

68. Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire*: A family tragedy rewritten**Kuğu TEKİN¹****APA:** Tekin, K. (2021) Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire*: A family tragedy rewritten. *RumeliDE Dil ve Edebiyat Arařtırmaları Dergisi*, (24), 1173-1181. DOI: 10.29000/rumelide.997587.**Abstract**

Kamila Shamsie's 2017 novel *Home Fire* is a reworking of Sophocles' tragedy *Antigone*. The novel is based on the existential struggle of three siblings, Isma, Aneeka and Parvaiz, who are British-Pakistani citizens living in contemporary multi-cultural British society where diversities are deemed to be tolerated as long as concerned minority groups internalise "the concept of Britishness." Along with the process of globalisation, especially in the last decades of the twentieth century, the number of immigrants from the South to the North increased rapidly. Coupled with this unwanted mobility, the chaotic aftermath of 9/11 strengthened the tendency of classifying Muslims living in the West under two distinct groups: the first group called "moderate Muslims" consists of those who act and live in accordance with Western paradigms; members of this group are seen as proper citizens, with access to all the regular privileges; the second group, however, includes those who do not deserve to be a national of the concerned country due to their extremist tendencies. Since Western security policies are built on eliminating extremists, conflict becomes inevitable whenever a presumably dissident voice is heard. In Shamsie's *Home Fire*, having extremist ideas or involvement in radical activities turns not just the related person but all her/his kin into an "enemy of the State." This essay dwells on the tragic outcomes of the erroneous surveillance policies targeting British Muslims as portrayed in Kamila Shamsie's novel.

Keywords: Kamila Shamsie, *Home Fire*, Britishness vs Englishness, surveillance, extremism**Kamila Shamsie'nin *Home Fire* romanı: Bir aile trajedisinin yeniden yazımı****Öz**

Kamila Shamsie'nin *Home Fire* (2017) romanı Sophocles'in *Antigone* adlı trajedisinin yeniden yazımıdır. Roman, günümüzde azınlıklar kültürel uyum sağladıkları ve İngiliz olma kavramını özümstedikleri sürece hoşgörölü olduđu söylenen İngiliz toplumunda Pakistan kökenli İngiliz vatandaşı, Isma, Aneeka ve Parvaiz adlı üç kardeşin varoluş mücadelesine dayanır. Küreselleşme sürecinde, özellikle 20. yüzyılın sonlarında güneyden kuzeye hareket eden göçmenlerin sayısı hızla yükselmiştir. Bu istenmeyen hareketlilik ve 11 Eylül olaylarının ardından gelen kaos ortamı batıda yaşayan Müslümanların iki farklı grup olarak sınıflandırılmasına yol açmıştır: "ılımlı Müslümanlar" olarak anılan ilk grup batı değerlerine göre yaşamakta ve böylece hakettikleri düşünölen vatandaşlık ayrıcalıklarından yararlanmaktadırlar. İkinci grup ise aşırılıkçı görüş ve davranışları nedeniyle ilgili ölkenin vatandaşlarına sunduđu haklar ve fırsatlardan yararlanması sakıncalı bulunan kişilerden oluşmaktadır. Batının güvenlik politikaları aşırılıkçı olanı yok etmeye dayandığı için aykırı bir ses duyulduğunda çatışma kaçınılmaz olmaktadır. Romanda görölüyorki aşırılıkçı görüşlere sahip olmak ya da radikal eylemlere karışmak sadece söz konusu kişinin değil bu kişinin tüm yakınlarının devlet

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düşmanı olarak damgalanmasına yol açmaktadır. Bu çalışma Kamila Shamsie'nin *Home Fire* romanını, Müslüman İngiliz vatandaşlarının yönetimce uygulanan yanlış takip ve gözetim politikaları nedeniyle yaşadıkları dram açısından incelemektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Kamila Shamsie, *Home Fire*, İngiliz ve/veya Britanyalı kimliği, takip ve gözetim, aşırılıkçılık

1. Introduction

Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* is a contemporary rewriting of Sophocles' classic tragedy *Antigone*. The novel consists of five sections each of which is narrated by the free indirect discourse of five characters; and the five locales of the novel are: London, Amherst-Massachusetts, Istanbul, Raqqa-Syria and Karachi. The novel is structured as a classic five-act tragedy. *Home Fire* tells of the existential struggle of British-Pakistani siblings, namely Isma, Aneeka and Parvaiz. The three siblings are British citizens who were born in London, into the very centre of the multi-cultural British society where all kinds of diversities are deemed to be respected or tolerated as long as concerned individuals/ groups internalise and fulfil the requirements of cultural appropriation and comply with "the concept of Britishness."

2. Britishness vs Englishness

In "Unwilling Citizens? Muslim Young People and National Identity" Paul Thomas and Pete Sanderson draw attention to the dichotomies between the concepts of "Britishness" and "Englishness." According to the two authors, a survey among Muslim young people living in Britain indicates that while the concept of Britishness has positive connotations in the process of internalising "British national identity," the idea of Englishness appears to be much more polarising and segregating. The peaceful inclusive features ascribed to "British national identity" are listed as follows:

- British means (to) live with different people
- British means loving your country
- British means you can be multi-cultured yet keep your identity. (2011: 1032)

It is observed that it is Britishness rather than Englishness maintaining the delicate balance between the non-Muslim and Muslim identities living in Britain. Thomas and Sanderson point out the sharp contrast between the two concepts with reference to two respondents' views:

British means you live in Britain, abiding laws, treating each other respectfully, a citizen of Britain, having rights in Britain. By contrast, Englishness appeared to be more associated with socio-cultural traits: the last respondent identified English people as: sometimes racist, to blame for the war on Iraq, good at football, and good cricketers, blame for street crime, (2011: 1032)

The above quotation suggests a paradoxical yet possible connection between the followers of Englishness and the radical Muslims in the context of Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire*. In the novel, it appears that while Muslims in Britain who associate themselves with the idea of Britishness are put under the category of moderate Muslims, the ardent supporters of Englishness—who are not always necessarily white Britons—occupy the same problematic conflicting space with the radical Muslims because both groups are extremists and the divisive practices of both appear to be far from building a cohesive multi-cultural community living in peace and harmony. Nevertheless, another issue to be further dwelt on here is how the majority of white Britons perceive the British Muslim identity in general. According to Geoffrey Nash,

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the rise of Islamism and its perceived threat to the West [...] activated dormant Eurocentric notions of Muslim otherness embedded in western culture by the colonial narrative of the superiority of European civilization over non-European, backward, traditional, pre-modern areas of the world. (2011: 19)

Nash defines the present meaning of the “Muslim other” in the eyes of the liberal West as “[one who] has been construed both in relation to what it is not and to what it lacks” (2011: 8). In the context of Britain, the period encompassing “Pre—and Post 9/11,” Nash claims, brought about a radical change in mainstream society’s perception of and attitude towards Muslims in that British Muslims came to be seen as “a religious grouping” rather than an ethnicity-based minority which was once regarded as a constituent of British multi-cultural society. Consequently, the non-Muslim majority in Britain reach the generalising that Muslims are “prone to (often dangerous) religious fanaticism” (Nash, 2011: 20).

Within this aforementioned period of the shifting attitude towards British Muslims, Kamila Shamsie’s *Home Fire* recounts the tragedy of the two British-Pakistani families: The Pashas and the Lones. Though they are both Muslim families sharing the same culture, and are of the same country of origin, and despite their acquaintance, the two families are drawn as the exact opposites, even enemies of each other. What binds the two families at the end of the novel is their shared disastrous fates. The author underlines the ruthless, unjust attitudes of power holders whenever they encounter active or passive resistance that might endanger their authority, to be more precise, their political career as in the case of Karamat Lone, father of the Lone family and Shamsie’s British-Pakistani Home Secretary in *Home Fire*. Karamat is drawn as the antagonist not just to the Pashas but to his own family because his ambition for protecting his highly influential political power costs him the life of his son—Eamonn—together with Aneeka, following the death of her twin brother, Parvaiz Pasha. The final scene of the novel portrays Eamonn walking towards Aneeka, who has collapsed beside the body of her beloved deceased twin, striving to take him back to Britain. Urszula Rutkowska’s comment on the ambiguity of the final scene is noteworthy because the critic claims, Shamsie’s preference for an inconclusive ambiguous ending eliminates all the melodramatic implications:

...the novel ends with an explosive terrorist act and no narrative space is given to its diffusion. Eamonn flies to Pakistan to join Aneeka, but as he walks towards her, a suicide vest is strapped to his body, and the novel ends as they embrace right before the explosion. It is unclear if Aneeka is to blame for the explosion or if she is an unsuspecting victim. (2020: 3)

Debjani Banerjee in her article titled “From Cheap Labor to Overlooked Citizens: Looking for British Muslim Identities in Kamila Shamsie’s *Home Fire*,” calls *Home Fire* a “transnational text” and compares the highly lyrical and tragic ending of Shamsie’s novel to that of “Laila and Majnu, the South Asian tale of love that does not find fulfilment” (2020: 298). The difference between the two authors’ interpretations of the final scene reflects two distinct approaches to the novel’s conclusion.

Considering the previous discussion on Britishness and Englishness, and those who fall under the two categories of moderate Muslims and of extremists, one cannot help placing Karamat Lone and Adil Pasha within the same group of extremists, though the two characters are portrayed as the representatives of the two opposite poles. Karamat’s uncompromising attitude towards the Pashas might be traced back to his unconditional adoption of “Englishness” which always prioritises national security to protect the idea of indivisible unity of “the nation and the nation-state.” In “White Identities” Simon Clarke and Steve Garner define nation as “a territory—a special space protected and managed by a state—and a people who owe solidarity to each other and allegiance to that state” (2010: 62). Clarke and Garner further argue that the 9/11 and 7/7 attacks and bombings, an intense focus on asylum and

immigration drive people “from the space of Britishness to that of [a racialised] Englishness” (2010: 60). Thus, Karamat Lone sees Adil Pasha’s extremism as a breach of faith towards Britain’s multi-cultural social structure, a crack in the solidarity among the British citizens, and, most significantly, a treason against the State. In addition, on being informed about the relationship between Eamonn and Aneeka, the British Home Secretary becomes the sworn enemy of the living members of the Pasha family who could do anything to save both his son and his country. The novel’s ending shows that Karamat Lone’s capability of doing anything to defend his State, his uncompromising Englishness, and his political power leads to the death of his only son.

3. Uncontrollable radicalisation

It is seen in the novel that animosity felt towards all members of the Pasha family operates on both national and personal levels beginning with Adil Pasha’s involvement in activities of radical groups. Adil Pasha, who is a British-Pakistani citizen, leaves his family in London, joins the jihadists and fights in the name of Islam in several different geographies like Bosnia, Chechnya, Kosovo and Afghanistan until he dies of “some sort of seizure” (Shamsie, 2017: 36) while being transferred to Guantanamo. The duality permeating Adil Pasha’s image turns him into a hero who fought and died for the cause of Islam in the eyes of extremists; to the British authorities, however, his engagement in terrorist activities directly makes him “an enemy of the State” to be eliminated at all costs. Consequently, Adil Pasha’s family members, all of whom are British citizens, have become a potential threat against the State and the State’s security policies require them to be kept under strict surveillance so as to block their contact with hidden terrorist cells. In addition, it is said to the grandmother, who is striving to hear from her son, that “the British government would withdraw all the benefits of the welfare state—including state school and the NHS—from any family if suspected of siding with the terrorists” (Shamsie, 2017: 36). A brief account of the family’s past might help imagining the scope of oppression applied to the living kin of Adil Pasha. After Adil’s death, his wife’s—Zainab’s—attempts to bring his body back home remain futile for according to the authorities, a terrorist like Adil Pasha is an enemy of the State and such a person does not deserve to be buried on British soil. Thus, Adil’s mother, his wife and three children—Isma, and the twins, Aneeka and Parvaiz, are left with the memory of Adil Pasha whose body is lying in an unmarked grave. Following the successive deaths of Zainab and her mother-in-law, Isma, the elder daughter of the family, takes the responsibility of raising her twin siblings—Aneeka and Parvaiz who never knew their father. For instance, in the opening chapters of the novel the author portrays the nineteen-year-old Parvaiz as a young man who is cherishing the vague hope of becoming a sound engineer; however, he is working as a shop assistant at a greengrocer. Indeed, neither Parvaiz nor his sisters seem to realise their future plans because Adil Pasha’s unlawful past automatically lowers their social status and makes them members of disenfranchised groups trying to survive in the multi-cultural British society. Parvaiz has to keep the smiling image of his father, whom he never met in person, alive in his memory for the MI5 officers confiscated all of Adil Pasha photos during their search of the family house located on Preston Road, Wembley. MI5’s intrusion of the domestic space to find further evidence of connection with radicals and to interrogate the family members not only creates a serious trauma on the young children but also initiates a desperate life under scrutiny. Obviously, interrogation and surveillance accompanied by monitoring are of utmost significance among the security policies and measurements taken by British intelligence services. Isma’s airport interrogation scene in the opening of the novel reveals how defenseless and fragile the lives of the siblings are. Isma is about to fly to Boston to finish her incomplete PhD studies. Yet, the security personnel at the airport cause Isma to miss her flight due to the detailed inspection of the contents of her luggage by a woman official and a two-hour interrogation of herself, of her Britishness in particular, by a man: “He wanted to know her thoughts on

Shias, homosexuals, the Queen, The Great British Bake Off, the invasion of Iraq, Israel, suicide bombers, dating websites” (Shamsie, 2017: 4). During the airport interrogation, which Isma has predicted, she reminisces about the rehearsal she had with Aneeka—her law student sister, “who knew everything about her rights and nothing about the fragility of her place in the world” (Shamsie, 2017: 5). Isma’s sincere answers to the expected questions read as follows:

‘When people talk about the enmity between Shias and Sunnis, it usually centres on some political imbalance of power, such as in Iraq or Syria—as a Brit, I don’t distinguish between one Muslim and another.’ ‘Occupying other people’s territory generally causes more problems than it solves’—this served for both Iraq and Israel. ‘Killing civilians is sinful—that is equally true whether the manner of killing is a suicide bombing or aerial bombardments or drone strikes’’. (Shamsie, 2017: 5)

Isma’s true feelings and thoughts related to the above-mentioned controversial issues not only prove her pure British identity but also her skill in evading such a problematic situation. Being the daughter of a father with a criminal past, Isma’s tough life experiences taught her how to protect the integrity of her second-generation immigrant identity at a very young age. However, the Pasha siblings’ subjection to a never-ending tiresome surveillance on account of their father’s radicalisation alienates them from their British identity, deprives them of every opportunity to build for themselves a decent future as legal British citizens, and worse than that, leads to Parvaiz’s recruitment to the “media wing” of terrorist groups fighting against the legitimate government in Syria. In “Towards an ethics of reading Muslims: encountering difference in Kamila Shamsie’s *Home Fire*” Rehana Ahmed comments on the interplay between the incidents and the characters that starts the chain of surveillance, monitoring and interrogation following the death of Adil Pasha as follows:

...the novel incorporates the monitoring by and of Muslim Conservative MP Karamat Lone in London, [...] Isma’s subjection to interrogation before boarding her flight to the US, the siblings’ monitoring of each other’s movements on Skype, the media’s surveillance of Aneeka after Parvaiz’s death, and Karamat’s privileged son Eamonn’s scrutiny of his lover Aneeka, who seduces Eamonn in order to gain influence with his powerful father [hoping] that he will help bringing home her beloved twin Parvaiz. (2020: 4)

The novel’s central theme revolves around the radicalisation of Parvaiz which is based on a combination of personal and political circumstances. Parvaiz’s desire to know about his dead father is manipulated by Farooq—a fellow British-Pakistani—who is calling Parvaiz “my little warrior.” Farooq recounts heroic stories about Adil Pasha’s resistance, about how he never yielded to torture, and how he devoted and sacrificed his life on extremist grounds. Since Parvaiz lacks a father figure who could have guided him to be a “model immigrant,” a second-generation British—Pakistani Muslim who fully internalises all the imperatives of “Britishness,” Farooq manages to persuade him to join the radical groups fighting in Syria. Unlike the fatherless Parvaiz, Eamonn does have a model father figure—Karamat who has fully integrated himself to the British society and culture. Isma recalls how they made both critique and fun of the extent of Karamat’s integration, the name he gave to his son and the origins of his wife when they saw the Lone family picture in a newspaper:

Eamonn, that was his name. How they’d laughed in Wembley when the newspaper article accompanying the family picture revealed this detail. An Irish spelling to disguise a Muslim name—“Ayman” became “Eamonn” so that people would know the father had integrated. (His Irish-American wife was seen as another indicator of this integrationist posing rather than an explanation for the son’s name. (Shamsie, 2017: 12)

Nevertheless, the father-son relationship between Karamat and Eamonn Lone proves that the only reason for Parvaiz’s radicalisation could not be the absence of a model father figure fitting the image of “good Muslim” in his life. According to Banerjee, global North has come to see “radicalization through

religion [...] as the most pervasive explanation for understanding violence and terrorism post 2001" (2020: 296). The terrorist attacks occurred in the first decade of the twenty-first century resulted in "the enormous weight of policies, overarching governmental strategies of surveillance, security, and community engagement that was put in motion impacted the lives of people [minorities in particular] differently" (2020: 295). Banerjee states that:

Preventing Violent Extremism Policy (2011), also known as PREVENT, defines extremism as "vocal or active opposition to ... British values," and in 2013 PREVENT was revised to include surveillance of the political and religious lives of Muslims ... public pressure on Muslims to declare their allegiance to British values. ... The better understanding and inculturation of British values were to be brought about by PREVENT with a focus on earlier intervention to prevent radicalization. ... By encouraging family members to prioritize security over family allegiances, PREVENT managed to create conflict within families and justify that in the name of nationalism. (2020: 296)

Obviously, Shamsie's Parvaiz belies mainstream media's cliché representations of "terrorists as young, death obsessed men with temperaments suited for engineering" (Chambers, 2018: 6). The simultaneous rise of a discriminatory nationalism and Islamophobia intensifies the pressure on British Muslims. For instance, the police stop and search Parvaiz twice on account of Islamophobic prejudices because being a young Muslim man suffices to be treated as a potential terrorist. This labelling is also related to the socio-economic status of the person in question. It seems easy to suspect Parvaiz due to his father's past, his lower-middle class background, his insufficient income, the location where he resides; in brief, he lacks all the opportunities Eamonn has, though both are young, British-Pakistani Muslim men living in London. As for Eamonn, he takes full advantage of his father's privileges in that he was born in London and raised in fancy sites like Kensington and Chelsea and is living in a Notting Hill apartment now. Eamonn owes his superior social status to his father's political power; his father's career in British politics not only provides him with a good education but also with a circle of friends, consisting of upper-class young men and women. Unlike Parvaiz, Eamonn is never exposed to discrimination due to his Muslim identity. Indeed, Eamonn lacks a religious identity and has nothing to do with his Pakistani origins. Eamonn's indifference towards his indigenous culture stems from Karamat's secular stance. Karamat gave up his Muslim identity and engaged in such a willing acculturation process that at the end he appeared as an exemplary immigrant who could get any high position in the multi-cultural context of British society. Indeed, he becomes the powerful British Home Secretary. In Amherst, Isma reveals to Eamonn her tragic family story and the indifference of Karamat Lone, who was then "a first-term MP," to her family's suffering. Eamonn tries to justify his father's past deeds by referring to his unconditional commitment to British values:

'It's harder for him,' he said. 'Because of his [Pakistani] background. Early on, in particular, he had to be more careful than any other MP, and at times that meant doing things he regretted. But everything he did, even the wrong choices, were because he had a sense of purpose. Public service, national good, British values. He deeply believes in these things. All the wrong choices he made, they were necessary to get him to the right place, the place he is now.' (Shamsie, 2017: 37)

On seeing that his words to excuse his father's cruelty are ineffectual, Eamonn tells Isma that he would arrange a meeting in London and make his father "confront and account for" what he did to the Pashas, hoping that Isma would think of Karamat Lone more positively. Isma does not speak out her true feelings about the idea of meeting Karamat perhaps not to be too offensive towards Eamonn; yet her non-verbal response to the idea of meeting Karamat Lone reads as follows: "Mr. British Values. Mr. Strong on Security. Mr. Striding Away from Muslim-ness. He would say, I know about your family. You're better off without your brother too. And Eamonn, his devoted son, would sadly have to agree" (Shamsie, 2017: 38). As the novel unfolds, the reader sees that all of Isma's predictions prove to be true.

As for Parvaiz, he could not establish a strong sense of belonging to the country of his birth because he is deprived of all the opportunities granted to Eamonn. In addition, the feeling of being under constant scrutiny makes him feel as if he were trapped in a cage. Hence, Farooq--the militant recruiter--casts the spell of his stories on Parvaiz easily. Farooq promises Parvaiz a fake world where all kinds of injustice, inequality and discrimination are eliminated. In brief, Farooq offers Parvaiz a journey to a utopic place where he could make his dreams come true:

'There is a place we can go to now. A place where migrants come in to join are treated like kings, given more in benefits than the locals to acknowledge all they've given up to reach there. A place where skin color doesn't matter. Where schools and hospitals are free, and rich and poor have same facilities. [...]. Where someone like you would find himself working in a state-of-the-art studio, living like a prince. Your own villa, your own car. Where you could speak openly about your father, with pride, not shame'. (Shamsie, 2017: 99)

Having been intoxicated by Farooq's beguiling discourse, Parvaiz dreams of a free life which would provide him with the prestigious social status that he thinks he deserves and that he is denied in British society. Thus, Parvaiz and Farooq go to Raqqa, Syria. On learning the whereabouts of their vanished brother, Isma and Aneeka do everything they can to save Parvaiz and bring him back "home." Aneeka becomes Eamonn's lover as she desperately needs Karamat Lone's political power by her side in her scheme of rescuing her beloved Parvaiz. Knowing the contradictory aspects of Aneeka's character, Isma is also anxious about her sister. In Isma's eyes Aneeka is "sharp-tongued and considerate, serious-minded and capable of unbridled goofiness, as open to absorbing other people's pain as she was incapable of acknowledging the damage of having been abandoned and orphaned ('I have you and P. That's enough')" (Shamsie, 2017: 17). Isma ponders upon the defence strategies three of them develop to safeguard their family privacy against the unwanted questions about their father; about how Aneeka's distinct tactics of evading their past differ from those of herself and of Parvaiz:

Whereas Parvaiz and Isma stayed at the margins of all groups so that no one would start to ask questions about their lives ('Where is your father? Are the rumours about him true?'), Aneeka simply knew how to place herself in the middle of a gathering, delineate her boundaries, and fashion intimacies around the no-go areas. Even as a young girl she'd known how to do this: someone would approach the subject of their father, and Aneeka would turn cold--an experience so disconcerting to those accustomed to her warmth that they'd quickly back away and be rewarded with the return of the Aneeka they knew. (Shamsie, 2017: 17-18)

Shamsie's portrayal of her British Muslim characters--the Pasha siblings and Eamonn and Karamat Lone--is marked by conflicting character traits, and this very conflict indicates the fallacies of State policies homogenising Muslim minorities of Britain. When terrorist acts of the twenty-first century are connected with religion-based radicalisation, the idea of "Britishness" which was once said by the then Prime Minister, Tony Blair, to be built on "tolerance, openness and adaptability, work and self-improvement, strong communities and families and fair play, rights and responsibilities and an outward looking approach to the world..." (Clarke & Garner, 2010: 64) changed because the authorities have come to the conclusion that tolerant, passive multiculturalism should be left behind for it initially impedes internalisation of British values--alternatively termed "managed assimilation--that "can lead to extremism which then further leads to terrorist activities" (Banerjee, 2020: 295). As a writer of a dissertation on the sociological impact of the War on Terror, Isma is fully aware of the state's discriminatory practices applied on British Muslims; in one of her sociology classes, Isma draws attention to mainstream media's labelling of terrorists with reference to the country of their origins. Isma's respond to Hira Shah, her Kashmiri lecturer, reads as follows:

[In line with the State discourse] The 7/7 terrorists were never described by the media as 'British terrorists.' Even when the word 'British' was used, it was always 'British of Pakistani descent' or 'British Muslim' or, my favorite, 'British passport holders,' always something interposed between their Britishness and terrorism. (Shamsie, 2017: 28)

Obviously, Isma's indignation stems from the state's constant questioning of their Britishness, their loyalty to Britain and British values, and the holistic view of connecting homegrown British Muslims with terrorism. Yet, Isma's reaction against what she calls "unfairness" does not go beyond a verbal protest; she cannot take action. Thus, the law-abiding Isma turns Parvaiz into the police, believing that bringing Parvaiz back home safe might be possible, if only she would collaborate with the state authorities. On learning that Isma is the informant, the terrified Aneeka cries out loud: "Isma, you've made our brother not able to come home" (Shamsie, 2017: 31). Isma tries to alleviate her furious sister by saying that giving up Parvaiz is the only way to keep herself and Aneeka unharmed:

"The police would have found out. There was nothing I could do for him, so I did what I could for you, for us. [...] We're in no position to let the state question our loyalties. [...] If you cooperate it makes a difference. I wasn't going to let him make you suffer for the choices he'd made." (Shamsie, 2017: 31)

Enraged Aneeka accuses Isma of betrayal, of destroying both herself and Parvaiz and that she (Isma) is not her sister anymore. As Banerjee states, "Aneeka is convinced that her twin would have returned once he realized that he had made a mistake, and that is indeed what Parvaiz tries to do" (2020: 294), when he is shot dead, presumably by Farooq, in front of the British consulate in Istanbul.

4. Conclusion

The ending of *Home Fire* suggests that the revised version of British policies of Preventing Violent Extremism, which is put into practice to protect national security along with British values against any kind of internal or external opposition, is based, not on rehabilitation, but rather on total destruction. Shamsie dramatizes the operations of these policies through creating conflict not just among the Pasha siblings but also among the family members of the powerful Karamat Lone. It is seen that both Isma and Karamat fulfil the requirements of the acculturation process, for both prioritize national security over family loyalties. The moment Eamonn confesses his love for and his decision to marry a woman like Aneeka, whose brother is recruited by the terrorists in Syria, asking his father to use his influence to bring the penitent Parvaiz back home, Karamat ceases to act as Eamonn's considerate father and begins to behave as the mighty Home Secretary, the cruel enemy of those who could endanger Britain's national security and British values that he considers above everything. Karamat's response to his son's request proves his uncompromising determination: "You will have no more contact with this girl. I'm setting up a security detail for you" (Shamsie, 2017: 76). Towards the end of the novel, Karamat Lone delivers the final blow by revoking Aneeka's citizenship as she goes to Karachi to retrieve the body of her beloved twin and bury him in British soil. The ending of the novel shows that Karamat's unyielding nationalism and Isma's obligatory nationalism together destroy both Aneeka and Eamonn. Although Isma and Karamat share the same motive, which is to keep their loved ones away from violent extremist activities, they could save neither Eamonn, nor Parvaiz and Aneeka, in a way acknowledging the epigraph to the novel from Sophocles' *Antigone* and translated by Seamus Heaney: "The ones we love ... are enemies of the state."

Shamsie's *Home Fire* sheds light on the fallacies of intolerant, severe state policies employed to suppress the voice of dissident minorities. In Shamsie's treatment, renouncing the notion of building a tolerant

multicultural society and adopting policies like “PREVENT” in Britain—and, one might add, in the West in general—increase rather than prevent violent extremism.

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