



## RESEARCH PAPER

### Ethical Metamorphosis and Kin Predicament in "My Beautiful Launderette" by "Hanif Kureishi"

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#### ABSTRACT

The decay of culture and identity begins with the introduction of violence, either individually or collectively. This shift is often driven by forces like "modernity" and "globalization," which alter a person's identity. In the quest for prominence or freedom, human connections and nature deteriorate, and in trying to restore them, time slips away. Hanif Kureishi's *My Beautiful Launderette* portrays hybridity, class differences, cultural variations, and homosexuality within London's social context (Fanon, 1952). This play highlights the negative impacts of these social issues, such as broken relationships, homelessness, and escapism, examined through the perspectives of critics like Homi K. Bhabha, Frantz Fanon, and Edward Said. In multicultural societies, migrants often struggle to adapt to the ethos of their new environment, leading to a loss of authenticity. Kureishi's work critiques the absurdity of relationships, emphasizing the importance of genuine human connections amidst societal pressures. To address this, there is a need for deeper cultural understanding and more meaningful interpersonal relations.

**KEYWORDS** Ethical Metamorphosis, Kin Predicament, Ethnic Revolt, My Beautiful Launderette

#### Introduction

Every piece of literature is an illustration of some specified consequences. "Hanif Kureishi" differentiates the norms and values of two different cultures in his play "My Beautiful Launderette" adapted by Stephen Frears in 1985 a jesting- drama film. Likewise, the gap between the relations of parents and children is depicted through dint of the character sketching of "Omar" and "Tania" effected via the influence of British society on their minds and rebellious freedom which they adopted through overpassing their roots. Correspondingly, the story also refers to the complexity of relation differences between Pakistani and British civic. The influence of "White's" was not limited to the 18<sup>th</sup> century but up till now in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the people of the subcontinent are mentally salve of colonizers' status and values. The selection of "My Beautiful Launderette" is momentous due to the intentional construction of migrant characters by "Hanif Kureishi". It not only shows the modern life in "London" but also mock on the loss of blood relations in that modern society through "Johnny", having no family. The converse situation of "Brown's" from "White's" lifestyle relaxes the mind due to its beauty and brotherhood. Highlighting cross relations, the adaptation of "others" lifestyle is a "revolt" from our own identity which is just because we cannot breathe anymore. This is a cause of oppression imposed by the "White" cultural dominance in the mind of expatriate folks that they are inferior. To

resolve the “inferiority complex”, migrants try to be like “White” as Fanon criticized in “Black Skin White Mask” but in this struggle, the revolt from their identity twitches.

### Literature Review

Relations are the most important necessity of life but modernization stanches the valuability of relation or store them with fakeness and absurdity. Blood relations need more attention rather than friendship. Today’s dilemma is that the temporary relations are more preferable in contrast to permanent relations. Sometimes, few relations are having no name, and are we are ashamed to justify them in front of society but for the fulfillment of personal desires, they exist. The relation of “Johnny” and Omar also falls under such nameless relation which is considered awkward in Pakistani cultural boundaries. Fanon argues that crossing the boundaries is the revolt against ethnic thread as he believed that “When we revolt it’s not for a particular culture. We revolt simply because, for many reasons, we can no longer breathe” **Invalid source specified**. As being oppressed and chained with cultural limitations, the quotation of Frantz Fanon validates the “Tania” escape from her home in these words that “The oppressed will always believe the worst about themselves” **Invalid source specified**. Escape is not a solution, for the personal peace it is not moral to leave pain and sufferings for those who are our permanent relations. It is of utmost precarious for the distinction of culture as Homi k Bhabha said that “Now when you look at somebody, it’s not simply, ‘Are you like me or unlike me? Has your culture produce great artists? What are your rituals?’ It’s. ‘Is your culture safe or not?” **Invalid source specified**. “My Beautiful Launderette” by “Hanif Kureishi” is evidence of self-desires which objectify the flaws of leaving our roots, and the silent sufferings of our beloveds. Through descriptively using the dialogues, a qualitative analysis clarifies the second picture of running behind desires to fulfill the aim of this research work.

### Material and Methods

Specifically, the theoretical framework which is implemented in this research is “revolt”, an orthodox of “Frantz Fanon” where he discussed, the reasons and consequences of violence of boundaries. Besides that, Homi k Bhabha and Edward Saeed are also cited to clarify the gratification of desires by losing the actual relations. Eloquent qualitative, point by point methodology is used to cast off the “ethical metamorphosis” and “kin predicament” in “My Beautiful Launderette” by “Hanif Kureishi”. Through the top-down approach, the critic's quotations are implemented on the dialogues by referring to the impacts of violation of the cultural boundaries and their consequences which are evident in “My Beautiful Launderette”.

### Results and Discussion

The values and customs of a culture is a representation of those people who are a part of that ethos. “My Beautiful Launderette” by Hanif Kureishi is a realistic piece of work to identify the issues which are hollowing the roots of society. In the introduction of the play, he quoted that “Omar” and “Johnny as children set pieces of racist marches, with mass violence” which is the gist of the decay of relations in the society. Absurdity and unsure kinship are reflected in the migrant's and residents' cause due to the need for revolution. Hanif Kureishi also refers his play to world-famous play and screen adaption of Mario Puzo, “The Godfather”. Specifically, the amendment of the past into a shimmering future according to desires will also be repaid in terms of consequences, evident through the comparison of the starting and ending of the play.

The major scene in the twitch of play is the pageant of "Johnny" and his homeless friend "Genghis" where the modernity of London is mocked by these words that "The squatters are leaving through windows and the reopened front door and gathering in the front of the garden, arranging their wretched belongings" (Launderette, 00:52). Whereas the conversation of "Papa" with "Naseer" his brother shows the element of a combined family as referred to in Pakistani society with the dialogue, "How are you, he says 'And Bilquis' and Tania and the other girls?" (Launderette, 3:52) which clarifies that people are known to their beloveds. In a family, many issues are resolved through the support of each other or in friendship, "Omar" provided shelter to "Johnny" but their friendship is also a viciousness of cultural boundaries by "Omar". The effect on new culture did not only stop till the new generation but the pure bread of Pakistani culture is also influenced by modernization. Nasser as a businessman feel ashamed of visiting with his wife "Bilquis" so he adopted an illegitimate relationship with a white woman "Rachel" as a stamp of his status which was destroyed at the end of the play when she knows about the dishonesty of Nasser. Rachel was also not much satisfied by Nasser internally when she questioned, "Nasser, do you think, we'll ever part? (Launderette,07:13). Moreover, Tania knows about the relation of his father and Rachel but she reacts in front of "Omar" like she is having no issue with that as the social context of "London" with fake "freedom" is nominated for the production of hate for families as she commented that, "He has a mistress, doesn't he? Rachel. Yes, I can tell from your face. Does he love her? Yes. Families, I hate families". (Launderette, 17:29)

Homi k Bhabha is factual about the concept of "self" and "other" where people are having no concern with other's feelings or their loss. The contentment of self-desires and wishes is the basic element that provokes egocentrism. Wealth is another important factor in the greed of which, people decide to leave their original relations or the relation which serves them. Nasser choose Rachel to overcome his inferiority complex as a migrant which Rachel also proud of that she is superior when she said "Tell me who do you live off? And you must understand we are of different generations, and different classes" (Launderette, 59:35) but on the other hand need of companion is more than wealth because "Rachel" realize that "The only thing that waited for me is your father" (Launderette, 59:48) It is human psychology that, without experiencing anything mostly they don't believe. The experience of "Rachel" as being hated one by the family of "Nasser" turns painful from joy. When "Nasser," asks a question to "Rachel" that, "Why say you are talking from my family?" (Launderette, 1:22:38) then she replied with a regretful tone that "Their love and money Yes, apparently I am". At that moment she understands the pain of the "Nasser" family who is suffering due to the presence of "Rachel". Silence is more painful than pugnacious for rights. Rachel feels the hatred of "Bilques" for her with these words, "It's not possible to enjoy being so hated" (Launderette, 1:22:48). To secure relations and to cover the flaws of our own families, sometimes kneeling is only the way to don't let them go. Sacrifice is not neglected, it will come back with the same relief of happiness. Purity for any kin and kith matters whereas in modern society of "London" people only know about the fulfillment of their interest. Edward Saeed describes the victimization as "You continue to victimize someone else just because you were a victim once- there has to be a limit" which is exactly fitted on Tania when she leaves her home. Everyone is a victim but we are not able to run fast in front of consequences. Escape is not a solution of anything, it only a permanent peace where the true relations lost their worth as "Bilquis" suffers. Tania feels oppressed by her family and the boundaries which she carries by birth as a Pakistani. Her feelings are truly justified with the quote of Fanon that "The oppressed will always believe the worst about themselves". Wealth is another important factor in the greed of which, people decide to leave their original relations or the relation which serves them. Nasser chooses Rachel to overcome his inferiority complex as a migrant.

With the reference of "Black Skin and White Mask, "My Beautiful Launderette" wraps up with a homosexual relationship of "Omar" and "Johnny" more preferable than "Tania". Omar was not worried about leaving Tania because he considers Johnny as his companion. But in the chase of his desires, he becomes rebellious of his own culture and family by violating nature and adopting the selfish modernization. In the last few seconds of play, it is mentioned that Omar and Johnny enjoy each other like a couple with these words that, "Omar and Johnny are washing and splashing each other in the sink in the back room of the launderette, both stripped to the waist" (Launderette, 1:30:12). When we see the other side of their homosexual relation, the decay of nature and reality of relation is marginalized. Interest in the same-gender is not much respectful ven in a free state where none interfere in others matter. It is not a simple vision of British society but it's a nostalgic yearning for hybrid generation on the loss of their identity and the acts which are agonizing for their relations. Limitations of relations patch up to people in a bundle with respect without which love is just like trash. It is in our hands to care and prefer permanent relations rather than temporary relations attached to needs. The open ending of the play force on thinking about the impending life of those who violate and destroy the moralities of nature

### **Conclusion**

Precisely, the lesson of being original is provoked by "Hanif Kureishi" from a colonial perspective. Concluding the whole descriptive analysis on "My Beautiful Launderette" in the light of critics, it is clear that, the people of a culture are responsible for its breakdown but the fakeness of that change will be repaid in the form of horrible consequences and sufferings. Protection of the roots is the supreme imperative cause about which we are not somber. Hence, Omar and Johnny as ha homosexual fulfill their desire but Omar lost Tania and Tania leaves her house because she was unable to understand the love of family. Her unawareness leads the protection from her mother as a barrier to her freedom. Similarly, the ending is flat and open but thinking about Tania, she becomes a homeless person as Johnny was. On the other side, the sufferings of a mother on losing a daughter are also hidden in the plot ending. The analysis accomplishes by identifying the devastation of the ethos which is the outcome of our faults. From contrasting the critic arguments with "My Beautiful Launderette" and the characters of the film, a thread of thought is become evident which gives a true pathway to achieve the momentous refurbishment of relations and its splendor by the refinement of our mistakes.

### **Recommendations**

To address the issues highlighted in My Beautiful Launderette, it is essential to foster a more inclusive and empathetic society that recognizes and respects cultural diversity. One recommendation is to prioritize dialogue and understanding between different cultural groups, helping to bridge the gap between migrants and the dominant society. This could involve community initiatives and educational programs that celebrate cultural exchange, dismantle stereotypes, and promote mutual respect. Additionally, creating safe spaces for individuals to express their identities without fear of marginalization or violence is crucial in rebuilding relationships and preserving cultural integrity. Policymakers should also focus on integrating social support systems for migrants, helping them navigate the complexities of identity and belonging while providing access to resources that promote emotional and mental well-being. Lastly, it is vital to challenge the superficial pursuit of modernity and material success, emphasizing the value of authentic human connections, relationships, and the preservation of cultural heritage in the face of globalization.

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