

T.C.
YAŞAR ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI
YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE SENSE OF DISPLACEMENT
AND UNBELONGING IN THE NOVELS**

***THE SAINT OF INCIPIENT INSANITIES AND THE BUDDHA OF
SUBURBIA***

**(ARAF VE VAROŞLARIN BUDASI ROMANLARINDAKİ YERİNDEN
EDİLMİŞLİK VE AİDİYETSİZLİK HİSSİNİN KARŞILAŞTIRMALI
ÇALIŞMASI)**

Güliden KAZAZ

Danışman: Yard. Doç. Dr. Trevor J. HOPE

İzmir – 2013

Yaşar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Müdürlüğüne Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak sunduğum “A Comparative Study of the Sense of Displacement and Unbelonging upon the Novels of *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* and *The Buddha of Suburbia*” adlı çalışmanın, tarafımdan bilimsel, ahlak ve geleneklere aykırı düşecek bir yardıma başvurmaksızın yazıldığını ve yararlandığım eserlerin bibliyografyada gösterilenlerden oluştuğunu, bunlara atıf yapılarak yararlanılmış olduğunu belirtir ve bunu onurumla doğrularım.

16/01/2013

Gülden KAZAZ



T.C.

YAŞAR ÜNİVERSİTESİ

SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ TEZLİ YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZ JÜRİ SINAV TUTANAĞI

ÖĞRENCİNİN		
Adı, Soyadı	: Gülden KAZAZ	
Öğrenci No	: 10300006002	
Anabilim Dalı	: İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı	
Programı	: Tezli Yüksek Lisans	
Tez Sınav Tarihi	: 16/01/2013	Sınav Saati : 14:00
Tezin Başlığı: A Comparative Study of The Sense of Displacement and Unbelonging in the Novels <i>The Saint of Incipient Souls and The Buddha of Suburbia</i>		
Adayın kişisel çalışmasına dayanan tezini 90 dakikalık süre içinde savunmasından sonra jüri üyelerince gerek çalışma konusu gerekse tezin dayanağı olan anabilim dallarından sorulan sorulara verdiği cevaplar değerlendirilerek tezin,		
3 <input type="checkbox"/> Jüri toplanamadığı için sınav yapılamamıştır.		
4 <input type="checkbox"/> Öğrenci sınava gelmemiştir.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Başarılı (S) <input type="checkbox"/> Eksik (I) <input type="checkbox"/> Başarısız (F) Üye : İmza :	<input type="checkbox"/> Başarılı (S) <input type="checkbox"/> Eksik (I) <input type="checkbox"/> Başarısız (F) Üye : İmza :	<input type="checkbox"/> Başarılı (S) <input type="checkbox"/> Eksik (I) <input type="checkbox"/> Başarısız (F) Üye : İmza :

1. Bu halde adaya 3 ay süre verilir.
2. Bu halde öğrencinin kaydı silinir.
3. Bu halde sınav için yeni bir tarih belirlenir.
4. Bu halde varsa öğrencinin mazeret belgesi Enstitü Yönetim Kurulunda görüşülür. Öğrencinin geçerli mazeretinin olmaması halinde Enstitü Yönetim Kurulu kararıyla ilişkisi kesilir. Mazereti geçerli sayıldığında yeni bir sınav tarihi belirlenir.

ABSTRACT

Master Thesis

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE SENSE OF DISPLACEMENT AND UNBELONGING IN THE NOVELS OF

THE SAINT OF INCIPIENT INSANITIES AND THE BUDDHA OF SUBURBIA

Gülden KAZAZ

This thesis explores the sense of displacement and (un)belonging in the novels *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* by Elif Shafak and *The Buddha of Suburbia* by Hanif Kureishi. These are novels which problematize the notions of diaspora, home, being in between or out of place while suggesting new alternative home and family structures. Rich in disputes concerning migrancy and hybridity, the novels vividly depict the lives and experiences of not only migrants but also the people who have contact with them. Therefore, the novels provide insights into questions of displacement and (un)belonging and suggest that these are feelings which are not limited to migrants. Although these terms suggest the negative effects of diaspora, which have often been noted, these novels also stimulate us to think that there may be some constructive impacts of diaspora and migrancy as well.

Firstly, the sense of displacement and (un)belonging are clarified with the help of theoretical texts; and then through a close reading of both novels, those feelings which also bring out the problematic sense of diaspora are examined. The characters of the novels (whether migrants or not) try to deal with the sense of melancholia which occurs after the loss of a beloved home, family and even nation and sometimes they need to cope with the eating problems which are also caused by the same sense of melancholia. Finally, different strategies to compensate for the loss of home and to produce a “third space” in order to survive are discussed alongside the attempts to establish alternative life or family structures.

Key Words: Migrancy, displacement, the sense of (un)belonging, the notion of home, multiculturalism

KISA ÖZET

Yüksek Lisans

ARAF VE VAROŞLARIN BUDASI ROMANLARINDAKİ YERİNDEN EDİLMİŞLİK VE AİDİYETSİZLİK HİSSİNİN KARŞILAŞTIRMALI ÇALIŞMASI

Güliden KAZAZ

Bu çalışma, yerinden edilmişlik ve aidiyetsizlik hissini Elif Şafak'ın *Araf* ve Hanif Kureishi'nin *Varoşların Budası* romanları doğrultusunda incelemektedir. Bu romanlar bir yandan sürgün, ev, arada kalmışlık ya da hiçbir yere ait olamama gibi kavramları sorunsallaştırırken bir yandan da aidiyet hissini gerçekleştirebilecek alternatif ev ve aile yapıları önerir. Göç ve melezlik temaları açısından zengin olan bu romanlar, sadece göçmenlerin değil onlarla iletişim içerisinde olan insanların da hayatlarını ve deneyimlerini anlatır. Bu yüzden, yerinden edilmişlik ve aidiyetsizlik hissini konu alan bu romanları çalışmak oldukça önemlidir çünkü bu romanlar bu hislerin sadece göçmenlere özgü olmadığını ve hatta sürgün ve göç yaşantılarının bile olumlu ve yapıcı etkilerinin olabileceğini gösterir.

Bu çalışma, ilk olarak sürgün edilmişlik ve aidiyetsizlik hissini kuramsal metinlerin yardımıyla açıklamaya çalışır; daha sonra bu hislerin anlaşılması zor olan yerinden edilmişlik hissini nasıl ortaya çıkardığı yakın okumalarla sunulur. Göçmen olsun ya da olmasın, bu iki romandaki tüm karakterler bu hislerle bütünleşen ve sevilen bir evin, ailenin ya da vatanın yitimi ile ortaya çıkan melankolinin üstesinden gelmeye çalışırlar. Bazen de bu karakterler bir yitimin ardından oluşan bu melankoli hissinden dolayı yeme problemleri ile karşı karşıya kalırlar. Sonunda, bu iki romandaki karakterler aracılığıyla, yitim hissini yok edip doğduğu ve bulunduğu yere alternatif üçüncü bir yer oluşturabilmek için, farklı yaşam, ev ve aile yapıları tartışılıp, tanımlanır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Göç, yerinden edilmişlik, aidiyetsizlik hissi, ev kavramı, çokkültürlülük

LIST OF CONTENTS

Approval Page	iii
Abstract	iv
Kısa Özet	v
List of Contents	vi
Acknowledgements	viii
Introduction	1
Chapter I: Migrant Identities in Migrant Literature	5
1.1 Diaspora and the Sense of Unbelonging	10
1.2 Belonging Nowhere or Being In-between	15
Chapter II: What or Where is Home for Migrants?	19
2.1 Home is the Name of Melancholia	26
2.1.1 Home: The Loss of Nation	33
2.2 Home is the Name of Eating Disorders	38
2.3 The Compensation of Migrants for the Loss of Home	52
Chapter III: The Third Space and The Struggle to Survive	59
3.1 Alternative House and Family Structures I	59
3.2 Alternative House and Family Structures II	69

Conclusion	79
List of Abbreviations	82
Works Cited	83
Works Consulted	85

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Above all, I would like to thank my thesis advisor Assistant Professor Trevor John HOPE for accepting me to study with him and advising useful sources for the thesis.

I am grateful to my family who always back me up for the things I want to achieve in my personal and academic life.

Besides, I sincerely thank all of my colleagues who encouraged me to complete my thesis on time.

Finally, I want to thank my fiancé, Şafak ÇELİK, for his constant support throughout this period.

DISPLACEMENT AND UNBELONGING

INTRODUCTION

Since the Second World War, many sociopolitical changes around the world have taken place. Some nations have gained their independence whereas others have lost their supreme power. Not all the citizens of these nations have felt the benefit of the outcomes of such political and social change. Some of those who are not content with the changes have decided to migrate from their homelands to foreign lands in the hope of a better future. So, the world has become the stage for a significant social change: mass migrations have started to take place, many people have become migrants on other people's soils and many others who are connected with these migrants have started to question their own lands, homes and societies. While the world has witnessed such great changes, literature is inspired by them and commences to reveal the lives and experiences of these people. These stories are especially told by bicultural writers who want to open up a discussion about the multicultural interconnections between different nations and cultures that have occurred since the Second World War.

In this thesis, I will focus on a comparative study on Elif Shafak's *The Saint of Incipient Souls* and Hanif Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia* in terms of the sense of displacement and (un)belonging which become common traits of the literature of migration not only for migrants but also for those who engage with them. These

problematic and challenging feelings seem to emerge as a symptom of diasporic displacement, but then it is exciting to notice that not only the migrants who have to relocate but also others who keep in touch with them have the same sense. I will perform a close reading of both novels which seriously problematizes the relationship between the place and the sense of belonging; and I attempt to support (and sometimes refute) the arguments about them with the help of eminent critics. Within the scope of my thesis, I strongly believe living in a multicultural world makes us question our own place in the world, even in our own homelands, as clearly depicted in both novels. Rather than clinging to the same notion of home(land) with the sense of melancholia, it is quite important to know how to benefit from the chances of new homelands and alternative homes.

The first chapter starts with the historical background after the Second World War, which paves the way for the notions of migrancy and displacement as argued by Bill Ashcroft. Then, the ways in which these themes appear in the stories of literature of migration are explored through the suggestion of Elif Shafak who believes the stories are the “existential glue keeping their pieces and memories together” (“The Politics of Fiction”). These stories can create a sense of historical belonging for people, especially to migrants who were once not included in any works of literature. So, bicultural writers such as Shafak try to invent an archive of minorities by gathering their life stories. The idea of an archive and its function in the formation of a new nation/culture/society are developed through the ideas of Jacques Derrida. In the light of his terminology, the major writers of the thesis, Shafak and Kureishi, are presented and introduced as the archons of the literature of migration.

Within the first chapter, the notion of diaspora, the sense of unbelonging or belonging nowhere and being in-between are elucidated. Dominated by theoretical concerns, these sections specifically analyse the meaning of diaspora in relation to displacement. Firstly, the notion of diaspora is discussed with reference to the theories of Ashcroft, Avtar Brah, Şebnem Toplu, Salman Rushdie and Kenneth Kaleta. Then, its numerous interpretations in relation to migrancy and hybridity are expressed; and finally the ambivalence of diaspora as a notion is explored. Since the sense of diaspora can be connected to either the burden of the past or the gift of multiplicity, it may connote homelessness or the chance to have many home(land)s for migrants. Therefore, the chapter ends with the notion of home, which is pertinent to questions of diaspora and emphasizes the multiple forms of home.

The second chapter deals with different notions of home which are formed by the imagination of migrants with reference to Sushelia Nasta and Brah's criticism. Here, the different structures of home are revealed in both novels via major and minor characters in order to reinforce the subjective notion of home. Within this chapter, different connotations of home are studied and analysed under three main subsections: the first subsection explains how the notion of home relates to the sense of melancholia in Sigmund Freud's criticism and exemplifies the sense of melancholia which may occur as a result of the loss of a beloved nation. The second subsection builds on the arguments of melancholia and loss and associates these issues with problems of eating. The final subsection reveals the different strategies from both novels for the compensation of loss in direct relation to the notion of home. Accordingly, the chapter ends with the suggestion of a "third space" by Rushdie which can only be formed by the imagination of people (especially of

migrants). If they are able to make up for the loss they undergo and manage to channel the libidinal attachments which are withdrawn, they will have the chance to develop alternative house and family structures with a new sense of belonging.

The third chapter reveals the attempts of the characters in both novels (disregarding the question of whether they are migrants or not) to attain a third space to survive in, in accordance with Rushdie's suggestion. The first subsection of this chapter portrays the unsuccessful attempt of Ömer and Gail in *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* to establish an alternative life within a new home which is formed by their fantasies. However, the second subsection presents successful attempts from *The Buddha of Suburbia* especially in the case of the female characters. In the light of these two subsections, this chapter asks why some of the characters do not succeed in gaining a new home(land) with a new sense of belonging while the others do. In the end, it is concluded that gaining a new space to survive and a new sense of belonging are not questions that depend on being a migrant/non-migrant or woman/man. Rather, this is about the compensation for the sense of melancholia connected in them with the problem of eating which emerge around the multicultural grounds.

CHAPTER I

MIGRANT IDENTITIES IN MIGRANT LITERATURE

An urge to assert the importance of identity has intensified particularly after the Second World War with the collapse of the former European empires and the accompanying reawakening of nationalism. In the twentieth century, empires such as Great Britain lost their international status and power which were dependent upon the lucrative colonies that were once under their supreme control. Seizing the chance to become independent, the colonies struggled to build their own nations. India, for instance, had been a colony of the British Empire for almost two hundred years (1687-1947), but after the Second World War, in 1947, the country gained its full independence and was partitioned into two nations, India and Pakistan. Although lots of people were happy and content to live in their own nations after the Second World War, many people had to migrate from their homelands to foreign lands in the hope that they would benefit from better social, economic and educational opportunities, of which they were deprived in their own homelands.

Literature has been affected by the changes in life after the Second World War. It has started to reveal the lives of people who migrate into other places and their relationship with people who have already been living there. A great numbers of novels, short stories and even poems have been composed in an attempt of portraying the life of migrants within their social, cultural and economic surroundings.

Therefore, the development of the literature of migration is closely related to the social and cultural changes of the time. Bill Ashcroft *et al.* also emphasize the high correlation between the postcolonial time and literature in the book *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Postcolonial Literature*:

Postcolonial literatures developed through several stages which can be seen to correspond to stages both of national or regional consciousness and of the project of *asserting difference from the imperial centre*. During the imperial period writing in the language of the imperial centre is inevitably, of course, produced by a literate elite whose primary identification is with the colonizing power.... Such texts can never form the basis for an indigenous culture nor can they be integrated in any way with the culture which already exists in the countries invaded. Despite their detailed reportage of landscape, custom, and language, they inevitably privilege the centre, emphasizing the 'home' over the 'native', the 'metropolitan' over the provincial' or 'colonial', and so forth. At a deeper level their claim to objectivity simply serves to hide *the imperial discourse* within which they are created (4-5; emphasis is mine).

Ashcroft *et al.* explain the importance of self-awareness, being different from the 'imperial centre', hegemony or majority. In accordance with postcolonial terms, they mention 'indigenous culture' which belongs to the 'native', 'provincial' or 'colonial' and which can be defined better by the minority circles that stand against the majority.

According to Ashcroft, the texts of the imperial period are inevitably partial when they describe the life of the minorities. Such texts devalue minorities while flattering the majority. So, in order to change the 'imperial discourse' that dominated

so long, bicultural writers have introduced a new discourse which is more akin to their particular life styles and cultural traits. They transmit their own stories which make up their cultural identity through memories, and, as Shafak argues in a talk organized by TED College entitled “The Politics of Fiction”, stories for these writers become an “existential glue keeping their pieces and memories together”.

Given this concern with the assembling of memories, one might even argue that the projects of these writers stem from their inevitable desire to create a new archive for themselves, one which can define them appropriately. Through such an archive they can create a sense of historical belonging; namely, they can find a place in which they can express themselves so that they do not feel lost in the labyrinths of history. What is at issue here is the *consignation* feature of the archive that Jacques Derrida describes in his essay “Archive Fever”:

By consignation, we do not only mean, in the ordinary sense of the word, the act of assigning residence or of entrusting so as to put into reserve (to consign, to deposit), in a place and on a substrate, but here the act of consigning through gathering signs (10).

Accordingly, Derrida does not present the archive as a specific order or system within a kind of homogeneous assemblage of people; what he describes is the key feature of the archive, a consignation that connotes multiplicity. In other words, for him, the archive does not establish any homogeneous cultural orders; it is the act of collecting people within heterogeneous orders or systems. By the help of this consignation feature of the archive, bicultural writers can intervene in the world stage in order to revise the archive of heterogeneous cultures.

The other feature of the archive closely related to the function of consignment is institutionalization. In Derridean terms, institutionalization is the attempt of societies to become independent by forming and cultivating their own social, political and cultural systems. Derrida argues “[A] science of the archive must include the theory of this institutionalization, that is to say, the theory both of the law which begins by inscribing itself there and of the right which authorizes it”(ibid). So, Derrida believes that the archive consists of specific writings (the law) and a particular history (the right) at the same time so as to form the only possible foundation of a society. The archive, in other words, is an essential requirement for a society to name or identify itself by institutionalization.

Works of migration are parts of the archive since, in accordance with its feature of consignment, migrants have pieced their lives, experiences and memories together and movements of large populations that followed and, in terms of institutionalization, their stories have come to be known. Besides, as their writings and history are told and retold, they are officially recognized as a valuable element of society by those who once disregarded them. So, many bicultural writers benefit greatly from the power of the archive while narrating their specific stories in order to record them for the present and future. In the long run, they become the *archons* who “have the power to interpret the archives” (10) with an archontic power. The “archons” manipulate that power as “the documents’ guardian” (ibid) for its own authority and presence.

One of the most ambitious and successful “archons” of migrant literature is Hanif Kureishi, who makes a significant contribution to the archive of the minorities with his acclaimed works. Kureishi is a transnational figure born in Kent, England, as an English boy but seemingly different from other English boys with his Pakistani father and English mother; so he seems to be an archon of the international and intercultural stories of England and Pakistan. As someone who himself is an exemplary figure of hybridity, being a person who straddles two cultures, Kureishi narrates the story of a boy of mixed descent in *The Buddha of Suburbia* in a semi-autobiographical way. Through the protagonist of the novel, Karim, (and by means of other characters as well), Kureishi contributes to the archive belonging to minorities.

Another leading “archon” of the literature of migration is Elif Shafak, who is a successful contemporary Turkish novelist. Shafak was born in France, spent her childhood in Spain and today lives in London for half of the year and for the rest of the time stays in Istanbul. So, as a migrant figure in her own right, Shafak is very skilled at creating multicultural matrices with lots of characters who are lifelong travelers in different locations and times. Keen on presenting the different lives of migrants belonging to varied cultural groups within myriad multicultural circles, Shafak always invites us into her fiction, which exposes the ambivalent feelings of her characters caused by the sense of being multicultural. Although multiculturalism may provoke ambivalent feelings in the characters of Shafak, it is the bedrock of Shafak’s story-telling, which suggests the transcending power of stories that can demolish all *cultural ghettos* by “cutting across all the boundaries around” as she (2004) explicitly describes in her talk entitled “The Politics of Fiction”(Shafak,

2004). Shafak believes she can unite all humanity regardless of different times and places at one meeting point with the help of literature. Among her accomplished novels, *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* has a special place in terms of the arguments concerning migrant literature.

The works of migration are frequently inspired by the real life stories of migrants, as we may have noticed from the biographies of Kureishi and Shafak. As both of them are themselves from migrant or hybrid backgrounds, it is natural that we should come across identifiable autobiographical elements in their works. However, it is essential not to forget the fact that evaluating a text in direct relation to the lives of its writers would be a fatal mistake. What should be kept in mind is that bicultural writers have different perspectives through which they can relocate themselves from the periphery to the center of literary narrative. Their primary aim seems to gather stories for their own archive or to find a place to themselves within heterogeneous archives; in other words, they want to be a part of this archive with their own stories. These are the novels that have the power to affect a Derridean institutionalization while bringing out the heterogeneous effects of consignment as well. With the help of these works, the archive of minorities appears and multiplies.

1.1 DIASPORA AND THE SENSE OF *UNBELONGING*

While the archive of minorities is developed, such a sense of unbelonging takes place and the literature of migration starts to problematize it. It gradually becomes one of the most notable characteristics of the genre as a probable result of the spatial awareness of the migrant. It is natural and inevitable that if you are born in

one country and lead your life in another one, you face a challenge to the most basic questions of yourself such as who you are, where you belong and how you feel as a migrant, and therefore as an in-between character implicated in two different nations, histories, cultures and languages. Therefore, post-war migrations that produce the post-imperial multi-racial societies of Europe trigger questions of the self and its own place in the world, but in order to understand the reasons behind the sense of unbelonging, it is useful to delve into the concept of diaspora that is extremely significant in the study of postcolonial and multicultural literatures.

It is a diasporic sense of place that provokes the feeling of unbelonging and dislocation inside the migrant. Since diaspora is defined as “the movement of people from any nation or group away from their own country” (“diaspora” def. 2), it is useful to think about the problems of adaptation in terms of culture (as a kind of culture shock or social alienation), ethnicity and nationality (as the feeling of otherness or alterity) which are brought on by the sense of not belonging to the place that they are in. In other words, diaspora can be succinctly defined as a change of places which leads to problems of identity concerning the self and its place. According to Ashcroft et al., these diasporic problems are also the major characteristics of postcolonial literatures:

A major feature of postcolonial literatures is the concern with place and displacement. It is here that *the special postcolonial crisis of identity* comes into being; the concern with the development or recovery of an effective identifying relationship between self and place. Indeed, critics such as D.E.S. Maxwell have made this the defining model of postcoloniality... A valid and active sense of self may have been eroded by dislocation, *resulting from*

migration, the experience of enslavement, transportation, or 'voluntary' removal for indentured labour. Or it may have been destroyed by cultural denigration, the conscious and unconscious oppression of the indigenous personality and culture by a supposedly superior racial or cultural model" (Ashcroft et. al., 1989, pages 8-9; emphasis is mine).

Ashcroft expresses the relation between the self and place that emerged after the colonial era. When he elucidates 'the special postcolonial crisis of identity', he bases this notion on historical facts such as the reasons for displacement: 'migration', 'enslavement', 'transportation', '*voluntary* removal' or 'cultural denigration'. Despite the several reasons for displacement that Ashcroft mentions, what is at issue here is the fact that the diasporic change of locations causes an identity crisis, produces an urgent sense of conflict about where the self really belongs.

In a similar vein, Avtar Brah lays particular stress on the fact that even *diaspora* as a word evokes "the imagery of the traumas of separation and dislocation [which] is certainly a very important aspect of the migratory experience" (Brah 193). In regard to her argument, diaspora is a signifier that makes us envisage the traumatic memory of migrants who want to relocate themselves. Brah underlines how important a sense of place is to people and how deeply they are affected by a change of locality. So, in the light of her criticism, it is possible to propose that no matter how hard the self searches for an appropriate place for its own, it gets lost after the diasporic change of locations. It feels like a stranger among the dominant racial and cultural models while attempting to attach itself to a particular place; then it gradually becomes a foreigner to itself. The foreigner who neither knows where she

comes from nor where she belongs may behave as if she were one of these people around by suppressing her feelings caused by displacement.

Such a clash between the self and place affects migrants' lives at the time of *a new hybrid identity construction*. It makes them active performers aiming to establish their identity within a certain place. Therefore, identity is not acquired by birth for them; it is gained by effort. They "have come to produce [their] highly unique cultures that both maintain and build on the perceptions of their original cultures" (Ashcroft et al. 68-9). They come to integrate their original cultures with the 'adopted' ones; and while doing this, they, on the one hand, strive to preserve their 'original' cultures in unknown lands. On the other hand, they attempt to reform their identities. It is a sort of simultaneously preservative and innovative effort of migrants that puts them in conflict with their cultural heritage and current lifestyles. The conflict awakens the problematic sense of identity asking questions about who they are and who they are trying to be. However, despite the problematic sense of belonging that Ashcroft defines or the pain of melancholic trauma that each migrant possibly feels according to Brah, the latter believes "diasporas are [...] potentially the sites of hope and new beginnings" (Brah 193) at the same time.

From such an optimistic viewpoint, Şebnem Toplu argues for the possible rehabilitations of migrants with the help of diasporic experience. She believes "[the] aspect of diaspora reveals the dynamic nature of identity since it can never be represented as fixed or pre-given but always in process" (Toplu 14). In accordance with her argument, the change of locations gives a fresh impetus to the nature of

identity which is not stable or fixed but constructed and flexible. Therefore, the diasporic subjects are ready to be changed or formed possibly because they place faith in their ability to become another person. They believe that they can reduce or even get rid of the effects of social alienation and cultural alterity that they may challenge.

As a representative of a hyphenated identity himself, Salman Rushdie is another critic who thinks the experience of diaspora, or being a “translated man” in his own words is not something unpleasant or traumatic; it is the opposite, indeed:

The word ‘translation’ comes, etymologically, from the Latin for ‘bearing across’. Having been borne across the world, we are translated men. It is normally supposed that *something always gets lost in translation*; I cling, obstinately, to the notion that *something can also be gained* (229; emphasis is mine).

Rushdie helpfully emphasizes the positive instead of the negative in hybridity. He is quite right to avoid generalizations such as the idea that something always gets lost in translation and smart enough to accentuate the possibility of gaining something in return for the loss. Although there is a chance of gaining something from being in-between as Rushdie advances, it is hard to disregard the problematic and traumatic sense of unbelonging as a result of the migratory experience that Brah emphasizes because being in-between inevitably involves the feeling of belonging nowhere and the sense of displacement.

1.2 BELONGING NOWHERE OR BEING IN-BETWEEN

If the senses of (un)belonging and displacement emerge from the feeling of being in-between, are migrants the only ones who may feel in-between? Before adapting the problem of (un)belonging to *everyone*, it is worth discussing the migrants' case: The simultaneous relationship to two distinctive locations creates confusion for migrants, making them believe they belong neither to the place they are born in nor to the place to which they migrate. So, apart from the identity crisis that the migrant may face after a migratory experience, the migrant can also be inspired by "the hopes for new beginnings" (Brah 193). Therefore, the sense of diaspora is ambivalent, implying different feelings for different migrants. On the one hand, it may be a burden on migrants that leads them to feel stuck in the past and unable to adapt themselves for the present; on the other hand, it may be positive as a sense of difference and multiplicity which enhances the imagination and perspective of migrants.

The sense of (un)belonging caused by diaspora is problematic for Hanif Kureishi as can be understood from his text "The Rainbow Sign", which is a three part essay telling his own story. Here, Kureishi's desire to be someone else, purified from all traces of his past, is explicit: "From the start I tried to deny my Pakistani self. I was ashamed. It was a curse and I wanted to be rid of it. I wanted to be like everyone else" (Kureishi, "The Rainbow" 73). In order to be(come) someone 'like everyone else', Kureishi wants to suppress his past and internalize the values of present; yet he very clearly explains the difficulty and complexity of being in-between in these words:

I was having a little identity crisis. *I'd been greeted so warmly in Pakistan*, I felt so excited by what I saw, and so at home with all my uncles, I wondered if I were not better off here than there. And when I said, with a little unnoticed irony, that I was an Englishman, people laughed. They fell about....Strangely, anti-British remarks made me feel patriotic, though I only felt patriotic when I was away from England.

But *I couldn't allow myself to feel too Pakistani*. I didn't want to give in to that falsity, that sentimentality...I couldn't rightfully lay claim to either place.

....So despite everything I felt pretty out of place (81; emphasis is mine).

At first, Kureishi is seemingly glad and content in Pakistan as he is 'greeted so warmly' and feels at home; but then when he introduces himself as an Englishman, he is mocked by others even in the place he calls "his home". Through ambivalent feelings, Kureishi feels patriotic and nationalistic away from England but at the same time he does not permit himself to be 'too Pakistani'. So, caught between England and Pakistan, Kureishi is overwhelmed by the dominant feeling of being 'out of place' in the end.

Kenneth C. Kaleta summarizes "The Rainbow Sign" in relation to the sense of displacement in *Hanif Kureishi: Postcolonial Storywriter* and underlines the sense of in-betweenness that Kureishi seems to experience:

The essay recalls a boy in the London suburbs, *a racial misfit among British and Asians alike, at home in neither England nor Pakistan, romantically attached to his roots, resentfully attached to his country of residence, tied culturally to both*. Autobiographical episodes illustrate his frank

introspection....An Asian author coming home to a Pakistan that he has never seen before, *Kureishi does not feel at home in the country of his family*....Finally, it is when he travels to his motherland that the author realizes the ironic overlap of national identities in his life in contemporary London. Rather than finding himself at home there, he writes, "*In Pakistan, England just wouldn't go away*" (Kaleta 5; emphasis is mine).

Kaleta defines the boy, who is obviously Kureishi himself, as 'a racial misfit among British and Asian alike'. Here, 'misfit' is a pivotal term to describe a hybrid figure defined by difference; and also it can be the distinctive signifier of displacement of the self in-between. Kaleta places emphasis on the ambivalent feelings of being in-between and states that Kureishi 'is at home in neither England nor Pakistan'. Such hybrid characters stay on the threshold of the communities; they are not invited inside because of their strangeness as foreigners. Kureishi, for example, is not at home in England; neither is he at home in Pakistan because such characters could not easily integrate into any communities, according to Kaleta. Paradoxically enough, while Kureishi romanticizes his ancestry by distancing himself from it, he inevitably gets closer to his present life in the migrated land. That is

possibly why Kaleta defines him as someone who is 'romantically attached to his roots, resentfully attached to his country of residence, tied culturally to both'. Accordingly, the migrant cannot escape from the cultural traits of both places, lives within the interaction of the two and hence s/he needs to live with the ties to his origin and his country of residence concurrently.

Kaleta concludes his comments on Kureishi with questions of the notion of home. He asks, if Kureishi does not feel at home 'in the country of his family' and

rather finds himself at home in England, where or what is home? Why does Kureishi think ‘[i]n Pakistan, England just wouldn’t go away?’ Another possible question to pose is, are there any fixed, unchanging, homogeneous homelands full of happy indigenous people “at home” or even should there be any stable perception of home at all? In contrast to the unpleasant sense of diaspora, belonging nowhere or being in-between can be constructive for the migrant regardless of any anxieties of the notion of home. Migrants may prefer to lead their lives like migratory birds that can never belong to any particular places nor give up flying over unknown soil.

In an interview published in Hürriyet, a national daily newspaper in Turkey, Elif Shafak, for instance, defines herself as a kind of tree, *tubağacı*, (rather than a bird above) which has roots but is not bound to any soil. As it is obvious from the metaphor of the tree (genealogy), Shafak knows well where she comes from. She acknowledges the tree of her family, her ancestry, but does not feel as if she belongs to the place of that tree. In lieu of belonging there, she favours a nomadic existence that enables her to get to know various countries, cultures and beliefs. This point of view also supports the theory of Rushdie that suggests ‘something can also be gained’ in translation and hybridity. It shows that the experience of diaspora can represent the positive side of difference and multiplicity as well. Besides, the sense of diaspora produces different perceptions of home.

CHAPTER II

WHAT OR WHERE IS HOME FOR MIGRANTS?

If home is not a place where you are born or where you lead your life, may it be “an illusory and fictional place constructed through the myths and fragments of the migrant imagination (Nasta 133)”? If so, there cannot be any fixed or literal meaning of ‘home’ in diaspora; it is liable to numerous interpretations that are based on the fragments of the fantasies of migrants. Therefore, the power of the archon to interpret the parts of stories belonging to minorities is required. Besides, the vision and version of these interpretations support the archive of the minorities. In other words, all these stories contribute to the archive of minorities to piece the fragments of minorities’ imagination together in harmony. Such a conceptualization is backed up by Brah as well who describes home in the following terms:

[o]n the one hand, a mythic place to desire in the diasporic imagination...
[o]n the other hand ... the lived experience of locality...In other words, the varying experience of the pains and pleasures, the terrors and contentments....The question of home, therefore, is intrinsically linked with the way in which processes of inclusion or exclusion operate and are subjectively experienced under given circumstances (192).

Brah explains how subjective the perception of home is and how it is differently perceived. So, as the notion of home signifies different phenomena for bicultural and transnational writers as well, it is not a surprise to find different interpretations of home through their portrayal of characters.

The changing notion of home is a reverberating motif in both Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia* and Shafak's *The Saint of Incipient Insanities*. It depicts the sense of unbelonging and displacement of the hybrid characters that take on "the voices of transplanted and translated subjects" (Seyhan 9). Although the essentials of home are the same in both novels such as a desire to belong to a place which offers them a safe shelter, their signifiers or meanings vary in context. By way of illustration, the locality consisting of numerous different houses in many different neighbourhoods is quite significant in *The Buddha of Suburbia* because it is the token of economic and social status determining the strata to which people are supposed to belong. However, home can also be an unknown, a foreign or a remote place to take refuge in for some migrant characters such as in *The Saint of Incipient Insanities*. It may be a nation from time to time or a room, a kitchen or a group of people with which the characters associate themselves.

The notion of home is more problematic for the protagonists of *The Buddha of Suburbia*, for Karim and Jamila, than for the other characters in the novel. From the very first pages of the novel to the end of the first part, Karim's desire to get away from the house, which has always been *dark and cold*, is crystal-clear. Even the opening scene of the novel persuades us of the tedium he feels in that house: "The room immediately seemed to contract. Tension rose. [I] couldn't wait to get out of the house now. [I] always wanted to be somewhere else, [I don't] know why" (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 4-5). The depressing atmosphere of the room creates an image of a person who is suffocating in the fumes. Here, Karim is depicted as if he were a man who wanted to escape from a burning house in order to preserve hope for

a new life. Karim feels he should not be in that house possibly because of his transnational and bicultural identity which makes him remember the clash between who he is and who he is trying to be or his concerns about the class he belongs to. Karim has the sense that he does not belong to the house since it may bring back the memories of his homeland (Bombay) and may, therefore, prevent his integration with others in London. Yet, most likely, as the house proves his family's class, he feels he belongs not to the house he lives in but somewhere else which belongs more to the upper middle class.

In Karim's eyes, the house appears to be the signifier of his family's economic status and its location is the proof of it. For example, when Margaret, Karim's mother, wants him to draw the curtains in order to avoid being observed by others, Karim aggressively protests: "It is not necessary, Mum. There isn't another house that can see us for a hundred yards-unless they're watching through binoculars" (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 4). Karim gets angry because they live in one of the South London suburbs which is an isolated and peripheral neighbourhood marking their lower life standards. So, his desire to escape from the house is based on the fantasy of climbing up the ladders of class. That is why everything at home connotes boredom, and this explains why Karim would rather work even "as a waiter in London" (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 54) than carry on living in this banality.

The notion of home is also problematic for Jamila who is the cousin and best friend of Karim; yet hers is a bit different from Karim's perception of home in terms of gender issues. Jamila wants to get away from her home in order to escape from

marriage to a man whom she does not love. When her father, Anwar, decides to marry her to an Indian (Changez) and rent them a flat nearby, intending them to produce at least two children, Jamila yearns to run away from the typical role of a woman as conceived by patriarchy. The home seems to be a prison in which Jamila is captured; therefore, what she apparently needs is to desert her house for freedom. Karim agrees with her: “[S]he might have to run away from home” but at the same time wonders, “where could she go” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 63). Here, Karim stresses the importance of the notion of home especially for a woman, while wondering about the place that Jamila can shelter *alone*.

Although Jamila is an anarchist and a rebellious woman, she has nowhere to go except for the home of her father or husband. Hence, she agrees to go to the home of her husband in order to punish her father. Supposing that “[m]arrying Changez would be, in her mind, a rebellion against rebellion, creat[ing] novelty itself” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 82). Therefore, leaving one home to go to another means nothing for her unless it is a place where she really feels at home; in other words, what is important for her is to find a place where she feels she really belongs. As Changez’s house is not such a place for her, it is highly possible Jamila’s life in Changez’s house will not last long.

As Shafak’s *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* is one of those typical “individual accounts of exilic experience with an existential understanding of displacement, expatriation and marginality” in terms of Seyhan’s argument (Seyhan 13), it is worth questioning the notion of home through the characters of her novel as

well. On the surface, the novel narrates the life stories of Ömer and Gail who are the protagonists: Ömer is a Ph.D. student in political science in America; by leaving his home behind, he begins “not to be himself anymore” (Shafak, *The Saint* 77). He “[runs] away from the person he was” (ibid) with the hope of new beginnings in new homes. On the other hand, Gail is a young American girl who works as a chocolate maker in her homeland but “feels utterly displaced in her homeland and moves from one obsession to another in an effort to find solid ground for herself” as described in the title page of the novel. These two characters stimulate us to think of the problems of displacement and the sense of belonging in a direct relation to the phenomenon of home.

The two characters, and peripherally the others as well, strive to find a place in which they will achieve a sense of belonging. Each tries to find a room in a flat (Ömer) or in a dormitory (Gail) in order to soothe their anxieties of being homeless, out of place. In other words, what they need is a place which makes them feel at ‘home’ and so offers them a sense of belonging. However, neither of them knows where such a home exists. The narrator of the novel, for instance, defines Ömer’s situation with these words:

“Lost” was precisely what he was, and what he had been more than anything for the last five, ten, fifteen years of his life...a graduate student of political science unable to accommodate himself either inside the torrent of politics or on the little island of *scientists*;... an expatriate who retained a deep sense of not being home here, but not knowing where that home was anymore (Shafak, *The Saint*14).

Ömer is seemingly a 'lost' character in the streets of a country in which he has no sense of belonging; and there he wanders around pathetically looking for a home for himself. Once, when he is as "demoralized and unsettled" (Shafak, *The Saint* 75) as ever, he finds a house that is "[l]ike many homes in this part of East Somerville...[which is] pretty rough and worn out" (Shafak, *The Saint* 94). The house evokes an unpleasant feeling of slight horror since it is depicted as a building which is very old and damaged due to constant use. Besides, the voice on the phone that Ömer calls and the questionnaire which Ömer has to fill out in order to become a member of the house give us a nasty feeling about the house. Nevertheless, at night Ömer is welcomed into the house and falls asleep "feeling lucky to have a pleasant home in a pleasant neighbourhood, with three housemates each minding his own business in his own walk of life" (Shafak, *The Saint* 95). Yet, as the years pass, (Time is constantly problematized by Ömer throughout the novel, so after how many years is a question without any precise answer) Ömer's thoughts about the house change a bit with the hope of a new life with Gail.

The notion of home or belonging somewhere means nothing for Gail, on the other hand, because she is a character who is portrayed as a young woman who neither belongs to her family nor the campus life. She is "a chronically anxiety-drenched antisocial youngster" (Shafak, *The Saint* 39) who avoids any social relations because of her shyness. She prefers to be someone who is invisible enough not to be recognized by others. However, being a part of the circle of Debra, "her redheaded savior", and accepted as a member of it and belonging to the same dormitory as her mean a lot for Gail. That is possibly why she tries to get inside

Debra's dormitory as an invader by playing a trick, although she fails and gets 'deported' in the end.

Four girls wearing sweatshirts in different shades of blue turned the corner smiling in unison while [Gail] was lingering in front of Brigham Hall. Seeing them coming this way, she hurried, or at least made an attempt to do so. She took her ID card out and slid it through the machine attached next to the door. But the door refused to let her in. She tried sliding it again, almost robotically, and then again, fanatically, turning the ID card with that awesome picture of hers on it upside down, in every different way she could think of. But the door declined. She could see the girls heading toward the dorm, which by now looked definitely like their dorm. She felt her face burn as she realized what a fool she'd been to think she could use her ID card to enter someone else's dormitory. Nobody would believe her, and even if somebody did, that special person would not be one of these girls, each an eyewitness to her efforts of intrusion (Shafak, *The Saint* 40).

Here, the image of the door and of Gail's ID are very important in terms of displacement: The door is the border gate that divides one place from another and the ID is the passport which enables people to cross the border unless it is invalid. Since Gail's ID is not valid, she is not accepted inside; no matter how hard she tries, the door refuses to let her enter. Despite her insistent attempts to enter and become one of the people of the dorm, she fails; and as she fails, she realizes she does not belong there because it is *their* dormitory, not hers. Ultimately, what she does is nothing but *intrusion*.

Then, optimistically, the image of the door multiples into doors which can be opened from the inside as well:

But doors, after all, do not only open from outside, they are capable of being opened from the inside, too. Right at the instant the girls in blues had reached the scene, somebody pushed Brigham Hall's door from inside and out came a bright-red head, almost glowing (Shafak, *The Saint* 41).

Although the inactive door becomes passable with the help of Debra, it is clear from what follows in the story that Gail has not been able to get inside in the end. All that she manages is to put herself "somewhere in [Debra' circle's] periphery" (Shafak, *The Saint* 62).

Seemingly, all these major characters feel *out of place* supposing that they belong somewhere different. The sense of diaspora and being in-between or belonging nowhere do not seem to be constructive for these characters because the notion of home in their minds and the house in the distance, the worn-out flat or the dormitory with its inaccessible gate do not match each other. It becomes a failed fantasy of home through which they want to lead their lives. Not only do the major characters of the novels, but also the minor ones attempt to find the home of their own fantasies.

2.1 HOME IS THE NAME OF MELANCHOLIA

What the characters of each novel, whether major or minor, challenge is the sense of loss which is caused by the *failed fantasy of home*. For example, Karim leaves his house hoping to find a new place to belong, and Jamila escapes in order to escape from the traditional expectations of her based on her gender roles while Ömer

abandons his hometown for the sake of new beginnings with the hope of a new home, and Gail undergoes a sense of unbelonging even in her hometown, not feeling at home anywhere there. The loss of home for each one brings out the sense of melancholia that Freud describes in his study of mourning and melancholia.

Freud mentions in his essay that melancholia is the name of loss that a person undergoes. It is the reaction of “profound mourning” after the loss of someone or something that is loved (Freud, “Mourning and Melancholia 252); in this case, the thing that is mourned is the lost home for the migrant. For example, in the case of Ömer, the lost home embodies the loss of the dots in his name and surname.

Back in Turkey, he used to be ÖMER ÖZSİPAHİOĞLU.

Here in America, he had become an OMAR OZSIPAHIOGLU (Shafak, *The Saint* p. 5).

The loss of his dots represents his lost home (Turkey) and his current location (America) at the same time very clearly. This loss makes him recall the sense of diaspora which seems to be a burden on his shoulders. No matter how hard he tries, he cannot get rid of the impact of the past and start to adapt himself to the present. Therefore, he obsessively upsets himself by thinking about the loss he undergoes:

When I write my name in Turkish, it has dots. In English, I *lose* them. It sounds stupid, I know, but *sometimes I lament losing my dots*. Therefore, those dots up there must be mine, take care of them (Shafak, *The Saint* 216; emphasis is mine).

Ömer entrusts his beloved dots to Gail on whom he relies, but he still regrets their loss since they are the only fragments that he has from his lost home(land). Here, the choice of verb “lament” and “losing” evoke a very parallel connotation of mourning and melancholia as Freud analyses these in his article.

In his article “Mourning and Melancholia”, Freud clearly analyses the difference between the two. He defines mourning as a “reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one’s country, liberty, an ideal, and so on” (Freud 252). For him, it is the sense of loss which occurs after the loss of a beloved thing or person such as after the loss of a beloved country. Although Freud believes the sense of melancholia emerges for the same reasons, there is a clear difference between the two:

...[A]lthough mourning involves grave departures from the normal attitude to life, it never occurs to us to regard it as a pathological condition and to refer it to medical treatment. We rely on its being overcome after a certain lapse of time, and we look upon any interference with it as useless or even harmful (ibid).

Mourning is a healthy way of expressing the grief that a person feels after the loss of a love object; therefore, it never shows any symptoms of physical or mental diseases. For a while, the person mourns to overcome the sense of loss they feel but then they stop mourning and keep living as before. If they keep mourning, they start to suffer from melancholia by challenging the symptoms of the disease.

Freud expresses the characteristics of melancholia as “a profoundly painful rejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, and a lowering of the self-regarding feelings” (252). When a person does not overcome the sense of loss, they maintain these feelings. They are stuck on the pain of the loss and lose their attachment to the outside world. They do not care about life or the others because they are not able to channel the love of the lost object to another one. In other words, they are not able to love anything or anyone as they cling to the love of the loss. After some time, when they are not competent enough to change the things, they start degrading themselves and bit by bit losing belief in their existence. Freud claims “...with one exception, the same traits are met with in mourning. The distinction of self-regard is absent in mourning; but otherwise the features are the same” (ibid).

So, there are several common traits between mourning and melancholia such as “the same loss of interest in the outside world” (252), according to Freud’s argument. Those who mourn or experience melancholia lose their attachments to life; in other words, they become introverted and feel isolated as they have no one with whom they may be in direct communication. For instance, Gail has no real connections to life before meeting Debra; she even tries to avoid any communications with others. On the first day of the semester when she needs to have a photo taken of herself for her ID, the narrator explicitly describes her dreary situation: “It wasn’t the waiting-in-a-line part that tortured her most, but the waiting-in-a-line-with-other-people part. It was always people. The way they talked, the way they joked, the ways they just were ...it was always them, the same old problem” (Shafak *The Saint* 33-4). People exhaust Gail and what she does to prevent such

exhaustion is to get away from the crowds and get indifferent to what is going on in the outside world.

Ömer and Gail are characters who undergo some common symptoms of mourning and melancholia due to Freud's criticism, yet the difference is Gail tries to "adopt a new object of love" (Freud 252) in order to replace what she lacks, although Ömer insists on revealing the melancholic's self-denigration. In other words, Gail completes "the work of mourning" and sets "the ego free and uninhibited again" (Freud 253) whereas Ömer reveals the symptoms of "self-regard" which is the distinctive feature of melancholia. Contrary to Ömer who is unable to move beyond the loss of his exact name with its dots, Gail, who has previously been known as Zarpanidit, creates a new name and identity for herself with the name of Gail hoping to establish a new life that she lacks or needs. Ömer "displays something else" as "an extraordinary diminution in his self-regard" (Freud 254) as a melancholic, according to Freud. He turns into an image of "walking self-destruction" (Shafak, *The Saint* 266) and a "clown in the mirror" (Shafak, *The Saint* 278) for the narrator and a "walking disgrace" (Shafak, *The Saint* 246) for Abed. All these descriptions of him support the claim of Freud: A melancholic "is not of the opinion that a change has taken place in him, but extends his self-criticism back over the past; he declares that he was never any better"(Freud 254). After several attempts to experience a change in his life, Ömer believes he is never able to be better; he thinks he has to be the embodiment of disgrace and self-destruction in the eyes of the others.

As he believes, he never shows any sign of recovery or improvement throughout the story; he even gets stranger to himself at specific moments when he looks at his reflection in the mirror:

“I think of the other person as a mirror...”With no person to think of, there was no mirror. “*Whatever this person is not giving to me is a reflection of something I am not giving myself*”. He decided to go the other way around, designating the things he failed to give to himself rather than those he couldn’t get from that occult lover. “Coffee” came to his mind first, and then “patience,” “resilience,” and “composure” (Shafak, *The Saint* 39; emphasis is mine).

Here, the mirror is a significant symbol to suggest an idea about how a person becomes a stranger to themselves because when a person looks at the mirror, they expect to see their own image but if they see the image different than theirs, it means they become a stranger to themselves. Namely, they do not know or recognize their own image. Ömer experiences such a feeling once he faces his reflection in the mirror. Although he comes to America in order not to be himself any more (Shafak, *The Saint* 77), Ömer fails in his desire to be someone else who is totally different. Being in-between, he turns into a stranger to himself who lacks any reflection. The reflection in the mirror seems to be an object of love that he lacks in real life, but since he cannot capture it, he succumbs increasingly in a sense of melancholia. Therefore, he starts to think of his past feeling nostalgia for the old, nice days in Turkey in his neighbourhood especially with his dear cousin Murat.

One day when Ömer feels alone and troubled in the streets of America, he misrecognises a man who looks like Murat. Much to his relief, he realises that he is not Murat when he gets closer to him. Although the man cannot be his cousin because of his lack of hair, Ömer wishes to see him.

It must be more than a year now since they'd stopped talking, and at least five months since he last saw him. It was sad the way things had turned out. It was sad because everything was so different once. Their mothers being not only sisters but also neighbors who spent more time in each other's houses than in their own, and they being of the same age, it was inevitable for them to pass all their childhood glued to one another (Shafak, *The Saint* 162).

Murat is one of the most dominant fragments in Ömer's life that complements his life and self. He is Ömer's coeval, his childhood friend, his companion and his roommate when they hire a flat in Ankara to go to Middle East Technical University. Despite "the estrangement between the two cousins" (Shafak, *The Saint* 165), they are like the complementary halves of one whole; and on such a day the reason why Ömer remembers his cousin Murat and feels nostalgia is the loss of him which leads Ömer to feel deeper melancholia. In addition to the sense of loss of his dots, the loss of Murat makes Ömer experience more intensively the melancholia that Freud defines; he does not overcome the loss of a loved object through the discovery of a new loved object as Gail does.

2.1.1 Home: The Loss of Nation

If melancholia is the name of a certain response to loss according to Freud, then the loss of his exact name with its dots and his constant companion mean the loss of his nation and identity for Ömer. In Turkey, at home, he is ÖMER ÖZSİPAHİOĞLU; he retrieves his lost dots and there he has a chance of meeting Murat who is the one that complements him. However, without his dots and Murat, he lacks something that is a part of himself and his identity; and hence, in the absence of these, he mourns. So, the sense of loss can be a reference to the lost nation that the migrant leaves behind.

For Ömer, Turkey is a reservoir of the pleasant memories of the past which cause him to remain in his past by cutting off every possible connection to the outside world which is one of the distinctive characteristics of the sense of melancholia. The archive of his past hinders his communication with the present and prevents him from establishing a new set of libidinal attachments. Apart from Ömer, the other two characters from *The Buddha of Suburbia* and *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* deal with the same sense of loss of a nation, Anwar and Abed.

Anwar is the uncle of Karim “who [came] from India to the Old Kent Road to lodge with a dentist, to jangle and gamble, to make his fortune and return home to build a house like [Karim’s] grandfather’s on Juhu Beach”(Kureishi, *The Buddha* 210-11). Even at the very first moment when Anwar comes to England, he has an idea of returning in his mind. In other words, he comes to England to earn some money to construct a new house in his hometown; he never thinks of settling down

there. Abed, in a similar vein, comes to America in order to work on his degree in biotechnology engineering (Shafak, *The Saint* 92) with the hope of returning to his hometown as an educated man who will have a job enabling him to earn money and get married to his beloved, Safiya. Safiya, therefore, becomes the means whereby Abed is able to maintain connections with Morocco, his nation. He continuously asks about her and writes to her in order not to lose his attachment to his lost home and nation.

Anwar is a typical representative of an Indian who has a dull life within his shop, *Paradise Stores*, according to Karim's thoughts. Karim believes his uncle does not know how to value life and hence accuses him of not enjoying his life:

I didn't know how much money [Uncle Anwar and Aunt Jeeta] had. But if they had anything they must have buried it, because they never bought any of the things people in Chislehurst would exchange their legs for: velvet curtains, stereos, Martinis, electric lawnmowers, double-glazing. The idea of enjoyment had passed Jeeta and Anwar by. They behaved as if they had unlimited lives: this life was of no consequence, it was merely the first of many hundreds to come in which they could relish existence. They also knew nothing of the outside world.... (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 51).

However, Karim sees things on the surface and does not wonder why Uncle Anwar has chosen such a life. Anwar comes to England to earn money and then go back to his homeland to build a house, but he does not manage to return. He earns money; yet this means nothing for him unless he goes back to India with the money which is earned for the construction of a house there. When Karim asks why he does not take up Jeeta's ideas to increase the profits of their market and to earn more money, he

replies: “For what? What will I do with the profit? How many shoes can I wear? How many socks? How better will I eat? Thirty breakfasts instead of one?” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 172). He loses all interest in the rest of the world believing that everything gets worse (ibid) and that is possibly why Anwar remains remote from all worldly issues; he knows he can never go back to India again.

As Anwar knows that he cannot go back to India, he keeps what he earns as if he is taking his revenge on himself. He gets angry with himself for failing to return to India and hence he punishes himself by keeping what he has, believing that another life will come in which he will live in India once again. Anwar always fantasizes of returning to India even at the first moment that he is introduced to us; however, his desire gets stronger towards the end of his life when he understands he cannot go back there under any circumstances. Although he very directly expresses his wish to get rid of that place: “I want to go home now...I’ve had enough of this damn place” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 172), he cannot change anything as his wife “[refuses] to go home to Bombay with him” (ibid). In the end, “Anwar [dies], mumbling about Bombay, about the beach, about the boys at the Cathedral school, and calling for his mother” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 212) with the notion of an imaginary homeland in his mind. The pain of his lost nation, homeland, and the melancholia caused by it extinguish his enthusiasm for life and finally bring about his death.

Anwar dies because of the sense of melancholia: he feels the ‘painful dejection’ of losing his hometown first; then, he loses all his interest in the outside world. As he is unable to establish a new set of libidinal attachments, he inevitably

suffers from the most distinctive feature of melancholia, self-denigration, in the end. Hence, his dreams to earn enough money to return to India for a construction of a new home there are unfulfilled. However, the sense of loss can sometimes be constructive in the sense of diaspora. The migrant may gain something from his/her hybridity as Rushdie suggests after s/he has channeled the loss of loved object to another one. Hence, they can avoid the sense of melancholia that Freud describes. If they are able to cope with the sense of loss, they will have more chance of accomplishing an imagined homeland based on their own fantasies. So, Abed's feelings concerning his lost nation end up in a relatively optimistic and promising way in comparison with Uncle Anwar. Although for a long time he grieves over his beloved who is the embodiment of his attachment to his homeland, he manages to channel the libido from his lost object to a new one.

When Zahra, Abed's mother, comes to visit him, she brings a package sent by Safiya to him; Abed finds a letter in it which describes "[Safiya's] father's illness, the weather's volatility these days, her little sister's wedding" (Shafak, *The Saint* 186). Yet, most importantly, the letter transmits the message that Safiya cannot wait for him anymore. Disappointed and hopeless, Abed mourns for his lost beloved for a while and then his meeting with a woman at the laundry leads him back to life. So, his transfer of the libido from the lost love object to a new one saves him from melancholia; in other words, "the existence of the lost object [Safiya] is [not] psychically prolonged [anymore]" (Freud 253) by Abed.

At the end of the novel, just before a new beginning with the woman at the laundry, Abed becomes aware of the secret relation between Safiya and his hometown. He eventually finds enough courage to admit the fact to himself:

He sensed but could never explain to anyone, no less to himself, that his loyalty for Safiya had been abstrusely interwoven with his devotion not only to their common past, but also to their country. The effect of losing bit by bit his connection to Safiya was a subtle loosening of the moorings that tied him to his homeland. Not that he felt less connected to Morocco now. But he somehow felt more connected to his life in the United States (Shafak, *The Buddha* 348).

Safiya plays a leading role as the maintainer of unbroken connections to Abed's past in Morocco; and as the reminder of the past, she makes him remember his past while making him forsake the present. So, when Abed gives up the hope of reuniting with her, he gradually cuts the ties that have kept him from moving away from his hometown as yet. Then he strengthens his ties with the present (with the woman at the laundry) by leaving the past (Safiya) behind. By getting rid of the symptoms of melancholia that Freud describes such as gaining interest, even libidinal interest, in the outside world and replacing the lost love object with a new object of love, Abed goes on to find the woman he likes. At the end of the novel, he finds her and "[does not] come home" (Shafak, *The Saint* 349) probably because he feels at 'home' somewhere different with the woman he has found.

2.2 HOME IS THE NAME OF EATING DISORDERS

While Anwar does not direct the loss of a loved object to anyone new, Abed manages to replace it with a woman he meets at the laundry. So, Anwar has to suffer from melancholia whereas Abed has fully recovered at the end of the novel. In their cases, the loss of a notion of home is associated with the lost nation but it may also be associated with the loss of nutrition. The loss of nutrition turns out to be one of the common traits observable in some of the migrants. They mourn after what they lose in terms of eating and drinking; and hence they cling to the idea of the same food or drink by rejecting eating anything new.

If melancholia occurs when one does not want to channel libido withdrawn from the lost love object to another new one, what is its relation to the loss of nutrition? The correlation is that as the migrants who experience melancholia do not want to taste or pleasure in any new food, they hold on to the food that they are used to or they just refuse to eat. For example, in the case of Ömer, he is never revealed to us while eating throughout the whole story; yet, apart from his addiction to alcohol, his relation to coffee is mentioned several times. Before he has serious stomach problems, Ömer continuously and persistently drinks coffee but when he cannot drink it anymore because of his health problems, he keeps his four different coffee machines as if they are “more like a tribute to the good old days when his stomach was still functioning” (Shafak, *The Saint* 18). These machines seem to be the symbols of the sense of melancholia for Ömer because while they make him remember good, happy and healthy days; they also make him remember what he has lost. So, these coffee machines are not only a gift but also a burden for him. As long

as he keeps them, he experiences this dichotomy between the nostalgic for the past and the past as a burden.

That is why when he observes his own reflection in mirror as a stranger, the first thing that he thinks of is coffee. He knows that coffee is a part of himself that he has lost in addition to his beloved dots and companion; he feels that he needs it terribly. So, he decides to retrieve it (Shafak, *The Saint* 239); yet he forsakes it very quickly.

He decided to go to the other way around, designating the things he failed to give himself... “Coffee” came to his mind first, and then.... He stopped. His mind refused to go on like this (ibid).

Once again, Ömer fails to get back what he has lost; he gives up the challenge. As if he were in a trance, he has succeeded in waking up by “shut[ting] down the Mother Nature Music site” (ibid). Thenceforth, Ömer is never ever revealed to us while eating or even drinking coffee to the end of the story; he suffers from the pain of loss from the very beginning of the novel to the end and does not make up for it with something different.

The loss of beloved coffee is not only about the sense of melancholia that Ömer undergoes; it is also connected with the eating disorders that some migrants may experience. However, is this specifically a sense that can only be felt by migrants? Can the problems of eating be experienced only by them or can *everyone* who undergoes the sense of melancholia because of the loss of a love object

experience it? Since Freud does not explain the sense of melancholia especially for migrants, it is hard to relate the problem solely to them; therefore, it may be a problem for anyone who does not divert their attention from the lost love object to a new one.

An eating disorder is not a problem for a particular group of people; it is one of the symptoms of melancholia that any person may display. As emphasized before, the difference between mourning and melancholia is shown by the existence of 'pathological condition' or the need for 'medical treatment' in terms of Freud's criticism. Melancholia involves the symptoms of physical or mental pathology, which possibly require treatment, contrary to the symptoms of mourning; and hence, eating disorders seem to be one of the possible pathologies from which people may suffer from the sense of melancholia.

For instance, Gail, who is certainly not a migrant figure, only eats bananas and chocolates throughout the story which become the only source of subsistence for her. She is never revealed to us while eating or even drinking anything except for chocolates and bananas until she meets Debra. Even on the first day of school, the only consoling items for her are chocolates and bananas.

The only solace she could think of to help her endure was the comfort of knowing she had another chocolate bar somewhere in the depths of her bag. When she'd finished with this, she would start eating that.... She took another bite, as petite as possible to make her panacea last longer. Ever since she'd arrived at this campus, she had been fading on two elements, which she liked to think had more in common than they seemed to have.... *All day long she could go on without eating anything else.* Sometimes she ate chocolates for

dinner and bananas for dessert, and sometimes she ate bananas for dinner and chocolates for dessert (Shafak, *The Saint* 33-4; emphasis is mine).

Chocolates and bananas are a kind of therapeutic medicine for her to heal the pain of being alone or not belonging to anyone or anywhere even in her own homeland. That is possibly why she clings to them; she is trying to survive. As she does not want any novelties in her life, she resists eating anything new. However, when Debra enters her life, she wants to eat something totally different: some pizza.

Although Debra seems to be someone who is promising for Gail, the change in her diet does not lead to a new and happy beginning for her. On the contrary, she remembers what she does not want to recall while eating the pieces of pizza at the time of her meeting Debra; and this brings out a suicidal tendency in her.

[...] That afternoon as she stood there chewing some pizza, a piece of pepperoni winked at her in recognition. It looked exactly the same as the piece she had choked on six years before. Zarpandit twirled the piece in her mouth and tried to stop it somewhere in her throat. To no avail. All the pieces of pepperoni she intended to stop halfway through she ended up gulping down. In the meanwhile, she'd surmised that even if she could not stop swallowing, she could instead hold her breath, which might basically serve the same end (Shafak, *The Saint* 49-50).

Here, the personalisation of pepperoni seems to evoke bitter memories of Gail's past that she suppresses. Even the choice of words and images become gloomy and depressing in order to strengthen this visual image and atmosphere. What Gail does is to spin the large mouthfuls, keep them somewhere close to her throat and then

block them by ‘the pieces of pepperoni’. In other words, she makes herself unable to draw breath by obstructing her throat with ‘the pieces of pepperoni’ which are possibly and metaphorically the bitter memories of her past. When she realises that she cannot swallow and digest them, she directly gulps down the pieces. However, at that specific moment, she comes up with another option: if she did not prevent herself from gulping down the pieces, she would be able to hold her breath which certainly means the same thing for her: to end her life.

Only once does Gail attempt to eat something new, and this happens with the help of Debra. In other words, if Gail did not meet her, she would never attempt to eat anything different from her bananas and chocolates. She tries to channel her affection to a new love object in terms of eating something different but she fails. Her trial does not work well because it makes her remember the unpleasant memories of her past. So, after this trial, she continues eating her bananas and chocolates, the only food that she can eat and digest.

Food apart from bananas and chocolates causes Gail to remember the time when she choked, was not able to draw a breath, or did not want to live; so she refuses to eat anything new in order to avoid recalling these times. She eats things that do not make her remember the memories she wants to forget. Everything else becomes undigested food for her such as the pieces of pepperoni that she cannot swallow. Gail is not the only character who has an eating disorder; most of the characters in both novels (either the migrants or non-migrants) are affected by eating problems because of the sense of melancholia they suffer: some of them start to eat

less or more or become thinner or plumper or even get ill or healthier in the course of their stories.

For instance, another character (a migrant one this time) who tries to cope with an eating disorder is Alegre who is the girlfriend of Piyu, “the Hispanic-looking” (Shafak, *The Saint* 92) flatmate of Ömer. She is “a young Mexican American [woman] as thin as ice despite the great cook she [is]” (Shafak, *The Saint* 95). She is defined by her hybridity and gender: on the one hand she is a hyphenated in-between figure and on the other she is the partner of a man. The only issue that distinguishes her is her cooking, and hence the kitchen “[is] [always] where she [needs] to be” (Shafak, *The Saint* 120). What is paradoxical is why such a woman defined by her mastery in cooking has an eating disorder. Why does she deny herself food although she loves cooking? Why does she refrain from consuming any food while she enjoys feeding others?

Now, if Ömer wants his beloved coffee back and Gail does not want to eat anything except for her bananas and chocolates, it might be because of the ways in which these objects function: The lost coffee means the lost fragment of Ömer, and retrieving it is a way of acquiring a part of himself that makes him remember the past nostalgically. On the other hand, different food for Gail signifies the traumatic past that she is trying to suppress. In both cases, they want to feel safe at home; however, in the case of Alegre, it is hard to define the situation. Even when she is in her kitchen, at home and in safety, she still suffers because of her eating disorder.

Alegre shows her mastery of cooking in the kitchen with the self-confidence that she does not have in her life. Stepping into someone's shoes, the kitchen is the only place where she can be "the captain of" (Shafak, *The Saint* 120) anything.

There was goat cheese in the fridge, which she crumbled on pita rounds. She found lots of canned tuna in the cupboards and turned them into lots of tuna noodle fettuccine.... the cabbage on the counter became coleslaw salad with red beans; some of the leftover corn evolved into pudding, and the rest into corn and zucchini sauté.... in case somebody was still hungry, she had in store twenty-four turkey club sandwiches. The remaining eggs and lemon juice she used for a lemon meringue tart. She was planning to make a banana split pie with the oodles of bananas she encountered in the fridge, but had to give up and sit down for a while, utterly wiped out (ibid).

Alegre is apparently good at improvising new recipes from basic ingredients, such as turning canned tuna into tuna noodle fettuccine or simple cabbage into coleslaw salad. She even makes use of leftovers by cooking pudding, corn and zucchini sauté. However, she is still anxious and afraid if there is anyone who remains hungry despite the numerous kinds of food that she prepares. Therefore, she also makes 'twenty-four turkey club sandwiches' just in case of such a situation. Although she plans to make 'a banana split pie' in addition, she is prevented by the tiredness of which she is unaware before sitting down.

After more than two hours, it seems as if Alegre has lost herself while cooking or "as if she [has] been crying for hours" (Shafak, *The Saint* 121). She is "utterly wiped out" (ibid) at the end; and instead of the happiness of achieving something difficult, she is totally upset. Though she promises Debra to meet her

friends and eat with them, she prefers to tidy up the kitchen by eating “three more grapefruits, 210 more calories” (Shafak, *The Saint* 122), rather than all the delicious food that she has cooked. Alegre is obsessed with calories (ibid) and that is why she does not want to eat any food though she likes it. She refuses to eat or disgorges what she eats (Shafak, *The Saint* 347) as if she were poisoned by something that makes her stomach heave. This may be the thing that makes her remember the past as in the case of Gail, or recall her lost nation as in the case of Ömer.

Seemingly, the reason why Alegre refuses to eat is that she cannot digest the reminiscences of her past. She remembers her lost homeland, family and mother in anger whenever she eats.

It was different when her parents were alive. Then she wasn't forced to eat more but to eat less. Her mother didn't want her to get fat, to reduce her chances for snagging a well-mannered, well-heeled man for a husband. Alegre had always suspected she was slightly ashamed of her. Not at the beginning, no doubt. Not when she was a child, but much later. When it had become clear that she was not getting rid of that plumpness that had descended on her at puberty, and looked cute then but not now, not anymore.... Back then, too often she'd pass the whole day without eating anything, but then when she started eating, she'd eat too much. She took regular overdoses of acetaminophen, and the more weight she lost, the more verbally abusive she became toward her parents. The docile girl Alegre had always been, had now turned into this furious teenager, her mouth refusing to take anything in, puking anger out (Shafak, *The Saint* 217).

Alegre's eating disorder reveals her unhealthy relation to her mother who is the memorial to her nation. As she turns into a nasty girl towards her family after the

change in her eating habits, she feels guilty. After her parents pass away, she becomes a woman who is “extremely interested in sanity and health” in the hope that her mother would like her in that way if she lived. However, she becomes more obsessed with “calories, carbohydrates, dietary fiber, soluble fiber, insoluble fiber...” day by day and becomes “a thin and delicate effigy” (ibid) in the end.

The night before Alegre “could not be found” (Shafak, *The Saint* 349), she is in almost a kind of hysterical state in the kitchen:

Night. Alegre is alone in the kitchen, the only place where she feels she is fully herself. *The kitchen is her homeland*. Surrounded by a long line of relatives and a circle of friends most of whom had been expatriated, deterritorialized, and even if willing still painfully molded into foreigners in the United States, nobody will believe that *the kitchen can be native soil*, so she tells it to no one. Alegre does not know if being in the kitchen makes her happy or not. But perhaps that’s not the point anyway. Homelands are not, she senses, about happiness after all. In any case, the only thing she can be sure of is that here, in the kitchen, *she belongs*. She comes here to cook for others, but every now and then for her and her alone. This is one of those moments. Tonight Alegre is not here to cook. *This time she came to the kitchen to feed the hungry mouth in her* (Shafak, *The Saint* 338; emphasis is mine).

The last scene in which Alegre appears in the novel is that moment when she takes refuge in the kitchen as if it were her homeland and she totally belonged there. Among lots of expatriated and deterritorialized relatives and friends, she wonders whether the kitchen can be a native soil for her; if it can be, do her relatives and friends believe her? She concludes that the kitchen is certainly her native soil but

decides not to tell this to the others. Although she feels that it is her homeland, she does not know if this place makes her happy or not. However, she is quite certain that it is the exact place where she thinks she belongs. It is important to her to feel that she belongs to somewhere at last. As a citizen of this land, she comes there whenever she wants or needs to cook and feed others. Nonetheless, this time, turning everything upside down, she comes to the kitchen to feed ‘the hungry mouth in her’ not to feed others.

Losing control, Alegre starts to eat whatever she finds in the fridge such as the bowls of puffed cereals that Abed and Piyu eat everyday but she never tastes. “[O]n a night like this she ends up wolfing down a whole box *as if making up for all the mornings lost*” (Shafak, *The Saint* 339; emphasis is mine). Indeed, what she compensates for is not the eating for ‘the mornings lost’ but the loss of her mother, family, home and nation. This perspective and thought is also shown us through the dog of the house, Arroz:

Arroz knew this was not eating. This was something else, something frightening. This rite was about turning the order of things upside down; taking in what was outside and then giving back what was taken in. Eating and purging, greed and abstemiousness, sinning and repenting... *this was about transcending impenetrable boundaries* (Shafak, *The Saint* 341; emphasis is mine).

Alegre’s absent-minded eating becomes a sort of ritual that is performed to take in something outside and then expel what is inside. Her attempts to eat and digest the food from which she has abstained from so far are all in vain because the things she

throws into her mouth are like the pieces of pepperoni that Gail does not swallow. It brings back the memories of her lost past, mother and even nation. That is why her stomach does not welcome it. Turning full circle, this ritual of eating and disgorging becomes an act of removing evil by eating; and eating in order to repent and repenting by sinning...With each small amount of food, she attempts to overcome the eating disorder she suffers: she wants to remove the past that is a heavy burden which prevents her actual recovery; but as she eats, she becomes more regretful about her life and what she has lost and then the pain of loss makes her curse everything and everyone in her life. All in all, this is a matter of 'transcending impenetrable boundaries'; Alegre goes beyond her borders. Not able to stop performing this ritual, she thinks she makes herself free by eating.

She supposes that she gets rid of her chains and sets herself free; yet she is mistaken, or she deceives herself. If she were to remove her unpleasant memories of the past, stop regretting what she has lost and give up sinning against her life, she would come back home, to her kitchen, homeland, at the end of the novel, but she does not return. Besides, the last reference to her is the unpleasant description of her body which evokes pessimistic feelings about her: "It was as if Alegre's body had coalesced into a sharp knife [Piyu] could not possibly lay a hand on" (Shafak, *The Saint* 349). In relation to the first metaphor of ice associated with her body, the sharp knife connotes death or lifelessness here. Although the novel does not explicitly tell us what happens to her in the end, what is clear in consequence is the fact that Alegre's fight against the past devours her; she seemingly takes revenge on her lost mother, family and nation by firstly depriving herself of food and then gorging herself on whatever she finds.

Contrary to Alegre, the sense of melancholia brought about the loss of a love object and the eating disorder which subsequently emerges can sometimes be constructive as in the case of Abed. If a person, either a migrant or a non-migrant, manages to recover from an eating disorder, s/he can have a chance of gaining something in return such as getting closer to her/his fantasized homeland. Margaret is such a woman character in *The Buddha of Suburbia*, whose case is not as pessimistic and dark as Alegre's. She is depicted as an English woman living like an Indian who suffers from an eating disorder at first but then is portrayed as a woman who manages to get well, even better later.

Margaret plays a very feminine role like Alegre: she “[is] in her kitchen as usual.... [wearing] an apron with flowers on it and [wiping] her hands repeatedly on a tea towel” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 4). The kitchen is the place that she spends most of her time doing daily chores such as cooking and washing the dishes for the other members of the household. She lives for others just as Alegre does. However, Margaret is different from Alegre in terms of physical appearance. She “[is] a plump and unphysical woman with a pale round face and kind brown eyes” (ibid) While dealing with the daily issues, Margaret does not prioritise her body; she is not even aware of her appearance. Besides, since she has a mission to behave like an Indian because of the wish of her husband, Haroon, she has a ‘pale’ face deprived of a glimpse of life. Behaving like a person different from herself drains of all her life energy.

Karim, on the other hand, imagines that “[Margaret] [considers] her body to be an inconvenient object surrounding her, as if she were stranded on an unexplored desert island” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 4). Karim thinks that his mother’s body does not fit her; it seems it is not an appropriate outfit. The deformation of Margaret’s body possibly results from her desire to eat whatever she finds in order to suppress the expected identity from her as the wife of an Indian man. By eating, she takes revenge on her husband and family who want her to become someone to whom she is foreign. Against the expectations of the others, she eats as Alegre does.

At the time when Haroon abandons her, Margaret takes refuge in her sister’s house and starts to live with her sister’s family for a short while. Then, she returns to her home. Although she “[is] feeling much better, and she [is] active again... she [becomes] very fat at Ted and Jean’s” house (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 144). There, by eating, she tries to digest the pains of the lost homeland in which she lived with her husband together; in other words, she handles the situation she is in with the help of eating. In every piece of food, she makes herself accept the complicated relation to her husband and his betrayal of her and gradually frees herself from the chains of the past. After this, Margaret manages to get rid of her plumpness and becomes physically attractive, which means she has digested her past with Haroon to a great extent. She turns into a new woman; even the reformation on her body cannot be easily overlooked by anyone. Karim is also the one who notices the change in her when she dances self-confidently (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 156). Once regenerated, Margaret goes back to her home to create a new homeland for herself.

At the end of the novel, Haroon feels sorry for his abandonment of Margaret and regrets it. His repentance doubles when he hears something good about his lost beloved. When he wants to learn the mood of Margaret, Karim answers: “She [is] well, better than I [saw] her for years, good-tempered and active and optimistic and all” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 280). Haroon does not expect to hear this since Margaret “[is] always the world’s sweetest but most miserable woman” (ibid) for him. He supposes she cannot keep on living without him or worse still he believes she will never be capable of becoming a better woman after all. In great sorrow, Haroon realizes that Margaret “[isn’t] waiting at home for him with curry and chapatis in the oven and the electric blanket on” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 281) anymore. She is not the woman in the kitchen who continuously cooks; she refuses the cultural expectations from her (such as cooking Indian food: ‘curry’ and chapatis’) like an Indian wife. In brief, no longer does she belong to him and his house: she “[transforms the house from being their place- and it [becomes] only a place, child-soiled, functional- into her home (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 144).

Overall, the deformation and reformation of the bodies of these women (Alegre and Margaret) are based on a notion of eating that is closely related to the notion of the lost ‘home’ even if they are seemingly not aware of it. Alegre cannot control her eating disorder and finally loses control because of the reminiscences of the past, of her lost home, family and nation while Margaret manages to deal with each of them. The reason that Margaret is successful in contrast to Alegre is possibly because the burden on Alegre’s shoulders is heavier than that on Margaret’s; at any rate, Margaret is English, after all, so adapting to an area that she knows would be relatively easier than Alegre’s situation. Anyway, what Alegre totally encounters and

Margaret partially experiences is the sense of melancholia that occurs after the pains of loss; the loss of 'home', family and nation or the nostalgic past.

2.3 THE COMPENSATION OF MIGRANTS FOR THE LOSS OF HOME

Uncle Anwar in *The Buddha of Suburbia* suffers from the pain of the lost nation whereas Alegre in *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* undergoes a terrible eating disorder; as a result, neither of them is able to get over their problems. They cannot compensate themselves for what they lack and die thinking of the loss they have endured: Anwar does not adapt to life in the London suburbs; he cannot call this place his homeland. Besides, the more he feels to attach himself there, the more he craves for his lost hometown, India. At the end, he dies mumbling about India. Alegre, on the other hand, refuses to eat in order not to avoid remembering her lost mother, family and nation. She sometimes tries to compensate for what she lacks by eating, but her stomach does not welcome the food she takes in. So, each mouthful torments her by making her recall the unpleasant memories of the past about eating. Although the end of her story is not clear at the end of the novel, it is certainly not very promising since the last time she is revealed to us, she is in a kind of hysterical state.

As most of the characters of both novels (Ömer, Abed, Karim, Jamila, and so forth) migrate from their homelands to the host lands, they face the dilemma of belonging to the land they come from or belonging to the land they migrate to. Uncle Anwar and Alegre feel that they belong to the land they come from; they cannot

integrate themselves into the host lands. Instead, they prefer mourning after their lost nation. No matter how hard they try to pretend to be integrated by suppressing the pain of their lost homelands, they are not able to succeed. This suppression, in the end, may bring on severe difficulties in their present lives which cause them to *lose* something in return. The attempts to deny, disregard, or remove the loss that the migrants incur can trigger adaptation problems; so what they ultimately need is to create alternative house and family structures to compensate for the loss of the house, family and even of the nation.

Azade Seyhan describes such a loss in her book *Writing outside the Nation* through the striking metaphor of burning:

Multiple migrations end in the loss of our homes, possessions, and memorabilia. When the smoke clears, we are faced with charred pieces of identification, shards of language, burned tongues, and cultural fragments (Seyhan 7).

Here, the migratory journey is associated with a fire that takes ‘homes, possessions and memorabilia’ away from the migrants. It is such an experience that makes the migrants leave their belongings and memories behind which are the crucial pieces for them to define or identify themselves. These pieces are all gone with the fire; and when the fire is put out, only their remnants emerge in a most distorted way: the pieces of identification that are charred because of burning, the pieces of broken language, the burned tongues and the fragments of culture all make it hard for new beginnings to take place.

Ömer leaves his home, possessions and memories behind in such a symbolic act of “burning” when he comes to America. What he has after his migratory journey is the ‘charred pieces of identification’. In other words, he has no clear answers for the questions about himself and his life; he has only the burned remnants of his identification: “I guess I envy Piyu and Abed. They know so well what they would like to accomplish in life. *Why did you come to America? What will you do after graduation? Where is home?* They know the answers! But me...I am only pretending... (Shafak, *The Saint* 215).” When he compares himself to his flatmates, he gets frustrated when he realises that he has no stories about his past and no further aims for the future. However, this is a sense which is not specific to Ömer because not only he but also Piyu and Abed experience a similar migratory journey. The problem is, some of them suffer after the fire, whereas a few manage to compensate for the loss.

How do a few migrants make up for the loss? Seyhan comes up with an idea in order to resolve this problem of loss that the migrant undergoes. With reference to Rushdie, she supports the idea of an alternative space for the migrant:

As Rushdie has clearly seen, the human product of mass migrations cannot find a place to call home on any map...neither a return to the homeland left behind nor being at home in the host country is an option. They need an alternative space, a third geography. This is the space of memory, of language, of translation (Seyhan 15).

Seyhan agrees with Rushdie that migrants are not able to find any place anywhere around the world. Never in their life have they felt at home, neither in the host

country nor the homeland, they believe. Since migrants are “the creation of radically new types of human being” (Seyhan 14), in terms of Rushdie’s own definition, they demand a new space that can provide them with chances of cultivating their memory and language which are burned in the fire that Seyhan portrays.

Alegre, for instance, aims to create such a third space with Piyu in order to cultivate her memory and language. Under the influence of her *tias* (her aunts), she keeps dealing with culinary issues which are her own “burned cultural fragments”. Performing these is essential for her to further her attempts to create a new beginning in a new space. That is one of the reasons why she takes on these cooking sessions a lot: they enable her to reinvigorate her cultural background. Besides, she creates a new language to herself from the burned pieces of her Spanish, Spanglish (Shafak, *The Saint* 156). By having more cooking sessions and creating a language of her own, she tries to eliminate the effects of the loss in her life while seeking compensation for them; yet she fails despite her all attempts because as she tries to remove herself from the impacts of the past, she becomes more attached to it. She is not able to renew herself; in other words, she cannot get away from the effects of the past. Hence, she cannot acquire a third space for herself.

On the other hand, Margaret manages to acquire such a third space for herself because she totally refreshes herself by accepting her past and hoping for a new beginning. One of the pieces of evidence for this is the fact that she “[isn’t] waiting at home for [Haroon] with curry and chapatis in the oven and the electric blanket on” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 281) any longer. Here, ‘curry’ and ‘chapatis’ represent the

typical food of India; and a portrait of a woman with a blanket on is representative of a gender role that the Indian wife takes on in the eyes of Haroon. Resisting these means that Margaret turns into a woman who is not Indian at all. She sets herself free from all the expectations and gender roles that her family imposes and creates a new life to herself within a new place with a new partner.

What is the reason for Margaret's success? Why does Alegre not manage to create a third space for herself? It is because of the compensation for the loss that each migrant needs to claim, seek and find, in the end. The new space is made up after the compensation for the loss reminding migrants of the sense of unbelonging and displacement. It is forged with the help of the fantasies and imaginations of migrants in the form of an alternative house and family structures. Rushdie reveals his thoughts on how to 'reclaim [such] loss' in this way:

It may be said that writers in my position, exiles or emigrants or expatriates, are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt. But if we do look back, we must also do so in the knowledge- that our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost; that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind (Rushdie 10)

These 'exiles or emigrants or expatriates' repeatedly suffer from the loss they feel; no matter how hard they try to reclaim the loss (to take their lost home, family, nation, and past back), they fail. Here, Rushdie makes reference to Lott's wife in the

Bible who disappears when she wants to turn back to see her home. Rushdie implies a metaphorical parallel between Lott's wife and the migrant: neither of them can help looking back at the risk of their lives. However, he suggests that even if they succeed in looking back, they are not able to get what they lose because of their alienation from their homelands. So, as they do not get what they have lost back, they imagine new homelands.

Rushdie believes the only way to find a third space for migrants is to create a new notion of home based on their imagination which invents new imaginary homelands for them. As mentioned earlier, Nasta also suggests a similar idea when she describes the notion of home for migrants. In her description, home is also "an illusory and fictional place constructed through the myths and fragments of the migrant imagination" (Nasta 133). So, it is the imagination of migrants which creates the notion of home and the sense of belonging; in other words, migrants actualise their imagined homes as an alternative space in which they feel at home.

Karim and Jamila in *The Buddha of Suburbia* and Ömer and Gail in *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* attempt to develop new lives in alternative houses since they are not content with their existing homes. They want to lead their lives somewhere different, in a place which is more akin to their imagined lands. Karim multiplies the number of his homes in order to increase the chances of obtaining the home which is the closest to his fantasies. Now, he has "five places ... to stay: with Mum at Auntie Jean's; at [their] now empty house; with Dad and Eva; with Anwar and Jeeta; or with Changez and Jamila" (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 93). He has the opportunity to choose

where to stay: if he does not want to stay in one of these homes or gets bored with it, he is able to go and stay in another one. The increasing number of homes means mobility and freedom for Karim; it enables him to stay wherever he wants. So, he keeps the ideal notion of home in his mind and goes to whichever home corresponds with his imagination more. On the other hand, instead of increasing the number of homes, Jamila leaves the one in which she lives with her husband, Changez. After the death of his father, she confesses that she stays in a house that she does not feel at home and belong to a small degree. “[She] [wants] to live somewhere different” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 214). Rather, she wishes to “live in another way” with a commune “in a large house ... in Peckham” (ibid); this is the imagined homeland for her where she feels at home.

The attempt to create a new life in a new house is successful for Karim and Jamila to some extent as they gain a place that they feel at home; yet such a blessing may not appear for some migrants, and the attempt to create an imagined home may therefore turn into a disaster in the end. For example, Ömer and Gail’s attempt to live together in a new home results in disaster with the sense of complete blankness of Ömer and the suicidal state of Gail. They do not share the same interests in their imagined home, but they do not even respect each other either. Not getting on well, they spoil the pleasure of living in a house constructed by their fantasies, day by day. So, the created and imagined third space seems to be an ambivalent term like diaspora which can sometimes be a total blessing for the migrant as in the cases of Karim and Jamila and sometimes a total disaster as for Ömer and Gail.

CHAPTER III

THE THIRD SPACE AND THE STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE

3.1 ALTERNATIVE HOUSE AND FAMILY STRUCTURES I

Ömer and Gail's story recounts the survival of two wounded birds that try to relieve the pains of each other's wounds. They are the Stork and the Crow: one is a large white bird walking around to find its food and the other one is a large black bird which squawks continuously and unpleasantly. Shafak makes an interesting and a relevant comparison between Ömer and the Stork and Gail and the Crow because these birds somehow define these characters' traits. As Ömer is a more naïve character than Gail, he is the white one (which is the colour of innocence and naivety). Believing everything will be perfect with Gail, he is just wandering around seeking food to compensate them for all that they have lost so far; meanwhile, Gail is the black one (which is the colour of chaos and disorder) that is always depressive and melancholic, and never trusts in anything promising. Despite the contrast among them, they believe they can complement each other and even create harmony.

Having high hopes of forming a family in a new house together, they leave their homes. Ömer leaves the house he stays in with his flatmates, and Gail abandons her life with Debra Allan Thompson, "her all-time housemate" (Shafak, *The Saint* 21) to settle in a different place in the hope that it can positively embody an imaginary homeland for them. What they want is to have a house that is removed from all the unpleasant traces of their past and promises them "a fresh start" (Shafak,

The Saint 19) together. Therefore, they want to take a few possessions into their new house so as to prevent any connotations of the past although they do not succeed in this.

At first, both of them agree “to take nothing, literally nothing, with them, just their humble mortal selves and the two Persian cats (though until the very last minute Ömer had secretly hoped that they, too, would be left behind)”(ibid). It will give them a chance of starting from the very beginning without any past and prejudices, which means moving to a completely empty house affecting to have “a fresh start as light as a feather” (Shafak, *The Saint* 19). Nonetheless,

they “[moved] in with far too many more belongings than they had initially planned to bring along- including the simplest furniture of a twin-size bed, two oak desks, a bamboo chest, and then the rest: a few thousand CDs (Ömer’s), four different coffee machines (Ömer’s, though more like tribute to the good old days when his stomach was still functioning), incenses of every sort (Gail’s), bundles and bunches of plants-spices-herbs-teas (Gail’s), dozens of goddess pictures, one of them bearded (Gail’s definitely), a collection of silver spoons (Gail’s most definitely), then books (Ömer’s) and books (Gail’s) and books again (Shafak, *The Saint* 18).

Obviously, few things are necessary for a couple such as ‘the simplest furniture’ of a twin-size bed, two oak desks and possibly a bamboo chest. These may be the things which suit their requirements best as a couple, but what about the others? The rest is all the personal possessions of the partners: CDs, coffee machines, incenses, goddess pictures, silver spoons and books. In brief, these are the belongings that they want to leave behind in order not to remember anything about their past. However, they form

their new house as a museum of their lost homelands, nations which contains the cultural fragments of each. In other words, both of them come with their own archives to live 'alone' in their imagined home(land). Instead of clinging to their archive (including their personal belongings and cultural fragments), they need to leave them behind in order to create a new one composed of their new memories, not of the memories of past. So, the reason why they do not succeed in forming an alternative life in a third space is that they do not eliminate the fragments of their previous lives which are the obstacles to create a new life.

Their failure to create a third space as the imagined homeland can be observed even at the very beginning of the novel. Because of the non-linear plot structure of the novel, the text starts with the image of a house belonging to Ömer and Gail revealing how disunited and dissatisfied they are within their house. However, their move and the early following days are quite blissful and cheerful for them. Ömer and his ex flatmates pack everything in a short time and make everything ready to move while Gail waits for them to come and help her to settle down.

The house that they decide to move into is “visibly old from the outside and [has] a musky odor inside, definitely not a pleasant one but not necessarily bad either” (Shafak, *The Saint* 305). They prefer a house which is old and worn rather than a pleasant and new one but why do they move into an old house when they are planning a new beginning although they can afford to rent a better one especially with the help of Ömer’s family? Why do they prefer the house of experiences instead

of having a house which is totally new? Under the influence of melancholia for the lost lives of others who have previously lived there, Gail feels the ghostly existence of these lives and questions whether she is truly happy there or not. While contemplating this, Gail has a sudden sense of death overshadowing the hopes of a new beginning within a new alternative space for their imaginary homeland.

To be more precise, she was at the windowpane. Waiting here for the others to arrive, she had spent some time watching West and The Rest [the cats] sniff around and tried to understand whether they liked the house or not; paced to and fro and tried to understand whether *she* liked the new house or not; ate a banana, and then a nougat.... as she leaned against the window frame, less to watch the mist outside than to feel the coolness of the glass on her forehead, she decided she could do something else: die (ibid).

Wondering whether she likes the house or not, Gail tries to escape from it even before she meets Ömer. She tries to calm down with the help of food therapy: the bananas and the nougat (not a piece of chocolate this time but again another kind of dessert) but no matter how hard she attempts to divert her attention; she can't help thinking about committing suicide.

In a trance, Gail suddenly notices a dried plant with which she associates herself. The plant looks like a hard block of wood that cannot be harmed or broken, by "the harshness of external circumstances" (Shafak, *The Saint* 305), but is damaged badly inside, by internally drying up; Gail has a gloomy sense that she resembles this plant which has destroyed itself rather than being destroyed by others. On the verge of falling, she regains consciousness aroused by the screams of *a*

lifeless couple and paradoxically, her life is saved by such a lifeless couple at the last moment.

Henceforth, the life in a new house is mostly pleasing and enjoyable for both of the characters especially for the first days since it provides a new home(land) to them where they can do whatever they want. The house just seems to be the negation of their previous houses, the product of their own wishes:

The first two weeks in the house were wonderful, partly because the first two weeks in a new house are always wonderful, but also because after living with housemates they were now discovering how comfortable and unashamedly sexy was this conjugal capsule they found themselves in (Shafak, *The Saint* 307-8).

Apart from the advantages of living with a person they want and in a place they choose, what is extremely auspicious is living in such a house which gives them a chance of rehabilitation; in other words, they can heal their wounds there without any symptoms of the wounds of the past. This is possibly why they find themselves in a kind of ‘conjugal capsule’; it is a sign that they can be healed by the capsule which contains the medicine of the wedlock.

Within the borders of their own homeland, Ömer and Gail feel the pleasure of freedom and independence. Their house becomes their kingdom in which Ömer, as the king, and Gail, as the queen, seemingly live happily ever after.

Living with Abed and Piyu for ten months had its own gratifications and joys for sure, but also entailed a series of restrictions, the weight and scale of which they realized better nowadays. Bestowed with the liberty of cooking whatever they wanted and eating less couscous, of not hearing horror-movie screams at night, of brushing cat hair from clothes rather than brushing both cat and dog hair, and the liberty of rambling the house entirely naked, at least in theory... becoming a typical bourgeois couple was not, they concluded, as bad as it looked from outside. Moving to a house of their own brought, first and foremost, freedom of decibels- the freedom to moan, come, coo, and quarrel loudly, sonorously, deafeningly (Shafak, *The Saint* 308).

Leaving behind the ‘restrictions, the weight and scale’ of living with Abed and Piyu, Ömer and Gail are apparently filled with the joy of becoming the sole owners of their land. While taking delight in living in their own homeland, they also experience the pleasures of freedom in terms of what to cook, listen to or wear regardless of others’ thoughts. They think how much better a conjugal life is despite their assumptions.

However, there is an important fact that they do not notice: if they are the only citizens (and at the same time owners) of their symbolic nation and have a chance to do whatever they want, how do their individual differences affect them? Since both of them have a different cultural background, how do they come to terms with this? In other words, what if Ömer disliked Gail’s incenses or Gail did not like hearing Ömer’s CD’s all the time, which are one of the belongings of each emphasizing their individuality? Are they open to any tolerance? Apparently, both of them come to that house to realise their imagined homeland; so they do not seem to accept anything that challenges their expectations. This is possibly one of the most

important reasons why they should have left almost all of their personal possessions before moving: for a completely fresh start!

This is exactly what happens when Gail and Ömer begin to argue. Both of them want to be with their own belongings and when they do not experience what they want because of the wishes of the other, they drift apart. Gail is the first one who walks away from Ömer. When she does not piece her own cultural fragments together, she goes to pieces; and no matter how hard Ömer tries to help her to put her pieces together, she breaks into fragments:

Each time he tried to cheer her up, he felt like he was bumping into a wall behind which, he sensed, lay a burrow, a wormhole, some sort of a space where she retreated when she felt despondent only to come back from there even more so (Shafak, *The Saint* 295).

When Ömer tries to reach and console Gail, he always crashes into the wall which prevents him from reaching her because the wall hides a hole within which she conceals herself. Gail believes this hidden place is her own homeland: if she cannot live in a home(land) with Ömer happily, she can build a new one in which she can live alone regardless of anyone, even Ömer. So, once she feels depressed and hopeless, she runs back her own territory to feel safe while Ömer hopelessly attempts to save her.

It was that small but solid space that frightened him like nothing else, for he had learned by now that when she tumbled into that void, he could find no way either to get in himself, or to pull her out of there. What worried him

even more was the fear that this might not be an enclosed space but instead a gateway into some other zone, an existential underworld. Deep down into that Hades, too burdened and intoxicated with the venom of the past, she fell in a bottomless perdition (ibid).

Ömer also realises that there is no way for him to get inside the void and no way to ‘pull her out of there’ either. He is not welcomed there by Gail and it seems he is the one who is ‘deported’ this time rather than herself. Here, the comparison between the wall and the door of the dormitory that does not let Gail in in the beginning of this chapter is revealing because this time she is the one who is inside and has a place to belong; this is the place that makes her feel at home. Ömer has a fine sense that this is not just ‘an enclosed space’; it is instead ‘a gateway into some other zones’. This scares him because he is afraid to *lose* her totally and that is why he focuses on the negative connotations of such a journey. He assumes that Gail encounters there a kind of eternal punishment because of her past and if she continues to make these journeys this will connote hell in life or death. Yet, what if the things were not so pessimistic for Gail?

Ömer has difficulty in accepting even the possibility that Gail is happy in her own homeland away from him; because if he does so, it means he loses one more part of his beloved self that leads him to melancholia. This is the most likely reason for his insistence on helping her. He even thinks of moving into another house to save her from the underworld journeys, in other words not to lose her completely. He intends to create a special space for her where she can feel at home and feel that she belongs somewhere (Shafak, *The Saint* 296) because he believes her problem is the lack of a sense of belonging. Once again, he has a fine sense about her but probably

forms a wrong judgment; hence he fails in each of his attempts. What Gail wants is not to share any home(land) with Ömer because she is quite happy on her own, but Ömer cannot notice or does not want to notice this.

As long as Gail tries to adapt to life with Ömer, or any other people, she fails since she craves to be the only member of her homeland, but Ömer wants her not to experience another loss. Their initial plan to live together in the imagined home formed by their imagination is ruined. In the end, neither of them is happy while drifting apart because Gail becomes more silent and Ömer turns into a man who becomes a foreigner to his wife; they even stop talking with each other.

The opening scene of the novel reveals such a moment when Ömer is immersed in depressing thoughts about his relationship with Gail. Questioning who she is and how well he knows her, Ömer comes to the door of the house which once belonged to them but now turns into a kind of haunted place:

Fourth floor. Number eighteen. Ömer chose a key from the bunch, stood expressionless for a few seconds as if confused about what to do next, and failing to come up with a better alternative, opened the door (Shafak, *The Saint* 22).

Ömer loses his enthusiasm for the house and life with Gail. He enters the house as if in a trance. He enters not because he wants to but because there is nothing else to do. So, the expected place of an imaginary homeland metamorphoses into an abominable place which no longer welcomes them.

As the image of the alternative house has changed, the novel distances us from it in the closing scene by bursting their bubble. It portrays a scene that takes place on a bridge; but why is this moment staged on a bridge? What does it signify? Rather than the houses and the sense of belonging to a specific house, homeland, nation and even culture, the final scene of the novel signifies in-betweenness. The bridge is the embodiment of the idea that the migrant cannot survive without a sense of belonging, which is not an easy notion to acquire. The ebbs and flows of belonging somewhere wear them out and then cutting all the hopes for new beginnings within new alternative house and family structures are gone with the wind.

Gail wants to end her life in such an in-between place because she feels that only such a place can convey the sense of (un)belonging. She believes “[...] this inbetweenness [is] the right place, and this very moment [is] the right time to die” (Shafak, *The Saint* 347). While crossing the bridge, the last image in her eyes is the void from which Ömer previously attempted to save her (Shafak, *The Saint* 350) and with which she associated her home(land). In order to reunite with it, she runs towards it as she has done before when she feels depressive and hopeless. Meanwhile, Ömer “[feels] [too] exhausted” (Shafak, *The Saint* 346) and emotionally drained to notice Gail’s feelings and plans. He is shocked when Gail runs to the edge of the bridge to jump over with a sense of “falling with an enormous speed, and a swifter release, into some indigo vacuum” (ibid). It is a very fast and quick ‘release’ which enables her to set herself free from all the burdens of her life caused by the sense of unbelonging and displacement. At the end of the novel, she is reunited with her void, ‘vacuum’, by being merged with the sky first and then the sea.

Ömer is unable to believe that Gail has gone this time for good; he does not (want to) accept such a loss. He denies the fact that she will die by consoling himself with these words: “She won’t die. No, she’ll not. People do not commit suicide on other people’s soil, and this is not her homeland. But did she ever have one?” (Shafak, *The Saint* 346). Once again, Ömer has a fine sense about Gail but again he makes a wrong judgement. He knows well why she commits suicide: it is about the sense of unbelonging and displacement that she undergoes; it is not about the place that she wants to die. This is not a dispute over whose nation or homeland it is that she takes her own life in because even in her own ‘homeland’, America, she wishes to die several times; it is completely about the sense of (un)belonging. So, people, whether migrants or non-migrants, do feel ‘out of place’, or they may feel they do not belong to the place they live in. In the end, the attempts of Gail and Ömer to build an alternative house with the hopes of new beginnings in order to belong somewhere and feel at home get unfulfilled fantasies of their imagination.

3.2 ALTERNATIVE HOUSE AND FAMILY STRUCTURES II

Ömer and Gail do not succeed in creating an alternative home for themselves; neither of them feels that they belong anywhere or believes there is a place that they can call their home. In contrast to their unsuccessful attempts, the characters of *The Buddha of Suburbia* present us with several successful models of an imagined homeland within new alternative house and family structures. Especially the women characters of the novel such as Margaret, Jamila and Eva find imaginary homelands where they can be happy and content; yet what do they do to gain such a third space built within their imagination?

These women characters (whether or not they are migrants) make every effort to find and establish their own imagined home(land). Firstly, they pretend to be happy in their homes, then they ignore the fact that they do not feel at home and safe. They become too tolerant and sometimes submissive in order not to upset others, but after a short while they take control of their lives and work on furthering their imagined homeland. For example, Margaret suffers a lot when her husband deserts her for the sake of another woman; in other words, it is not easy for Margaret to create a new homeland after the disillusionment that she experiences.

Margaret leaves the house as soon as she is abandoned and directly goes to her sister's house. There, she eats in order to compensate for the loss of her beloved "object" while suffering from melancholia; at the end of her "food therapy [which] is part of her recovery"(Shafak, *The Saint* 103), she puts on weight and feels relieved at making a new start. The first thing she wants to do is to convert *their* home to *her* home; in other words, she wants to create a new home to herself out of a former one.

She [cleans] [the house] as never before, with care and interest...She [washes down] the walls and [repaints] doors smudged with [their] fingerprints. She [repots] every plants in the house and [starts] listening to opera (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 144-5).

She cleans up the marks of the past 'their fingerprints' on the walls and the doors of the house in order to erase their common experiences. For the sake of a completely new life, she cleans the house as if it was the first time she cleaned it; she paints the doors once again for the bright colours of hopes. She repots every plant to cherish a

hope for her future, that is to say, she spreads the seeds of hope within an alternative house.

Margaret recreates herself; she celebrates her regeneration with the gift of a new love “object”. She meets and loves a man who “[is] in his late thirties, earnest” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 270) called Jimmy. He becomes the name of Margaret’s new life. So, with the transformation of her house and life, Margaret acquires an alternative life that makes her happy and excited as if she were in the imaginary land she always wants to be. She feels that is the life in which she is at home.

Jamila is another woman character in the novel who manages to find herself a third space to live in like Margaret does. She is married to Changez at the wishes of her father although she knows he is not a man that she may fall in love with. In other words, she agrees to marry him in order to rebel against her father, not because she loves him. So, no sooner does her father die than she leaves Changez. She wants to abandon her husband Changez who is “imposed on [her] by [her] father” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 277) and “to live [her] life in peace” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 84). Rather than living in the same traditional way, she prefers to live in a commune.

Changez does not want to leave her and wishes to come with her to be a part of her new life but Jamila does not care about him because not only does she want to leave the home, but she also wants to leave Changez. She does not want to live in a typical house in which she was used to taking on a typical feminine role; therefore she decides to stay in a place which is not a house at all but rather a kind of

environment (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 222) including the “all-pine communal kitchen surrounded by plants and piles of radical newspapers” (ibid).

Never has she imagined such an ideal place that she can call home, and in which she lives however she wants. There, she falls passionately in love with a man, Simon. Despite the presence of her ex-husband Changez, she becomes pregnant by Simon and gives birth to a commune baby. When Simon leaves, she immediately compensates for the loss of the *love object* with a new one in order to prevent any sense of melancholia; and this time, she loves a woman, Joanna, instead of a man. At last, Jamila is very happy (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 277) in her newly created imagined homeland although Changez suffers from the loss of his love object (Jamila) and her continuous betrayals.

Eva Kay is the last portrayal of a woman character in *The Buddha of Suburbia* who feels a sense of unbelonging and displacement. She attempts to build a new life in a third space in which she may feel at home; but why and how does she need to feel at home, even if she is literally in her own homeland? In other words, Jamila is a migrant figure who experiences the sense of unbelonging because of the fact that she is not literally in her own homeland, and if this is the reason why she has to suffer from the loss of her beloved nation, her attempt to find a new love object (a third space) by way of compensation seems to be plausible. However, in the case of Eva, who is not a migrant figure, it is hard to claim this since she has a sense of displacement and unbelonging in her own homeland (as Margaret). As an English woman who lives in England, if Eva has such feelings, it means that the sense of

(un)belonging cannot be related with the places or nations. It must be about the feelings which have emerged as a result of the multicultural interactions of the cultures.

When one nation and culture encounters with the other, it will never be the same homogeneous culture again and consequently such heterogeneity leads to questions of belonging. In other words, it is not only migrants who need a third space to belong and feel at home; even people who are in their homelands may feel such an urge and this is possibly why Eva tries to find a third space in order to belong somewhere that she can call home like Gail does (Gail is an American girl who lives in America and feels that she does not belong the place she lives). One piece of clear evidence for Eva's sense of unbelonging in the place she lives is her assumption of elements of Indian culture with her "full-length, multi- coloured kaftan" on her body and 'kohl' in her eyes (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 8-9). In the heart of Chislehurst, one of the neighbourhoods of England which is popular with the upper middle class, Eva performs as though she were an Indian woman by wearing the traditional clothes of this nation/culture.

Her tendency to identify with Indian nation/culture is revealed by (or perhaps after) Haroon who is a typical Indian man who can help her actualise her dream of possessing a third place that can be her home. So, she plans to form a new life with Haroon in order to leave the painful memories of her past behind. She wants to leave England and searches for a new homeland in Indian culture.

As she is a different kind of woman from Margaret, she manages to attract Haroon's attention very easily with her economic and social status. Even at first glance, she impresses him with her standards of living. She lives in "a bigger house, with a little drive and garage and car.... [and] bay windows, an attic, a greenhouse, three bedrooms and central heating" (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 8) which signifies the fact that she has better economic and social opportunities. Haroon is a man who "[likes] to stand out like a juggler at funeral" (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 42); he likes being the centre attention. He wants to be noticed unlike his wife Margaret whose ambition "[is] to be unnoticed, to be like everyone else" (ibid). In contrast to Margaret, Eva is a woman of attention and therefore she affects Haroon very easily with the accoutrements of her life. Under Eva's spell, Haroon chooses to live with her instead of his wife and this is a choice which promises a new life (within a new home) not only to Eva, but also to Haroon and even Karim.

Haroon becomes the cement holding the fragments of Eva together. Before Eva meets him, she has lost hope for the future and does not want to live anymore. She describes the change she experiences with the help of Haroon in these words:

Before I met this man,... I had no courage and little faith. I'd had cancer. One breast was removed. I rarely talk about it... But I wanted to live. And now I have contracts in that drawer for several jobs. I am beginning to feel I can do anything- with the aid of techniques like meditation, self-awareness and yoga.... You see, I have come to believe in self-help, individual initiative, the love of what you do, and the full development of all individuals. I am constantly disappointed by how little we expect of ourselves and of the world (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 262-3).

Before Eva meets Haroon, she is unhappy and stuck in total despondency (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 114) because of her illness. She has hard times while she is struggling to recover from her illness. Now, it is high time to start making up for her lost days as Margaret does when Haroon abandons her. While compensating for the loss she feels, Eva willingly receives the assistance and encouragement of Haroon. She gains a sense of relief and rebirth from the meditation and yoga sessions that are taught and led by Haroon and comes to believe she has the power to regenerate herself.

To take steps to create a third space for herself, the first thing Eva does is to take on the task of changing the house into another one which can belong totally to herself and Haroon. So, “[she] [knows] what she [wants]: she [wants] the whole house transformed, every inch of it” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 111) so as to make a new area to live in apart from all the connotations of the past that she does not want to recall anymore. She does exactly the same thing that Margaret does by reforming and redesigning the house according to her own desires. “[F]inally the house [is painted] white, every room” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 112) which is the signifier of new beginnings, hopes and expectations. At first, Haroon enjoys this life, as does Eva, but then living in the suburbs becomes intolerable for him because of the sense of melancholia he undergoes. When Haroon cannot compensate for the loss he feels and does not find any new love object either, he begins mourning for his beloved wife, family and home. Afraid of losing Haroon and her newly created imagined homeland, Eva decides to sell the house, leave the suburbs and move into the city, London, in order to prevent any sense of melancholia. Karim describes her decision and its most likely cause in this way:

...she put the beautiful white Ted-decorated house on the market as soon as it was finished. She'd decided to take Dad away. She would look for a flat in London. The suburbs were over: they were a leaving place. Perhaps Eva thought a change of location would stop him thinking about Mum (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 117).

Leaving behind the recently-decorated home, Eva takes Haroon to another house for a new beginning. As Ömer takes Gail to another house in the hope of *a fresh start*, Eva moves to another house in a different location with Haroon believing that unless he does see her, he will be able to forget her; however, the house there, in Beckenham, fails all her expectations and plans.

Finding an imagined home(land) is quite significant for hopes of alternative house and family structures. If a home is capable of being renovated, it is a promising sign for future to establish a third space; yet if it is not, then it connotes failure. This is why Eva gets anxious; as she knows the significance of an imagined home well, she becomes disappointed because she does not expect to find such an old and ruined house with its 'sad walls', faded colours and 'cracked mirrors'. It is "like a student flat, a wretched and dirty gaff with lino on the floor and large white dried flowers waving from the marble fireplace" (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 125). The colour of new beginnings, hope and expectations turns into the colour of lifelessness here via the metaphors of 'sad walls', 'cracked mirrors' and 'dried flowers', and Eva senses this. She starts to kiss Haroon continuously "in case he [loses] his nerve and faith in her and [longs] to be with Mum" (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 126). She tries to persuade him that she can handle this wreckage and manage to turn it into a place of

vivacity and life. So, once again all her anxiety about the home is rooted in her fear of losing her beloved Haroon and home.

However, contrary to her fears, Eva succeeds in gathering everything into a state of harmony and order: “the transformation of the flat from its original dereliction into this example of the creative use of space” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 262) is appreciated even by the journalists. The newly-decorated house and the active social life of Eva start to excite Haroon once again (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 151); however, this does not last long either. After a short while, Haroon complains about Eva’s losing his interest in her life. Karim understands his dissatisfaction and regret very well: “Eva was always out, and I knew Dad was thinking of Mum more than ever, was probably idealizing her” (Kureishi, *The Buddha* 212). Karim is quite right in his sense that Haroon misses his wife, who was once waiting for him at home with curry and chapatis in the oven, more than ever. He feels that he has not only lost his wife, but also he has lost all his family, home and even his nation. Under the influence of the loss he suffers from, he turns into a different and difficult man who even cannot move ‘without flinching’. However, Haroon’s worsening situation does not change the satisfying situation for Eva who possesses her alternative life in her imaginary homeland anyway.

In the end, Eva achieves her goal of building an alternative house and making a new beginning. She announces her success with the news of their decision to get married. In order to affect such a happy ending in the imagined home(land), Eva struggles a lot but she finally wins, like Margaret and Jamila. All the female

characters of the novel, whether they are migrant or not, celebrate finding a third space for themselves in order to live as if in their own imagined homelands; however, the male characters are not able to compensate for the loss that they experience because of the sense of melancholia. In other words, the male characters of the novel such as Haroon and Changez become depressed by the loss of their previous lives in contrast to the female characters. However, the primary point at issue is not about gender issues; it concerns the sense of (un)belonging and displacement. As stated, there is no certain homeland for anyone since homelands are created by the fantasies of people who want to feel at home even if they are not in their “actual” homelands. So, the problems of (un)belonging and displacement are not about the notion of nations or “stable” home(land)s; they are rather outcomes of heterogeneous nations and cultures that have emerged as a result of the multicultural interactions.

CONCLUSION

Many nations won their independence after the Second World War; although many people were happy about this, many others felt dissatisfied. They wanted to migrate other countries in the hope of a better future. Their migration and integration to the new countries have created new stories which need to be told. These stories form the pieces of a huge heterogeneous archive of many nations of migrants. So, paradoxically, the emergence of many nations leads to heterogeneous archives which narrate the life and experience of migrants with non-migrants. Every piece of this heterogeneous archive gradually fosters the works of literature of migration and reveals common traits of this multicultural archive.

Such a heterogeneous archive gathers the stories of migrants and portrays the encounter of them with others from migrant's perspective. Through the contributions of writers, especially of those who are bicultural, these stories spread out; Elif Shafak and Hanif Kureishi are two of these writers who are the archons of this heterogeneous archive. They do not write out of nationalistic concerns; on the contrary, they write for heterogeneous archives. In other words, they do not want to popularize their own nations; they want to show common traits concerning the notion of migrancy. Therefore, their works *The Saint of Incipient Souls* and *The Buddha of Suburbia* are the two important works of multicultural archiving.

Both of the novels are parts of heterogeneous archives which narrate the stories of migrants and their relation with non-migrants within the conflict of a

multicultural background. Therefore, as they have a mutual relationship with each other, not only migrants but also people who meet them are affected by the notion of migrancy. They question the sense of displacement and (un)belonging that has emerged after a migratory experience. In other words, the feelings of displacement and (un)belonging are not specific feelings for migrants; non-migrants may also encounter such problematic feelings. They are common feelings which occurred after the Second World War for both sides because when some people migrate from their homeland to a foreign one, not only do they encounter a different nation/culture but also those who become involved with these migrants leave their “actual” or “homogeneous” homelands behind. Namely, once migrants set up home on another’s soil, the “natives” of that place also become strangers to their own homelands. So, this is the most probable reason why people have started to question their place even in their own homelands: Where is home or even what is home for them?

The notion of home and finding a third space, which is neither the place a person leaves behind nor the place she is living in at the moment, is quite an important issue in both novels. In these novels, home is sometimes the name of something that people experience as a melancholic loss and sometimes the name of an eating disorder which also emerges to compensate for the sense of a melancholic loss which is associated with the loss of the home. By refusing to eat anything different from the food they are used to or even stopping eating anything, the characters in the novels try to compensate for the sense of loss or/and the problem of eating. However, if they do not establish a new set of libidinal attachments to compensate for the loss they suffer from, they will never be able to recover; that is to say, in order to have the constructive effect of migrancy, people should compensate

for the loss they experience like Abed and Margaret. If they do so, then they will have a chance of new beginnings in alternative houses and family structures.

All in all, since World War II, migrancy as a cultural phenomenon has permeated the lives of all of us in the contemporary world. Those of us who are not obviously migrants have also started to question our place in the world experiencing the sense of (un)belonging. As we live in a multicultural world where we mingle with migrants (multicultural groups), we feel the urge to create a third space for ourselves because once we meet them in our homelands, we also become strangers in our own homelands. However, such an encounter should not make us mourn for our beloved homelands which we suppose that they are once “homogeneous” and “belong only to us”. In other words, we should not cling to the past by insistently seeking our lost homes, families and nations. Rather, we need to think of the possible gains from multiculturalism as Rushdie suggests and try to take advantage of its opportunities enabling us to gain the chances for new homelands.

In this study, the notions of heterogeneous archives and third space open up new questions about how we think of the study of literature in national terms. What does it mean to study these bicultural writers under the title of “English Language and Literature”? I think this thesis is a small part of the large heterogeneous archive of each and every nation; it is a piece of cultural studies which itself produces a third space in which to “archive” its stories. Therefore, even as it appears under the name of “English Literature”, it also contributes to the project of revealing the heterogeneity of that archive.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The Saint-----*The Saint of Incipient Souls*

The Buddha-----*The Buddha of Suburbia*

The Rainbow-----“The Rainbow Sign”

WORKS CITED

Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffith, and Helen Tiffin. *The Empire Writes Back*. London: Routledge, 1989. Print.

“Asıl amaç, Türkiye'nin AB üyeliğini engellemek.” *Hürriyet* 17 Oct. 2006. Web. <<http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=5273514>>

Brah, Avtar. *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*. London: Routledge, 1996. Print.

Derrida, Jacques, and Eric Prenowitz. “Archive Fever” A Freudian Impression. *Diacritics*. (1995): Volume 25 (No. 2), 9-63. *Jstor*. Web. 20 Sep. 2009.

“Diaspora”. Def. 2. *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*. 6th ed. U.K: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Freud, Sigmund. “Mourning and Melancholia”. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud: On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movements, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works*. (1917): Volume 14, 237-258. Print.

Kaleta, Kenneth C. *Hanif Kureishi: Postcolonial Story Teller*. (1st ed.). Texas: University of Texas Press, 1998. Print.

Kureishi, Hanif. *The Buddha of Suburbia*. New York: Penguin Books, 1991. Print.

_____ (1996). *The Rainbow Sign. My Beautiful Laundrette and Other Writings*. (71-102). London: Faber and Faber.

Rushdie, Salman. *Imaginary Homelands*. D. Walder, (Ed.). *Literature in the Modern World Critical Essays and Documents*. (226-231) Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004. Print.

_____. *Imaginary Homelands. Essays and Criticism 1981-1991*. New York: Penguin Books, 1992. Print.

Seyhan, Azade, and Ernest Apter. Introduction: Neither Here/Nor There: The Culture of Exile. *Writing Outside the Nation*. (3-21). New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000. Print.

Shafak, Elif. *The Saint of Incipient Insanities*. (1st ed.). New York: F.S.G. Books, 2004. Print.

_____. "The Politics of Fiction", 2010. Web. 04 Oct. 2012, from <http://www.ted.com/talks/elif_shafak_the_politics_of_fiction.html>

Sushelia, Nasta. *Home Truths: Fictions of the South Asian Diaspora in Britain*. London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002. Print.

Toplu, Şebnem. Home(land) or 'Motherland': Translational Identities in Andrea Levy's *Fruit of the Lemon*. *Anthurium: A Caribbean Studies Journal*. (2005): Volume 3, Issue 1. 1-8. Print.

WORKS CONSULTED

Althusser, Louis. *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses. Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays*. (B. Brewster, Trans.). London: New Left Books, 1971. (Original Work Published 1969).

Bhabha, Homi. K. *DissemiNation: time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation. The Location of Culture*. (291-321) London and New York: Routledge, 1994.

Borghi, Elena. "Literature of Migration-Perspectives, Struggles and Innovations." (2009): Web. 1 Nov. 2011, from <http://www.truthseekers.cultureunplugged.com/truth_seekers/2009/04/literature-of-migration-perspectives-struggles-and-innovations.html>

Bromley, Roger. *Narratives for a New Belonging: Diasporic Cultural Fictions*. Edinburg: Edinburg UP, 2000.

Levy, Andrea. This is My England. (2000): Web. 23 Sep. 2010, from <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2000/feb/19/society1>>

Renan, Ernest. What is a Nation? (1882): Web. 25 Apr. 2010, from <www.philol.msu.ru/~discours/images/stories/Documents/renan.doc>

Thomas, Susie. Hanif Kureishi: *The Buddha of Suburbia*. (2011): Web. 1 Dec. 2011, from <<http://www.londonfictions.com/hanif-kureishi-the-buddha-of-suburbia.html>>

Toplu, Şebnem. "Where Are You from, Originally?". Race and Gender in Bernardine Evaristo's *Lara*. *InterCulture Editorial Board*, Volume 1. 1-11, 2004.

Yousaf, Nahem. *Hanif Kureishi's The Buddha of Suburbia*. New York: The Continuum International Publishing, 2002.