures the postcolonial sense of alienation within systems designed by colonial powers. He highlights how orientalist frameworks impose foreign norms on Eastern identities, forcing them into roles they never chose. Zynah's reply underscores their consciousness of living under a legacy, not of their making, revealing the enduring power of colonial narratives to shape self-perception. When Zynah observes, "It's like we're constantly caught in a tug-of-war between our heritage and the expectations of the world" (Naveed, p. 46), she names the orientalist tension between preserving indigenous culture and conforming to Western models of progress. This dual pressure exemplifies Said's argument that the East is perpetually defined as a Western "other." Finally, Rehan's speculative question—"Do you ever wonder how different our lives would be if our ancestors hadn't experienced... history forever altered by forces beyond our control" (Naveed, p. 77)—reflects the orientalist legacy of powerlessness, as characters imagine alternate trajectories unshaped by colonial imposition. Together, these exchanges illustrate how *All of My Heart* uses personal dialogue to expose the ongoing influence of *Orientalism* on postcolonial identity and agency.

Viewed through Said's *Orientalism*, Rehan's question about carrying "the weight of history" exposes how postcolonial subjects inherit not only cultural legacies but also the burdens imposed by colonial narratives that define their past and frame their responsibilities. Zynah's acknowledgment of this burden highlights their generation's challenge as they confront colonial histories they did not choose while striving to forge a future on their terms and reflecting Said's notion that the colonized are perpetually negotiating identities constructed by Western discourse.

When Zynah asks, "Why is it so challenging for us to find a sense of belonging... they don't quite fit together" (Naveed, p. 79), she names the orientalist dilemma of hybrid identities caught between Eastern heritage and Western environments. Rehan's response, describing their dual worlds, underscores how orientalist frameworks position the "Oriental" as forever out of place in the "Occident," making authentic belonging elusive. Their ability to adapt to blend into various cultural contexts is a form of what Said calls "contrapuntal" survival, navigating imposed binaries and asserting agency within spaces defined by colonial power. Together, these exchanges reveal how *All of My Heart* dramatizes the ongoing impact of *Orientalism* on personal and collective identity, belonging, and cultural flexibility in postcolonial lives.

Viewed through Said's *Orientalism*, Rehan's question about their identities being "composed of borrowed elements from different cultures" reveals how postcolonial subjects inherit fragmented self-definitions imposed by Western discourses that exoticize and appropriate



Eastern cultures. His critique uncovers the orientalist process of constructing the "Orient" as a repository of usable cultural fragments, forcing individuals to piece together a sense of self from externally defined elements. Zynah's acknowledgment of this patchwork identity underscores how postcolonial individuals exercise agency by gathering diverse traditions to forge coherence within orientalist constraints. Their experience of cultural synthesis illustrates both the enduring power of colonial representations and the creative resilience required to redefine identity in a world still shaped by colonial hierarchies.

This analysis deepens our understanding of *All of My Heart* by highlighting how postcolonial identities are fluid, adaptable, and actively constructed. Rehan and Zynah embody cultural duality, negotiating their Pakistani heritage alongside Western influences to forge coherent selves. They carry intergenerational trauma—the inherited weight of colonial histories—and confront the recurring tension between preserving tradition and pursuing modern independence. Their ongoing quest for belonging in spaces that neither culture fully accommodates underscores the complex, evolving nature of postcolonial identity formation.

Rehan and Zynah's experiences in *All of My Heart* illustrate the dynamic adaptability of postcolonial identities as they become cultural chameleons who must navigate multiple settings to survive and thrive. Their selves emerge as patchworks, assembled from fragments of Pakistani heritage and Western influences, reflecting the creative process of identity construction in postcolonial contexts. At the same time, they carry the weight of their ancestors' colonial past. This burden intertwines personal memories with collective history and reminds them of the enduring impact of colonialism. This inheritance complicates their quest to reconcile tradition with modern aspirations: they strive to honor cultural roots while shaping futures defined by self-determination. Through their hybrid identities, Rehan and Zynah embody both the tensions and the resilience of postcolonial individuals—showing how, despite historical traumas and societal pressures, they continually adapt, reconcile, and forge coherent senses of self across diverse cultural worlds.

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Rehan and Zynah actively blend elements of Pakistani and Western cultures to forge coherent, hybrid identities, demonstrating that postcolonial subjects are creative agents rather than passive inheritors of a single tradition.
2. The enduring impact of colonial history emerges in both characters carrying their ancestors' experiences as a form of intergenerational trauma that shapes their self-understanding and life choices.
3. Conflicts between upholding family customs and pursuing personal autonomy reveal how postcolonial individuals negotiate competing demands of tradition and modernity.
4. Their difficulty fully belonging to either Pakistani or British social spheres underscores the liminal nature of postcolonial identities and suggests that belonging remains an unsettled, ongoing project.
5. By adapting linguistically, socially, and emotionally to diverse settings, the protagonists exhibit a "cultural chameleon" resilience that serves as a survival strategy in environments marked by power imbalances.
6. Intimate dialogues between Rehan and Zynah function as sites of cultural negotiation, exposing and challenging orientalist assumptions through the very act of personal exchange.

Conclusion



Rehan and Zynah's experiences in *All of My Heart* demonstrate how postcolonial individuals actively reconstruct their identities. They do so by weaving together traditions from their Pakistani heritage with influences from Western contexts. Their evolving sense of self, born from this cultural synthesis, reveals the creativity and agency that characterize postcolonial identity formation. This emphasis on agency is empowering, as it shows that individuals have the power to shape their own narratives. At the same time, both characters carry the inherited weight of colonial history, which shapes their struggles to reconcile familial customs with their aspirations for independence. The resulting tension between preserving tradition and embracing modernity, alongside the ongoing quest for belonging in spaces that neither culture fully accommodates, highlights the fluid and liminal nature of postcolonial existence.

By adapting linguistically, socially, and emotionally to diverse power structures, Rehan and Zynah embody a resilience that allows them to survive and even thrive amid cultural complexities. Their conversations serve as microcosms of broader negotiations between East and West, revealing how personal dialogue can both perpetuate and, importantly, challenge Orientalist frameworks. This critical engagement is enlightening, as it shows how personal dialogue can be a powerful tool for deconstructing and reimagining cultural narratives. This analysis extends postcolonial literary discourse by showing how contemporary South Asian fiction illuminates themes of cultural hybridity, intergenerational responsibility, and the negotiation of historical legacies. Future research might explore how these themes manifest in other genres or regional literatures, further deepening our understanding of postcolonial identity in an interconnected world.

Recommendations

Building on this study's findings, future research should compare *All of My Heart* with other contemporary South Asian novels. This comparative analysis will help uncover shared patterns of cultural hybridity and inherited trauma, thereby enriching our understanding of postcolonial identity. Moreover, applying interdisciplinary lenses that combine postcolonial theory with migration and memory studies will allow us to track evolving narratives of belonging. In educational settings, instructors can pair Naveed's novel with classical postcolonial texts to demonstrate how popular fiction engages with themes of tradition, modernity, and identity formation. Publishers and translators should work to bring Pakistani romantic fiction to wider international audiences in order to enrich the global literary conversation. Finally, conducting reader-response research through surveys or focus groups will reveal how diverse audiences interpret postcolonial themes and help scholars understand contemporary attitudes toward cultural identity.

REFERENCES

- Abdulqadr, K. S., & Mohammed, K. H. (2022). The Binational Interpreter in Kachachi's *The American Granddaughter: A Postcolonial Study*. *Arab World English Journal*, 13.
- Ahmad, A. (1994). In theory: Classes, nations, literatures. verso.
- Ali, Z. (2016). "Contemporary Pakistani Fiction: An Overview." *Journal of South Asian Literature*, 28(2), 123-136.
- Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. (1989). *The Empire Writes Back*.
- Bhabha, H. K. (2013). Culture's in between. In *Multicultural states* (pp. 29-36). Routledge.
- Bhabha, H. K. (2021). *DissemiNation: Time, narrative, and the margins of the modern*



nation 1.

Bhabha, Homi K. (1994). "The Location of Culture."

Boundary 2, 333-358.

Chakrabarty, D. (2008). *Provincializing Europe: postcolonial thought and historical difference- New edition*. Princeton University Press.

Chatterjee, P. (1993). *The nation and its fragments: Colonial and postcolonial histories* (Vol. 4).

Chindoga, M., & Johnson, P. (2021). Nativism and the demise of nation-building: A case of nativist discourse and responses in rural Zimbabwe. *Journal of Nation-Building and Policy Studies*, 5(1), 27.

Dirlik, A. (2002). Rethinking colonialism: Globalization, postcolonialism, and the nation.

Fru, R. N., & Wassermann, J. (2017). Historical knowledge-genre as it relates to the reunification of Cameroon in selected Anglophone Cameroonian History textbooks. *Yesterday and Today*, (18), 42-63.

Hogarth, K., & Fletcher, W. L. (2018). *A space for race: Decoding racism, multiculturalism, and post-colonialism in the quest for belonging in Canada and beyond*. Oxford University Press.

In *Literary Theory and Criticism* (pp. 35-68). Routledge India.

Interventions, 4(3), 428-448.

Khan, S. (2019). "Women Writers in South Asian Literature." *Literary Review*, 45(3), 210-225. Lahiri, J. (1999). *The Interpreter of Maladies*.

López, A. J. (2001). *Posts and pasts: A theory of postcolonialism*. State University of New York Press.

Marx, J. (2004). Postcolonial literature and the Western literary canon. *The Cambridge companion to postcolonial literary studies*, 83-96.

Mbah, M. F., Bailey, M., & Shingruf, A. (2023). Considerations for relational research methods for use in Indigenous contexts: implications for sustainable development. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 1-16.

Mohanty, C. T. (1984). *Under Western eyes: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourses*.

Prakash, G. (Ed.). (1994). *After colonialism: Imperial histories and postcolonial displacements*.

Princeton University Press.

Said, E. W. (1977). *Orientalism*. *The Georgia Review*, 31(1), 162-206.

Shamsie, K. (2017). *Home Fire*.

Silalahi, R. M. P. (2018). Western Capitalism and Eastern Exoticism: Orientalism in Edward Said's Perspectives. *Journal of English Language and Culture*, 7(2).

Spivak, G. C. (1988). *Can Subaltern Speak?*

Tallapessy, A., Wahyuningsih, I., & Anjasari, R. A. (2020). Postcolonial discourse in Coogler's Black Panther: A multimodal critical discourse analysis. *Humaniora*, 32(1), 75-87.

Thamarana, S. (2015). Significance of studying postcolonial literature and its relevance. *Research Journal of English Language and Literature*, 3(3), 537-541.



- Vidal, H. (1993). The Concept of Colonial and Postcolonial Discourse: A perspective from literary criticism. *Latin American Research Review*, 28(3), 113-119.
- Wolfe, P. (2016). History and imperialism: a century of theory, from Marx to postcolonialism. In *The Rise and Fall of Modern Empires, Volume IV* (pp. 491-524). Routledge.