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## Nostalgia and Identity in Mohsin Hamid's Fiction

### Abstract

This paper explores the notion of nostalgia in Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007) and *Exit West* (2017). We see in the transnational movements of the characters in these novels the emergence of a subjectivity defined by an intense nostalgia for the past. Changez's obsession with past and his eventual return to Pakistan, for example, are motivated by his nostalgia for his native city and historical past. I argue that Hamid's characters use their nostalgia to reimagine their future. After passing through the metaphoric doors, Nadia and Saeed, the protagonists in *Exit West*, reach some Greek beach. Though their ultimate wish was to escape their native city being ruled by militants, yet just after crossing the doors Saeed gets nostalgic and wants to go back. He is unable to disconnect from his land and people but as the story evolves we see him settling down at new places. Despite Hamid's call for a "radical political engagement with future" (*The Guardian*: February 25, 2017) he emphasizes the significance of nostalgia in framing the ways of life we may wish for ourselves. Study of nostalgia in the novels which map the trajectories of the Pakistani diaspora in the US and the West eventually produces a transnational identity emerging from South Asia.