Decentering Narratives: A Deconstructive Exploration of Contingent Identities and Ruptured Realities

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Abstract

The ongoing study examines the concept of contingent identities and the fragmented reality in Exit West (2017) through the deconstructive lens. The deconstruction theory holds that language and power structures generate meaning rather than being intrinsic. Employing this paradigm, the research will examine how Hamid depicts people whose identities are in flux, owning to migration, conflict, and the mythical aspect of magical doors, such as Nadia and Saeed. Examining the ruptured realities people encounter as they cross geographical lines and explore imaginative novel settings will further highlight the deconstruction of established identities. The study's objective is to present a powerful lens for understanding the fragmented identities of expatriates in foreign lands. It also reveals the inflictions of fixed identities and exposes the significant confluence of migration on our perceptions.

Keywords: Deconstruction, Decentering Narratives, Contingent Identity

Introduction

The concept of identity has undergone an enormous shift due to globalization. Migration, displacement, and wider global realities are challenging, stable concepts of self-anchored in established national and cultural narratives. *Exit West (2017)* is an explosive investigation of this issue. The current research examines the text via a deconstructive lens, deconstructing the idea of contingent identities and the narrative's rupture of reality.

Employing Jacques Derrida's deconstruction theory, this study analyzes how language and power structures in *Exit West (2017)* construct meanings rather than imparting them to us. By integrating this paradigm into the experiences of the main protagonists, Saeed and Nadia, we can reveal how their identities always transform. Their traumatic war experiences, their pervasive fear of violence, and the compelled evacuation made possible by the magical doors all contribute to their unstable and ever-evolving belief in self. The dismantling of solid identities can be witnessed much more when they cross national borders. These crossovers signify a substantial shift in their perspective on the world and their preexisting sense of self; they are more than just physical excursions. Entering the doors brings them hurtling into imaginative new worlds, further upsetting their

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perception of reality and making them confront the continual shifts of their identities in this strange milieu.

The current research on *Exit West (2017)* is highly conducive to understanding identity worldwide. Through an examination of typical self-narratives, the analysis highlights the intricate and always-evolving identity when confronted with displacement. Additionally, it emphasizes the power relationships that contribute to the construction and disintegration of identities, especially for expatriates who must negotiate fractured realities and face unforeseen obstacles to their belief in identity. By examining Nadia and Saeed's experiences in the context of *Exit West (2017)* we can develop a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by individuals whose identities are continuously changing due to the reality of globalization.

Research Objectives
- To deconstruct contingent identities in *Exit West*, analyzing how war, migration, and magical doors destabilize fragmented identities.
- To analyze the experiences of ruptured realities of characters navigating geographical borders in *Exit West*.

Importance of the Studies
The current research focuses on Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West (2017)*, utilizing a deconstruction lens to investigate the notion of contingent identities. It sheds light on the ruptured and perpetually shifting identities in a globalized world by probing how migration, war, and the "magical doors" undermine established principles of identity. The analysis not only unveils the particular experiences of the characters of the protagonists but also presents a deeper framework for comprehending how individuals struggling with fractured realities and shifting boundaries navigate the opted realities. This investigation holds a critical impetus for understanding human interaction in a world that is developing, dislodging, and shifting perpetually.

Literature Review
In *Exit West (2017),* people struggle with deconstruction—the disintegration of established notions of identity and place—in a constantly changing world. The current review examines how the novel challenges these accepted beliefs using decentering narratives-related themes. Researchers examined how *Exit West* represents identity as a fluid and transient concept that reflects the concerns of a globalized society and the identity crisis that occurs. In addition, the narrative underscores the deconstruction of reality by utilizing supernatural reality. *Exit West* offers a disorienting and distressing ambiance that reflects the characters' struggle to make sense of their chaotic reality by concealing the boundaries between the real and the virtual.

Ahmad (2019) explores how identity is dismantled in *Exit West (2017)*. He claims that those without a stable sense of identity, such as Nadia and Saeed, continuously transform. Their precarious position, which forces them to adjust to constantly shifting circumstances as they explore the world through the magical doors, is the root cause of their instability. The fractured nature of identity in the modern world is further reflected in their experiences in the odd, magical metropolis. Conventional ideas of belonging are being challenged by globalization and the ongoing mobility of people. Individuals are no longer restricted to a certain locale or culture. Rather, they have to create a new identity that is flexible and dependent on their environment, much like Nadia and Saeed did. *Exit West* revolves around this perpetual state of flux and the challenges involved

in fitting in, replicating the concerns of a society where uprooting oneself becomes more and more usual.

Malik (2020) examines the idea of liminality to highlight another aspect of identity deconstruction in *Exit West*. Liminality implies an in-between or transitional period in which a person stands at the boundary between two defined identities. Malik opines that throughout the text, Hamid deliberately situates his characters—especially Nadia and Saeed—in various liminal locations. These spaces—real and imagined—emphasize their continuous battle to find their identity in a constantly changing world. The protagonists' physical excursions best illustrate this liminality via the magical gateways. They find themselves in strange, foreign lands, leaving their accustomed existence behind. These new contexts offer neither a clear path ahead nor a sense of belonging. They haven't established a new identity in this weird reality, nor are they who they previously were. Their emotional condition also reflects this liminality. They battle with emotions of displacement and future uncertainty. Beyond the characters' direct experiences, there is a general sense of impermanence. According to Malik, it is a reflection of the 21st-century human situation in its entirety. Globalization and accelerated shifts in society and politics have tossed established concepts of identity and belonging. People always have to renegotiate where they fit into the world, which can be strange and confusing. Hamid challenges readers to deal with these fears of the contemporary world and the difficulties of forming an identity in a continuously shifting environment by placing his characters in a condition of liminality.

Hamid's utilization of magical realism in *Exit West (2017)* stimulates the protagonists' perception of a reality that has been shattered. He dissolves the lines between the real and the fictional by inserting enigmatic features such as the magical doorways. This line-blurring makes characters like Nadia and Saeed feel extremely perplexed and uneasy. Singh (2018) contends that this style represents the characters' mental effort to make sense of their increasingly chaotic surroundings rather than being a mere literary ploy. They are struggling with a sense of absurdity and uncertainty as violence and instability have upended their once-familiar reality. Thus, this fractured world reveals itself through the magical doorways. Their presence defies reason and logic, symbolizing the protagonists' effort to make sense of the chaos and established order. There is a deeper reason for this bewilderment. It forces readers to confront their fears of living in a world that can frequently feel unpredictable and uncomfortable and challenge their conceptions of reality. Hamid forces us to recognize the fragmented nature of reality in *Exit West* by muddying the boundaries between the actual and the imagined, mirroring contemporary world concerns.

Freud's (1925) notion of the "uncanny" accentuates *Exit West's* disassembled reality. The magical doors symbolize the uncanny, something familiar made odd, residing within the everyday yet opening to fantasy realms. Characters like Nadia and Saeed become disoriented by this contradiction between what is expected and what is experienced. The odd landscapes on the opposite side, both familiar and warped, also invoke the "uncanny double," which instills fear because of its contradictory similarity and dissimilarity. The protagonists are obligated by these meetings to face the boundaries of their comprehension, reflecting the concerns of a globalized world where the disturbing aspect of the unfamiliar-familiar continuously challenges conventional beliefs of realities. This unpleasant experience is an illustration of the larger problems of living in a globalized world where accepted notions of home and belonging are continuously being challenged. The protagonists' deconstructed reality in *Exit West* is highlighted by the fact that, like many people in the twenty-first century, they find themselves lost and alone in a strangely familiar setting.

According to Jameson (2016) magical reality can be interpreted as a critique of western realism ideas, particularly in postcolonial literature. He believes that by upending the established order and prevailing ideas, the fantastical components compel readers to reexamine the basic basis of reality they take for granted. This Jamesonian paradigm can be used to grasp the magical doorways in *Exit West*. Their abrupt entrance throws the characters' sense of normalcy out of their seemingly ordinary environment. The ability to distinguish between what is genuine and what is not is no longer available to the characters. This blurring of boundaries reflects larger concerns about living in a globalized society where cultural norms and established power structures are constantly threatened. The characters' experience navigating a strangely similar environment, akin to many in the twenty-first century, emphasizes the fragmented nature of reality in a colonialist milieu.

Gilroy's (2000) concept of "deterritorialization" reveals how the magical doors undercut the protagonists' sense of identity in the context of *Exit West (2017)*. Identity is usually closely associated with a particular place; a person's place of origin influences their culture, traditions, and sense of identity. The magical doors, however, contradict this idea. The doors break Nadia and Saeed's link to a single identity rooted in a particular location by taking them to different and unexpected environments. Their experiences and cultural upbringing in their native country no longer serve as their exclusive means of identity. Rather, they become inhabitants of a world in perpetual change, molding their identities to fit the requirements of every new context. Gilroy's belief posits that the typical association between identity and place is being challenged by globalization and the growing accessibility of cross-border mobility. Individuals can now be found in many areas and have their experiences influenced by other cultures. This deterritorialization is symbolized by the magical doors in *Exit West*. They stand for the dissolution of geographical barriers and people's ability to create novel identities not confined to a particular locale.

According to Sander (2018) migration significantly affects the characters' feelings of self-deconstruction in *Exit West*. Being away from their native place denotes a psychological and a physical departure. Their identities are robbed of the comfortable social positions and cultural standards that once shaped them. With their pasts broken apart and their current circumstances forcing them to create a new identity, they find themselves strangers in strange places, navigating uncharted territory. A fragmented sense of self results from this intricate interaction, as Sander proposes. Look at Nadia, for instance; she may not be taken seriously in the new country despite being a devout daughter or a successful professional in her native country. She could have to accept new employment and adjust to different standards while juggling the recollections and traces of her former existence. The identity of Nadia and Saeed in *Exit West (2017)* is variable and divided, partly due to their ongoing negotiation of the past and present, the familiar and the unknown. By emphasizing the practical difficulties of relocation and identity reconstruction, Sander's viewpoint enhances the idea of deterritorialization and aids in the novel's Deconstruction of ongoing identities.

Exit West by Mohsin Hamid explores the "double exile" concept outlined by Mimi Bal in her 2002 book *The Double Exile: Migration and Social Change*. This idea is reflected in the characters' constant state of migration, such as Nadia and Saeed. According to Bal, forced migration and conflict lead to a deep sense of alienation from one's native country and the possibility of developing a new understanding of identity abroad. The protagonists' struggle to adjust to the constantly shifting environments they enter through the magical doors clearly indicates their "double exile." Because of the trauma from their past that still lingers, and because they are unsure of what lies ahead, they are outsiders who cannot fully assimilate into a particular region. Bal

(2002) highlights how this twofold exile disrupts conventional social structures and cultural norms that offer individuals a feeling of identity and rootedness.

In the same way that Nadia and Saeed give up parts of who they were when they walk through a door, they also find it difficult to establish new bonds and create a stable identity in these strange places. This ongoing change reflects the concerns of globalization and the difficulties migrants face in a society where established ideas of belonging are continuously questioned. Therefore, Bal's dissertation highlights the psychological and social costs of relocation in a world characterized by perpetual travel and precariousness, adding another dimension to the Deconstruction of identity in *Exit West (2017).*

In *On Belonging: Anthropological Reflections on Mobility and Belonging*, Acampora (2016) digs into the idea of "hybrid identities" created through migration. This idea clarifies *Exit West's* disassembled identities. According to Acampora, refugees like Nadia and Saeed do more than give up on their former selves. Rather, they create new identities using negotiation and adaptation by fusing aspects of their native culture with the effects of their new environment. Through the mysterious portals, Nadia and Saeed travel through various settings but never completely lose their identity as native people. Instead, they integrated aspects of their history with the requirements of every new setting. In today's globalized society, when migration is not a sign of one's demise but rather a chance to forge a distinct and complex identity, Acampora's notion highlights identity's dynamic and ongoing aspect.

Saldaña-Portillo's (2015) document, *Living Between Worlds: Constructing Identities in the Borderlands*, presents a provocative perspective on the identities that Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West deconstructs*. As the characters negotiate a world that is always changing, it strikes a deep chord with them. Nadia and Saeed can never fully integrate into any one place because of the magical portals that enable them to live a wandering lifestyle and the constant fear of war. Their new environment is always foreign to them, and they live in an "in-betweenness," with their native country becoming forgotten. This "unbelonging" manifests in their unwillingness to cultivate meaningful relationships, their ongoing feeling of alienation, and their fears about not knowing where they fit in the world. Saldaña-Portillo's research illuminates the emotional costs of relocation and the difficulties encountered by people who are difficult to classify in a world growing more interconnected daily. Their disjointed identities, which are always changing, reflect the challenges of fitting in in the contemporary world.

Balibar (2009) analyzes border permeability in the context of global deterritorialization. He says the rapid exchange of cash and information has homogenized the globalized world. "Every individual is virtually in contact with every other individual through a whole variety of channels," he says, complicating the question of the digital vs real life. Because it has a "quasi-hallucinatory consistency" and "each local individuality is thus associated with the image of the place it occupies in the 'whole,'" he claims that this virtual reality is more real than reality itself. He also emphasizes the necessity of democratizing borders since they serve as political boundaries that exacerbate ideological conflicts between nations and states in an increasingly interconnected globe.

Brah (2005) challenges the premise of borders to highlight its importance in the context of studies on the diaspora. She views boundaries as metaphors for politics and power. She claimed that a story about psychic and territorial reality is ingrained in every border. She says the metaphor of borders also represents power because it allows "overdeveloped" nations to maintain a stronger grip over global human smuggling, thereby exercising their hegemony over "underdeveloped" countries. According to Brah, "Borders are arbitrary lines that divide things in ways that are simultaneously social, cultural, and psychic; they are areas to be patrolled against people they

define as outsiders, aliens, or the Others; they are demarcation lines where the act of forbidding something inscribes transgression; they are places where ownership claims—claims to "mine," "yours," and "theirs"—are staked out, contested, defended, and fought over."

Brison (2002) delves into the idea of "traumatized subjectivity" and how traumatic events can shatter a person's memory and sense of self. This idea clarifies how Nadia and Saeed are affected psychologically by the conflict and their relocation. According to Brison, trauma obstructs the regular process of combining events into a meaningful story. They may have flashbacks, jumbled memories, and a sensation of being cut off from their history as a result of the violence and turmoil they endure in their native country. Examine certain instances where characters struggle with broken memories or incoherently recap their past. Nadia's heavenly recall of her childhood home in an undisclosed city, for example (Hamid, 2017, p. 23), may represent a fragmented memory and the emotional distance she feels from her beforehand life as a result of the trauma of warfare.

Betancourt (2013) explores the psychological repercussions of forced migration, such as dissociation, depression, and anxiety. This study supports Nadia and Saeed's difficulties navigating a constantly changing environment. They probably have mental health problems as a result of the doors' continual movement and unpredictability. Based on Betancourt's research, it appears possible that Nadia and Saeed face anxiety symptoms, including trouble focusing or persistent worry about the future. Depressive symptoms, such as hopelessness or a loss of interest in once-enjoyed activities, may also be displayed by them. One coping strategy for handling the overwhelming nature of their predicament could be dissociation, a psychological defense mechanism in which people separate from their thoughts or environment. Examine how Nadia and Saeed's mental health is impacted by their continual relocation and uncertainty. Observe moments when the characters, navigating their shattered realities, display signs of anxiety, sadness, or disassociation. As an illustration of the psychological cost of relocation, consider Nadia's loneliness and bewilderment upon landing in Istanbul (Hamid, 2017, p. 42). These abstract entities could be seen as signs of anxiety and disorientation.

Castles (2010) underlines the obstacles and concerns that come with migration while criticizing the romanticization of mobility in migration studies. The magical doors symbolize a perpetual state of upheaval and a sense of freedom and promise. The art of Castles serves as a helpful reminder that moving, even voluntarily, is not always pleasant. The characters adjust to different settings, social mores, and cultural customs. This ongoing transition may cause worry and anxiety. Examine how the characters deal with the emotional and psychological concerns of continuously adjusting to new realities and the physical displacement experienced by the doors. Consider how the continual mobility challenges Nadia and Saeed's sense of self and how they try to keep things typical despite the ensuing chaos.

Puar (2017) challenges orthodox identity politics that only considers national origin in her 2017 book *Terrorist Assemblages: Violence, Trauma, and Resistance in the Wake of 9/11*. Puar argues in favor of a more complex interpretation that considers how racial, gender, sexual, and geopolitical intersections shape the experiences of migrants. This approach provides an insightful prism to view *Exit West (2017)*. While it's true that Nadia and Saeed's relocation has shaped their sense of self, Puar's work shows us that these identities are not fixed. The power structures they come across in each new setting also impact them. For example, their experiences in Istanbul and London will probably be influenced by how their gender, race, and class place them in those particular social situations. Think about how a young Muslim woman like Nadia may behave differently in a patriarchal society than Saeed. A deeper comprehension of the characters' changing

identities and the difficulties they encounter as they navigate a culture shaped by diverse social, political, and economic factors are made possible by Puar's emphasis on intersectionality.

Kim (2022) investigates the premise of "performed identities" in the context of migration in her article "Staged Selves: Performing Koreanness in the Transnational Sphere," which provides an insightful lens through which to examine Exit West. According to Kim, immigrants like Nadia and Saeed constantly modify how they show themselves to fit in with their new environment's social and cultural standards. The scenes in which Nadia dresses more conservatively in a patriarchal setting or modifies her resume to emphasize particular abilities are in great demand in the community and strike a chord with this. Kim's research enables us to examine how Nadia and Saeed's self-perception transforms into a dynamic act continuously influenced by their encounters with various social environments. For example, consider how Nadia might present herself differently on a job application than she would while hanging out with Saeed in their new house. By looking at these performances, we can better comprehend how their contingent identities result from the interaction of their experiences, memories, and the demands of the several realities they inhabit.

Hernandez-Carreño (2024) sheds light on how migrants employ digital platforms to manage the intricacies involved in migration. We may examine how Nadia and Saeed's interactions with technology may affect their sense of using this paradigm. Despite being physically far away, digital platforms can serve as a tool to keep in touch with their home country and promote a sense of belonging. Nadia, for example, might use social media to stay in touch with family members back home, exchange stories, and learn about their latest happenings. During their ever-changing new circumstances, these virtual exchanges can serve as a persistent reminder of her past identity.

On the other hand, digital spaces can also present an alternative image that complies with the new environment's social and cultural standards. Saeed may modify his LinkedIn profile to emphasize particular high-demand competencies in his new city of residence. He incorporates this carefully constructed online persona with his performed personality, which helps him overcome the obstacles of integration. We can learn more about how Nadia and Saeed's sense of self is constantly created and enacted by looking at how they engage with the digital world. Their contingent identities are shaped by the interaction of physical and virtual places, underscoring the complex character of selfhood in an increasingly digital society.

Theoretical Framework

The paper utilizes deconstruction theory to conduct qualitative research and justify the question of contingent identities and ruptured realities in *Mohsin Hamid's Exit West (2017).* This approach challenges the rigid concepts of identity and locale by highlighting the transitory nature of meanings and decentered subjectivity. The deconstructive methodology features how established identity beliefs are disrupted, underscoring the instability and diversity of cultural and personal narratives in the face of transformation and emigration.

Analysis and Discussion

Exit West (2017) is overflowing with narratives of displacement and chaos, a notion of home as an idealized entity that can never be entirely fulfilled in an increasingly interconnected world. In this setting, Hamid introduces the novel with an unnamed city facing threats from the government and extremist Islamists. Hamid's book, "After War and Extremism," poignantly captures the postcolonial state of a globalized world where people must uphold a hyper-realistic sense of everyday existence under violence and conflict. As a result, despite the threat of war, the citizens of the unnamed city in the text go about their daily lives as usual. In this way, Hamid captures the

ambivalence that permeates the entire book. The town is caught between a state of "peace" and "war," symbolizing the current globalized world in which there is diversity and multiplicity in human existence, with both natives and refugees, eliminating the possibility of a pure nation or culture. "In a city swollen by refugees but still mostly at peace, or at least not yet openly at war" (Hamid, 2017, p. 1)".

Exit West (2017) by Mohsin Hamid employs a deconstructivist methodology to explore the nuances of identity and reality within a society characterized by conflict, migration, and imagination. The current chapter investigates how the novel challenges established concepts of the environment and identity, highlighting how experience is contingent and divided for characters such as Nadia and Saeed. Here, the study examines how Deconstruction influences the narrative and sheds light on the characters' experiences of dislocation and transformation. Deconstruction reveals how unstable the "self" is as an integrated whole. Nadia and Saeed's identity continues to be questioned in *Exit West* by their travels and interactions with people from different cultural backgrounds. Their identities are presented in the novel as fluid and molded by their experiences rather than as static.

By employing a deconstructivist lens to *Exit West,* we can see how Nadia and Saeed's identities are constantly shattered due to their relocation. The broken narrative structure and fluctuating views reflect their sense of disarray. The fanciful doors demolish conventional ideas of "home" and "away," compelling people to create fictitious identities and fresh perspectives on belonging in each setting. Characters need help conveying their experiences' complexity through conventional narratives, and language becomes a barrier. The contingent nature of identity in a world characterized by perpetual change and shattered realities is shown by this deconstructivist investigation. The following text illustrates the contingent identities of the protagonists:

The air is so dry, so clear, and there's so few people, almost no lights. And you can lie on your back and look up and see the Milky Way. All the stars are like a splash of milk in the sky. And you can see them slowly move because the Earth is moving. And you feel like you are lying on a giant spinning ball in space (Hamid, 2017, p.21).

 Exit West (2017) vividly depicts how people crave connection and structure in the face of dislocation. The "outside the house" world starts to serve as a continual reminder of the instability and randomness that characterize the characters' lives—migration, war, and the constant movement made possible by the magical doors. The outside world is strange and erratic. But a ray of optimism shines within the "house." Nadia and Saeed may find a place to create routines and a modicum of control over their lives here. Even with its frailty, establishing order lays the groundwork for something possibly deeper: the capacity to create a community. A sense of connection and belonging can be fostered even in the face of perpetual change since this emerging community provides a potent counterbalance to the alienating turmoil outside. *Exit West* investigates this idea through a deconstructivist lens: the breakdown of conventional ideas of self and the fluidity of identity in a world characterized by shifting. We can examine the intricacies of displacement in greater detail thanks to this decentered method, which also highlights its significant effects on people's fractured and contingent identities "Outside the house, much was random and chaotic, but inside, perhaps, a degree of order could be built. Maybe even a community (Hamid, 2017, p.129)".

As Nadia and Saeed must adjust to new cultures and break links to their native country, migration further erodes their sense of self. Even while they provide a way out, the magical doors upend ideas of "home" because they make it possible to travel instantly over great distances. A cohesive sense of self cannot emerge from this ongoing fluctuation. Displacement dramatically affects an

individual, as Nadia and Saeed struggle with fragmented realities, making their identities dependent on constantly shifting circumstances. Characters are forced to establish new relationships due to displacement, which also upends identities. But the decentered story serves as a reminder of the difficulties. Since the chapters are broken up and the viewpoints change, the fractured realities of relocation are mirrored, making the process of finding a secure sense of self in the "third space" ongoing. The following textual lines express the notion of displacement, migration, third space identity, and adopted identities explicitly "He disliked Filipinos. They had their place, but they had to know their place… and slipped into a walk behind them, fingering a metal in his pocket as he went (Hamid, 2017, p.28)".

The protagonists in *Exit West (2017)*uphold the ambivalence surrounding identity crises by inhabiting two positions simultaneously: the colonized other, or the position of the colonized, and the colonized self, or the desire to become the colonizer. Living in a community known as London Halo, Saeed and Nadia deal with this identity dilemma. They labor arduously to construct a decent home consisting of "forty square meters of land and a connection to all the utilities of modernity" (Hamid, 2017, pp.167-168) in their worker camp. On the working site, there is a clear separation between the locals and the outsiders. Native Americans hold the role of colonizers as "supervisors or operators." Nadia characterizes the "driver of the digging machine" and his spouse as "...the couple a bit like the queen and king of a domain" in this context (Hamid, 2017, p. 182). This illustrates her subliminal ambition to become as important as her masters. Saeed articulates the "in-between" nature of his position between his foreman and the other worker migrants while upholding the subject position of the colonizer/colonized. This speaks to the "third space for articulation" of the non-natives in a diasporic context of London's halo "…he sat next to Saeed as he ate. Saeed also had the added advantage of being among those workers who spoke English and so occupied a status midway between the foreman and the others on the team" (Hamid, 2017, p. 177)".

Hamid refers to the worldwide migrant crisis as a "global crisis" (Hamid, 2017, p. 83). As Saeed and Nadia work in one of the "worker camps," the bourgeoisie is the colonizer or white people, and the proletariat is the colonized or brown people. London Halo is a hybrid space within a globalized world to "accommodate more people again than London itself" (Hamid, 2017, p. 167). The migrants and the natives are at odds over money due to this difference. Surprisingly, Hamid keeps the conflict in the position of the colonizer and the colonized, as each position simultaneously preserves the status of being the dominant and the dominated. Hamid state "…some migrants continued to cling to properties they did not own under the law, and some migrants, some nativists too, continued to detonate bombs and carry out knifings and shootings (Hamid, 2017, p. 168)".

Hamid (2017) establishes an acute line between "dark London" and "light London" to highlight the existential truths that differ between migrants and natives and to disprove the idea that a purist culture is possible in the modern, globalized world. As if "people dined in elegant restaurants and rode in shiny black cabs," Saeed and Nadia envision "light London" as the location of their dreams. However, Hamid (2017) describes "dark London" as the location where "... rubbish accrued, uncollected and underground stations (were) sealed." Ironically, Hamid tends to prove that the large migrations have affected both natives and migrants. Therefore, the effects of displacement and dislocation are not limited to the migrants."…it was now said that between Westminster and Hammersmith, legal residents were in the minority, native-born ones vanishingly few, with local newspapers referring to the area as the worst of the black holes in the fabric of the nation (Hamid, 2017, p. 126)".

Exit West (2017) is an endeavor to undermine the idea of an independent culture, which Bhabha (1994) refers to as "international culture," by deterring the world not just in terms of border permeability but also through their democratization. In an attempt to undermine the purist concept of culture, Hamid places "dark London" under the constant observation of "drones and helicopters and surveillance balloons" (Hamid, 2017, p. 142). This separates the migrant population's existence into the real and virtual worlds, giving the virtual reality more power because it serves as the natives' prevailing eye. In a society turned global, Hamid depicts the notion of "nation" as a person with "multiple personalities" and positions on nationality to give voice to an "international culture." But because they constantly interact with different "skins," these individuals appear to be losing their "skin." In this context, the word "skin" is a metonym for race and color, which the nations are trying to uproot in an era of globalization "…this person with multiple personalities was furthermore a person whose skin appeared to be dissolving as they swam in a soup full of other people whose skins were likewise dissolving" (Hamid, 2017, pp. 155-156)".

Hamid (2017) delves deeply into the politics of location by placing Saeed and Nadia in various places to challenge the idea of location as a monolithic concept of "safety" or "terror" but rather as a diverse site that embodies elements of both. There are several reasons why Saeed and Nadia should flee their home city. One way to see the departure is as a haven from the chaos of their city to the more developed parts of the globe. However, the two protagonists are placed in the trauma of diaspora when they flee to Mykonos and subsequently to London. Furthermore, the author interprets the concept of location as hyper-real, a place where "the doors could not be closed, and new doors would continue to open" (Hamid, 2017, p. 164), signifying the vanishing of pristine nation and culture in an increasingly interconnected globe. A little story of a woman in Palo Alto who chooses to stay put and not move despite the numerous migrations all around her greatly contributes to the hyper-reality of the place. She realizes at one point that she cannot identify any individual in the village. Subsequently, the woman realizes that no matter how much we may want to avoid migration and shifting, "time" forces us to move to various regions. "We are all migrants through time (Hamid, 2017, p. 209)".

Conclusion

The novel challenges established notions of identity by exposing identity's contingent and perpetually shifting nature through the fractured narratives and disrupted realities of characters such as Nadia and Saeed. *Exit West (2017)* explores the complicated realities of displacement in a world characterized by migration, war, and the fantastical through a deconstructivist perspective. The magical doors, migration, and war trigger this dismantling. Nadia and Saeed are forced to migrate after being uprooted from their comfortable homes by war. Their links to their own country are severed by migration, causing individuals to adjust to new social mores and cultures. Even if they provide a means of escape, the magical doors further undermine the idea of a permanent "home" by permitting instantaneous travel over great distances. This constant evolution, reflected in the disjointed narrative structure, keeps the individual from developing a cohesive sense of self. *Exit West (2017)* skillfully undermines rigid beliefs of identity by exhibiting how migration, war, and magical doors change existing beliefs and reveal the malleability of identity. This investigation highlights the novel's insightful remark on the transient nature of cultural and human identities in a perpetually changing world.

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