

## Fate shapes One's Destiny in Monica Ali's Brick Lane (2003)

### – A Sociological and Literary Analysis –

Hany Mohamed Bahaa El-Din

Walid Abdallah Rezk

Faculty of Arts || Suez University || Egypt

**Abstract:** This paper aims at analyzing Brick Lane (2003) Monica Ali's masterpiece which is regarded as a very good example of post-colonial literature with its main characteristics of displacement, racism, diaspora, hybridity and alienation and exploring its main theme, how fate shapes one's destiny which is directly related to immigrating from homeland for better social and economic conditions. This theme starts at the very beginning with the main character Nazneen, when she was born as a sick child, the midwife told her mother that she could take the baby to hospital, or just let her to her fate. Nazneen's mother chose to wait and see what might happen to her child. During their getting older, Nazneen and her sister Hasinaa learned that fighting fate would be risky and fatal. Monica Ali's Brick Lane is a novel that has nearly all the components of a real diasporic heroine that passes through the complicated dilemma of adapting to a multicultural community. This paper is intended to prove that this novel can be regarded as a very good example of post-colonial literature and how the writer is able to present the Asian heroine who has always been marginalized throughout the different ages.

**Keywords:** Fate, Nostalgia, Racism, displacement, diaspora, alienation, and immigration.

## الْقَدْرُ يُشَكِّلُ مَصِيرَ الْإِنْسَانِ فِي رِوَايَةِ مُونِيكََا عَلِي "حَارَةُ بْرِيك" 2003

### – دِرَاسِيَّةٌ أَدَبِيَّةٌ اجْتِمَاعِيَّةٌ –

هَانِي مُحَمَّدٍ بَهَاءِ الدِّينِ

وَلَيْدِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ رِزْقِي

كلية الآداب || جامعة السويس || مصر

**المخلص:** تَهْدَفُ هَذِهِ الْوَرَقَةُ الْبَحْثِيَّةُ إِلَى تَحْلِيلِ رِوَايَةِ مُونِيكََا عَلِي "حَارَةُ بْرِيك" 2003 مِنْ وَجْهَةِ نَظَرٍ أَدَبِيَّةٍ وَاجْتِمَاعِيَّةٍ لِأَنَّهَا تُعْتَبَرُ مَثَالًا جَيِّدًا لِلْأَدَبِ مَا بَعْدَ الْإِسْتِعْمَارِ مَعَ خَصَائِصِهِ الرَّئِيسِيَّةِ لِلْهَجْرَةِ وَالنَّشْرِيَّةِ، وَالسَّتَاتِ، وَالتَّهْجِيْنِ وَالتَّغْرِيْبِ، وَاسْتِكْشَافِ مَوْضُوعِهِ الرَّئِيسِيِّ، وَهُوَ دَوْرُ الْقَدْرِ فِي تَشْكِيلِ مَصِيرِ الْإِنْسَانِ وَالَّذِي يَرْتَبِطُ مَبَاشَرَةً بِالْهَجْرَةِ مِنَ الْوَطَنِ مِنْ أَجْلِ ظُرُوفِ اجْتِمَاعِيَّةٍ وَاقْتِصَادِيَّةٍ أَفْضَلِ. تَبْدَأُ هَذِهِ الْفِكْرَةُ فِي الْبِدَايَةِ مَعَ الشَّخْصِيَّةِ الرَّئِيسِيَّةِ نَازِينِ، عِنْدَمَا وُلِدَتْ مَرِيضَةً، وَقَالَتْ الْقَابِلَةُ لِلْأَمِّ الْجَدِيدَةِ إِنَّهَا تَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ تَأْخُذَ الْوَلَدَ إِلَى الْمُسْتَشْفَى، أَوْ أَنْ تَتْرَكَهَا لِمَصِيرِهَا. اخْتَارَتْ أُمُّ نَازِينِ أَنْ تَنْتَظِرَ وَتَرَى مَا سَيَخْتَارُ الْقَدْرُ. أَثْنَاءَ نَشَأَتِهِمْ، عَلِمَتْ نَازِينِ وَأَخْتُهَا حُسَيْنَةُ أَنَّ مُحَارَبَةَ الْقَدْرِ قَدْ تَكُونُ قَاتِلَةً. تَحْلِيلُ رِوَايَةِ مُونِيكََا عَلِي حَارَةُ بْرِيكُ تَحْتَوِي عَلَى جَمِيعِ عَنَاصِرِ شَخْصِيَّةٍ مُغْتَرِبَةٍ وَمُهَاجِرَةٍ جَسَدِيًّا وَنَفْسِيًّا، وَالَّتِي تَمُرُّ بِحَالَةٍ مُعَقَّدَةٍ مِنَ التَّكْيُفِ مَعَ مَجْتَمَعٍ مُتَعَدِّدِ الثَّقَافَاتِ. وُلِدَتْ مُونِيكََا عَلِي فِي دَكَا، بَنْغَلَادِيْشِ، وَنَشَأَتْ فِي إِنْجَلْتَرَا، وَتَعِيشُ الْآنَ مَعَ زَوْجِهَا وَوَلَدَيْهَا. وَقَدْ سَمَّيَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِ جِرَانَتْ عَلَى أَنَّهَا وَاحِدَةٌ مِنْ أَفْضَلِ عَشْرِينَ سَابًا مِنَ الرِّوَايَاتِيَّةِ الْبَرِيْطَانِيَّةِ؛ تَمَّ تَرْشِيْحُ رِوَايَتِهَا لِجَائِزَةِ بُوْكُز. تَمُرُّ شَخْصِيَّاتِ الرِّوَايَةِ بِأَشْكَالٍ مُخْتَلِفَةٍ مِنَ التَّشَوُّهَاتِ الْمُتَمَثِّلَةِ مِنْ جَلَالِ تَجَارِبِهَا فِي الْهَجْرَةِ وَالْإِغْتِرَابِ، وَلَكِنِ تَتَكَيَّفُ

مَعَ الْمُجْتَمَعِ الْجَدِيدِ تَعْتَمِدُ مُعْظَمَ الشَّخْصِيَّاتِ فِي الْبِدَايَةِ عَلَى ذِكْرَاتِهَا مِنْ بُلْدَانِهَا الْأَصْلِيَّةِ لِتَحْطِيَ الْعُزْلَةَ وَالْوَحْدَةَ. وَتُنَاقِشُ الْوَرَقَةَ الْبَحْثِيَّةُ أَيْضًا تَعْرِيفَ الْهَجْرَةِ وَأَسْبَابِهَا مِنْ خِلَالِ نَظَرِيَّاتِ عِلْمِ الْاجْتِمَاعِ.  
الْكَلِمَاتُ الْمِفْتَاحِيَّةُ: الْقَدْرُ، الْهَجْرَةُ، الْعُزْلَةُ، الْإِغْتِرَابُ، الشَّتَاتُ، التَّشْرِيدُ، الْعَنْصَرِيَّةُ.

## Introduction:

Monica Ali was born in 1967 in Bangladesh. Her father worked as a teacher, and her mother was British and worked as a counselor. The story of her parent's interracial marriage was controversial. The civil war broke out in East Pakistan while Monica was only three years old when her family moved to England in 1971. They chose a small city to live in near Manchester where Monica joined her school. After many years, she went to study at Oxford, where she became a graduate of Wadham College. Monica completed a degree in an interdisciplinary program combining politics, economics, and philosophy. After her graduation, Monica started a career in the marketing department of a small publishing company. She tried different subsequent jobs as a sales and marketing manager at the publishing house Verso, and at a branding agency as well. She got married to Simon Torrance, a consultant, and she gave birth to her first child in 1999. After the birth of her son Felix, Monica did not return to her job, and started to change her career into writing fiction for the first time. She was initially interested in short stories, but found the short form constrained the stories she wanted to tell. In 2001, Monica gave birth to her second child, a daughter named Shumi. Shortly after Shumi's birth, Monica's father died. The loss motivated her to focus on family, history, and the need to not postpone living one's dreams. She began writing the draft of *Brick Lane*. As a first-time novelist, Monica was very curious about feedback, so she showed some chapters to her friend who works in the publishing industry. The feedback was quite positive, and Monica was offered a book deal within a few days. She passed most of 2002 working on the rest of her masterpiece, and *Brick Lane* finally came out in 2003. After her stunning success of *Brick Lane*, Monica went on her writing career. She published other books like *Alentejo Blue* (2006), *In the Kitchen* (2009), and *Untold Story* (2011).

## Aim of the study and Methodology:

Monica Ali's masterpiece *Brick Lane* presents an overall panorama of immigrant female identity in multicultural Britain. This masterpiece combines sociology and literature in a wonderful context shedding light on the phenomenon of immigration by tracing the social factors that lead to immigration. The major character Nazneen is generally a stereotype of this image. The main aim of this study is to present a significant problem of a common immigrating woman that has to face racial discrimination in two aspects, as an immigrant and as a female, and especially, to analyze the character of Nazneen who represents those women who experience double alienation. Therefore, this paper interests in particular the people who study women and postcolonial and postmodernism studies and the results will be useful in literary and intercultural studies.

This study is intended to answer a group of questions. First, can man escape from his fate? Second, can immigration be a solution to social and economic problems? Third, can man achieve his goals through immigration? Fourth, does the immigrant get complete rights? Fifth, to what extent does the immigrant feel alienated? Sixth, does the immigrant achieve the dream of salvation through immigration? Seventh, to what extent is the immigrant exposed to racial discrimination? In order to answer the questions of the study, the post-colonial theory along with the sociological theories of economy and expulsion and attraction will be adopted through the life journey of Nazneen the heroine of Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* 2003.

According to sociology, migration is the individual or group movement from one site to another in search of a better social, economic, religious, or political situation. Sociologists also see that migration indicates a change in social status, such as a change in trade or social class and others. Abd Al Halim Mashry defines immigration as "a movement inside geography from a place where the causes of tension and attraction are reduced to a place that provides factors of living and security." (7).

Migration means that people move to a new country hoping to live a better life there. People usually move from one country to another for various reasons. It is possible to say that the immigrant would search for better work, look for new land to settle in, or run away from a threat such as persecution because of religious beliefs or political positions. Saad Bin Abd Al Rahman states some reasons for immigration as "also, large numbers of people have fled their countries because of disasters such as famine, conflict, and war. Leaving the country of origin to settle in another country." (73).

Sociological studies agree on the importance of the personal motives of migration. They believe that the central reason for youth migration is the aspiration to a better life than those they live in their countries, due to global and local conditions, and that the main reason behind the emigration of young people is the economic life of individuals. Some studies try to neutralize or give less importance to the economic aspect of migration, and find that looking for a better life is the main reason for migration, whether legal or illegal, especially since most migrants are not poor, but everyone is looking for a better model of life. Not all those who emigrate are poor, but they have a higher level of aspirations than what is available in their countries, while others travel under coercive conditions as a result of the wars and armed conflicts that exist in some countries. Ali Galby adds that "with all new developments, the economic factor remains a common factor with all other causes of migration. Others emphasize the structural factor of the North-South gap as a factor of expulsion between or within nations." (261).

Some field studies, through interviews with a sample of respondents, have found that a range of individual motives are also a cause of ambition, dream, challenge and sometimes risk, meaning that illegal immigrants have a strategy to achieve. Denis Jodelet sees that "some risk being overwhelmed by the level of civilization in Europe, and this percentage is mainly higher among those who have received a university education, and some have had to integrate into their original society." (111).

The theory of expulsion and attraction in sociology has identified the underlying causes of migration in two factors: communication and the multiplicity of relationships between sending and receiving countries. Youb Morad states that "Boge regarded exclusion and attraction as reasons that contribute to selecting peculiar groups to immigrate from one place to another. Expulsion factors range from simple ones such as poverty and social isolation to large excreta factors such as disasters and other." (24).

Economic theories about migration explain the factors associated with wages and jobs. The writer of the first theory of immigration in 1885 and the English world of geography, Ernest Ravenstein, makes some regulations by giving an analysis to population census data. He settled that immigration is driven by pushing and pulling, with bad economy and poor conditions driving people to abandon their native countries for more comfortable places. Migration was increasing with the development of technology. Tapinos notes that "This writer has put immigration in a broader climate, regarding the development of immigration as a movement from the circumference to the core of the sphere, and the space travelled by immigrants." (14).

Before the 20<sup>th</sup> century, associated with the significant development of the dynamics in the world, man entering a new period. The 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the age of colonizing powers of France and Britain, during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the imperialistic countries began to lose their power, the end of colonialism controlled the world scene. A lot of countries struggled for their regional liberty and were able to restore their independence from the former powers. Owing to those changes and variations, new social movements, one of which and maybe the most important is immigration on a wider scale, emerged and lots of countries started to have a more interracial and new social structure in the 20th century. We can safely say that "immigration always causes troubles and even among the best integrated groups that fall under such severe conditions" (Glazer 52). Accordingly, the most badly affected group in an interracial and multi-cultural community is undoubtedly immigrants. That's why *Brick Lane* is a very good example of post-colonial literature. Therefore, Oliva Espin (1999) states, the immigrants' personalities, identities, and entities pass through many serious troubles:

The immigrants suffer from the severe and harsh conditions in the new community, which influence self-confidence and usually lead to isolation and alienation; perplexity in relation to role prospects, principles and personality; they are shocked due to the disparities between the two different cultures; and their feeling of up rootedness and weakness as a result of their powerlessness to act proficiently in the new community. (19)

In her masterpiece *Brick Lane* (2003) Monica Ali sheds light on the modern and hybrid England with interesting topics like alienation, immigration, poverty, racism, identity crises in addition to religion which proves that her novel can be regarded as a very good model of post-colonial literature. Monica confirms the image of different voices or conflicting points of view. Choudhury notes in *English Social and*

*Cultural History: An Introductory Guide and Glossary* 2005 that "In analyzing immigration experiences and the issues related to identity, Monica is exploring a state in which place and culture unite to give circumstances that would have been beyond perception in the nineteenth century colonial world order" (294). In the book, the district of Brick Lane "has become a symbol of a holding place, a temporary area for immigrants who have not yet fully settled in London" (Hussain, 102). Monica, for her novel, which presents the immigrant issues in a multi-sided way, chooses a female character as the protagonist. As Nick Bentley comments "Monica Ali is trying to represent the experiences of all female immigrants, through her main character Nazneen, of a group of Bangladeshi women who have rarely before been represented in British literature" (Bentley 84). "Ali shows her characters in a way to shed light on the position of Bangladeshi women inside England, as the novel focuses on their social roles and relationships inside and outside home" (Hussain91). Thus, in *Brick Lane*, Monica Ali sheds light on the eminent problem of immigrant woman as experiencing double alienation in the society which is represented in being both an immigrant and a woman. However, Monica does not present it in a totally pessimistic picture, but in a fully hopeful image. Kanal, in *The Celebration of Acculturation in Monica Ali's Brick Lane* 2008 notes that "The novel presents Nazneen's life journey from a submissive, dominated, passive adolescent to a steady transformation into a self-determining, cautious, independent mother with a lyrical compassion beyond her stuffy, desolate and messy flat on Brick Lane" (51).

From the first chapter, which begins in one of the Bengali villages, where the main character is born Nazneen, we realize that the author has put us before the existential moment of the human being, and she even hinted at it, starting when she borrowed two words to serve as an entry for her novel : The first is the Russian novelist Torjnev : (Ruthlessly and mercilessly guide each of us to his own destiny, but at the beginning, when we are bogged down in detail, in all kinds of savages, in ourselves, we are indeed unaware of his cruel hand), and the second is by the Greek philosopher Heraclitus : (Human destiny is his personality).

Marshall G in *A Dictionary of Sociology* 2011 explains alienation as, "in the most general terms, defines the separation of individuals from one another, or from an exact condition or practice" (798). Monica Ali shows this type of dual estrangement in her novel with her main character Nazneen. "In this point, the story becomes a social text in that: it provides an awareness into the lives of women who have immigrated and who are learning to adapt to a foreign environment" (Hussain 100). Starting with, the reality of being "the other" in the new community is prevailing to produce alienation. The newcomers who decide to settle in England have been called "the other" for a long time. Salman Rushdie states in an interview: "Once I put my first step in England to learn, I was named, the other". I believe I can understand the meaning of being on the other side of the wall" (Çongar, 2007). But, what makes some people see the immigrant or define them as "being seen as the other" in England and how seriously does this affect the feeling of alienation of the immigrant and their identity and behavior?

The negative opinion about the newcomers who have a colonized experience is unblemished in *Brick Lane* as Nazneen and Shanu have Bangladeshi origin and experienced invasion of their homeland. In the novel "the devastating feeling of being a recluse and foreigner, not quite being a part of the culture that one is bounded by, is also surrounded by the character of Nazneen's husband, Shanu" (Ann, 229). Shanu usually states that the invading practices of England still exist in a different way and the west always does not show any respect to them and regards the immigrant as lower human beings. He confirms the ignorance of the west and says:

Here all these people that despise us and see us as ugly farmers know nothing of history, in the sixteenth century, Bengal was nicknamed the Paradise of Nations. These are our origins. Do they teach these facts in their schools here? Does Shahana know about the Paradise of Nations? All she knows about it is flood and starvation. Whole bloody country is just a bloody basket case to her. (Ali 185).

There is some kind of irony in Shanu's character, though he bitterly challenges indulging into the British culture, clinging to his historical and cultural background and feeling of his national personality, he himself is an embellished imitation of the conventional creation of post-colonialism, a creation from the southeast Asia who tracks his university studies in England, "familiarizing himself with, and soaking himself in, British culture and literature, spouting casual quotes from Shakespeare to praise the event." (Ann 229).

We can safely say that Shanu represents the immigrant who experiences the crisis of being stuck between two different cultures. Catriona Mackenzie sheds light on that crisis with these words:

Shanu, Nazneen's husband, is equally stuck. The more his longing for appreciation is upset the more he feels isolated both from the English culture from which he once longed to gain reverence and from the East London Bangladeshi community, which is split with inner opposition, interracial struggle and anger towards the prevailing culture. (103).

Naturally, Nazneen, who has arrived in London as an ordinary Bangladeshi immigrating woman, has not encountered the suffering of being a past citizen in an occupied land of Britain's former colony as much as her husband Shanu. Because Nazneen often spends much of her time at home, she does not experience the same racial discrimination issues very much. Nazneen, both from outside and inside herself, does not belong to the British community or its culture. Every now and then when Nazneen goes out to Bishopsgate, which is a near place to Brick Lane but ethnically rather diverse, she repeatedly feels the isolation and alienation effects of the society. Bentley N in *Contemporary British Fiction* states that "The conduct of the people in these areas is defined in terms that discrete them from Nazneen, in relation to clothes, racial features, the way they communicate with one another and the other sex" (88). In this area, Nazneen has the feelings of being isolated and alienated. This experience is narrated in the novel as: "Nazneen, limping and hesitant, started to be conscious of herself. Deprived of a jacket, lacking a suit, short of a white face, not having a goal" (56).

In London Review of Books, Sukhdev Sandhu writes about Monica Ali who is considered one of the best and the first feminists who can express women's sufferings:

Monica Aly is not the first author to shed light on the Bangladeshi communities who settle in Brick Lane in their writings. *The Mapmakers of Spitalfields* by Sayed Manzurul Islam (1997) was an outstanding collection of short stories, full of intellect and fiction, about Brothero-Man for example, one of the leading pirates and now an 'invisible survivor of the city'. Twenty years after that Farrukh Dhondy, later to become commissioning editor of racial shows for Channel 4, wrote a series of mocking books – *East End at Your Feet* (1976) and *Come to Mecca* (1978) – intended to young adults. (11).

Sandhu sheds light on the power Monica Ali uses in exploring and analyzing the life and sufferings of a Bangladeshi woman who lives in Brick Lane, but she even analyses all her movements and gestures, how she leads a new life in a new country which doesn't offer her many of her rights:

*Brick Lane* is considered the first novel to concentrate mainly on the sufferings, worries and pains of Bangladeshi women in Tower Hamlets. It attempts to transfer us far beyond the yellowish net curtains of their overcrowded block of flats, and into their living rooms and bedrooms. It targets, for the most portion successfully, to enunciate their doubts and wishes, and proposes a rich and superbly surfaced remedial to those versions which depict them as selective dampers, instinctive tattlers of Third World customs and traditions. (12).

The story begins in 1967 in the Mymensingh region of East Pakistan, which after four years would become a new country called Bangladesh, it narrates the sad story of a sick new-born girl called Nazneen, a poor educated young girl who knows that nobody is going to care about her or would sympathize with her sufferings, so she decides to accept her fate because most people in her life circle as Walid Abdallah states in his book *Shout of Silence* 2015 "are deaf to hear her shouts, she finds God her only salvation and decides to tell God everything that disturbs her." Nazneen says "I have no complaints or regrets to tell you; I tell everything to God" (Aly 5). Nazneen was forced to get married to Shanu, a bulky bore twenty years older than her. He is nasty and they don't have any shared interests, or any love emotions or feelings, but he becomes a great part of her destiny now and she has to accept him without questioning, the only thing that might cool her pains is that after getting married to him, he would take her to London, a new society where she might achieve one of her lost goals:

The man she would get married to was very old. At least forty years old. He had a face which looks like a frog. They would marry and she would accompany him back to England... Men can do whatever they want in this life. (6)

She goes with him back to where he has been living for some time. The changeover from the gradual movements of countryside life in Bangladesh to the faster London life of the 1985s in England looks too hard, she wakes up to completely two different societies and when she opens her eyes, she sees the ugliest creature she has ever seen, but she has to adapt to that nightmare. "She woke up, opened her

eyes and saw her husband Shanu's swollen face on the pillow next to her, his lips divided huffily even while he slept." (7) Shanu's dreams are more than he can achieve. Years pass and they have two girls and one son who they should look after and care for. Shanu and Nazneen suffer much to provide for their two daughters a generous life, fate chooses their lone son, and he perishes in babyhood. Nazneen stays at home during the day, feeling bored with her life as she does nothing except the house chores and feels that her life is being robbed of her. All the time she only watches her husband eat his meals and he notices that she never touches her food and asks her about the reason for that and she replies that food is not important for her implying that it is better to die than live such a humiliating life, she has only a few friends apart from Razya, who moves around in a Union Jack sweatshirt, and is locked into a gloomy life suffering from being a woman with dark future and whose shouts are not heard or even accepted:

Life crafted its design round and underneath and across her. Nazneen tidied and prepared food and cleaned. She prepared breakfast for Shanu and waited as he ate, gathered his pens and placed them in his case, viewed him from the window as he walked like a bandleader through the courtyard to the bus stop on the far side of the property. Then she ate while standing up at the sink and washing the dishes. She made the bed and dusted the flat, washed socks and pants in the sink and bigger items in the bath. In the afternoons she cooked and ate as she cooked, so that Shanu stated to enquire why she rarely touched her food, and she shrugged her shoulders in a way that food was of no importance to her. And the days were bearable, and the evenings were nothing to protest about. (27).

It was not until, in 2001, she, for the first time, feels true love with a relative to the owner of the sweatshop who is called Kareem. They start their love affair which in fact opposes their values and principles. Kareem promises to marry her after she gets her divorce from her husband, she goes on describing a feeling she never had with her husband. It is the first time to feel like a female who has rights, feelings and has the ability to love. She is astonished to know that her heart is still able to beat for love for the first time in her life, she enjoys that feeling as if she was in a wonderful dream and doesn't want to get up:

Looking became unbearable and, as if by mutual agreement, both lowered their eyes. Nazneen inhaled choking air that was full of things unsaid, their excitement held in particles like drips of respect. She was conscious of her body, as if just now she had come to occupy it for the first time, and it was both odd and delightful to have this new bodily countenance. A beat behind her ear. A spine of thrill down her thigh. Inside her abdomen, a hidden and despairing deprivation ... She did not know who displaced first or how, but they were in the bedroom alone and locked together so close that even air could not pass between them. She bit his ear. She bit his lip and tasted blood. He pushed her onto the bed and tore her blouse and pushed the skirt of her sari around her waist. Still dressed, she was more than naked...She helped him undress. (284).



Walid Abdallah in his book *Shout of Silence* (2015) goes on describing her new relation as follows “for the first time, she tastes love and feels its sweetness. She was always deprived of her simplest rights and now finally she got the chance to make up for herself that’s why she is so fierce in behaving with her new lover” (33).

She felt it now: there was nothing she would not do. She pulled him in, not with delicacy but with wildness as though it were possible in this situation to lose and win all in this one move. He put a hand around her neck and she wanted everything: to disappear inside the warmth like a drip of dew, to feel his hand press down and quench her, to hear Shanu come in and see what she was, his wife. (Ali 284).

At the beginning of the story Nazneen’s mother Amma tells everybody in her family: ‘My girl should not ruin her energy struggling against fate. By doing that, she would be stronger.’ (2) Amma puts her hand on Nazneen and her sister Hasinaa that nothing can be altered and that everything must be borne. Amma dies in a terrible way while the girls are still young. Nazneen keeps Amma's lessons in her heart, but Hasinaa rebels very early against the restrictions of the community and even against her fate. At the age of sixteen, Hasinaa elopes with a young man for a love marriage. Nazneen is soon given away, for fear of causing a new shame to her family, in an arranged marriage which she does not protest at all. After a number of years in London, Nazneen can’t still find the words for “this formless, unnamed thing that edged across her shoulders and cuddled into her hair and exterminated her lungs, that turned her both into fidgety and listless” (255). It’s only after she sees Kareem that she starts to hear new words, some of which she recounts to her own troubles – ‘Radical was new vocabulary for Nazneen’ – and by the end of the book she’s bashing up and down to Lulu’s ‘Shout’. (295).

Didn't her mother tell her story with fate and how she lived with death threats while still a baby? Why is she so stubborn now? and can she escape her fate someday? Thus, Nazneen and her husband, Shanu, go to England to live far from her motherland, and with the death of the father, only her sister Hasinaaa, who continues to write, and although Nazneen, through the events, seems gave up and seemed to live in agreement with the events she opposes, the exact description of her feelings and thoughts reveals to us a sense of life, and she can also understand even the personality of her husband who has a degree in English literature with all the problems surrounding them, especially as she has a child and her husband becomes one of the many Bengali families in English society who face a lot of difficulties because of poverty and discrimination in the marginalization of her husband in his work, the lack of promotion he seeks, and soon loses her little child in the hospital, However, she continues her journey (her fate) and starts to get to know the expatriate Bengali community. She develops her relationship with a group of Bengali women who share her concerns of expatriation and attempts to adapt to their new life. She has two daughters: Shahana and Bibi, she started sewing so that she can help her husband in his life, in addition to helping her sister Hasinaaa, who has been writing to her and telling her news. She has a love affair with young Kareem, through whom she (Nazneen) looks at the concerns of young Bengali Muslims

and the way he deals with the new society, which is divided between extremists who view Western society and the policies it carries against the Islamic world, those who have become depressed and weak and found consolation in drugs, or those who have been struggling in exile as is the case with their husband Shanu who saw his national identity and the pride he holds in his civilized past, which gives him some strength and hopes for a day that he returns to his motherland, As events continue to unfold, the Bengali community in England faces many obstacles of poverty, inability to adapt to the nature of the English society, whose values and traditions are incompatible with Islamic values and traditions, as well as the emerging conflict between the Bengali youth generation itself, which leads to the emergence of clashes between its members and the violence, but the final event ends The novel will not surprise us as much as Nazneen's husband is when he's packed up and decides to go back to his homeland. She is now scheduled to return to Bangladesh, refusing to return with him and clinging to staying there and continues her struggle in life, and continues her work in sewing to support her two daughters, and the husband will give in to her decision and go alone to his country. Sandhu in *London Review of Books* 2003 notes that "both in history and in geography that the book doesn't manage. The letters do, however, go a long way to reject the idea that Bangladesh is still countryside, rustic; it is metropolis, fierce and locked into the world capitalism." (13).

Now and then Nazneen occasionally meets some Bangladeshi children and other people who remind her of her rural life, Sandhu in *London Review of Books* 2003 says:

She sees a twosome of pupils who look 'as whitish as rice and lurid as peacocks'; a fridge drones 'like a huge mosquito'; dressed in a Parka coat, Shanu looks like 'a Kachuga turtle'. We are told that Nazneen doesn't recall most of the aspects of her birthplace, yet the outstanding images stands up with cumulative excess: she starts talks to the devices that keep her son alive in hospital "like a mahout pacifies an angry elephant'; a stunned Shanu 'looked ensnared, attacked by dacoits'; making love to Kareem, 'like a Sufi in a trance, a revolving dervish, she lost the drift of one being and found another." (13).

The male characters in *Brick Lane* are very violent and cruel even in their thoughts and ideas, they pour out all kinds of oppression against women only to satisfy their manhood. They are also very complicated and have a lot of contradictions; Sandhu describes them as follows "they're just more entirely fleshed out, fortunate with disputations, outlined with sensitivity and absurdity rather than sorrow." (13).

Shanu can be seen as the most complicated character, he does not know what he really wants from his life. He lives in a very simple place. The walls of his house are decorated with some certificates of honor, yet his daughters laugh at him, even his wife gets tired of her life with him especially after leaving his job as a clerk and becoming a cab driver. He wants to feel he is still in charge and control all the people living in his house. He wants to feel he has authority over his daughter and when he wants to punish her, he hands a banana skin: Monica Ali says "He whipped devotedly but without gift. His liveliness went into

the *Aniyah* –of his intention – and here he was progressive and dexterous, but the distribution upset him.” (355).

Shanu rarely behaves like a real man, so one day he decides to go on a tour with his family to show them the real London. He buys his wife and daughters new clothes and other things to enjoy their time. Nazneen, on the other hand was really has mixed feelings at that time. She does not know whether to feel excited for being out with her family, or to feel frightened because of having a secret lover. Shanu asks one of the tourists to take a photo for him with his family. Nazneen says it is the first and the last photo they take together, and after the photo had been developed, there was nothing except the feet that appeared.

Kareem’s character is somewhat less persuasive, and to destructive effect Sandhu describes him as follows, “He can be seen, before the cautious regularities of the novel are lastly unfolded, the anti-Shanu: youthful, not old and obese; pious rather than drifting multi faithed; someone who wishes to do things to reading about them; economically safe, not doling out half his scanty income in mortgage refunds.” (13) According to Nazneen, he offers her a bright future after getting her divorce. He was able to change her point of view in the world. She used to think that she was only born to suffer not to love or be loved. She forgets her values and prefers to live in the mirage he offers her rather than living in a real hell with the frog- face husband.

Kareem is claimed to represent the discord and dissonance of the next generation of Bangladeshi young people. They have passed through cruelty and suffered much during their first years in London. They used to be the ones, along with their relatives, who had the first shock of the attack from the 1970s to the 1990s; they of course agonized through their education as a consequence of being bullied by their school mates and cruel teachers. In turn, these men when they get power over some people even if they are their wives or daughters, they act violently against them.

Strangely, *Brick Lane* 2003, a huge part of it set in the 1980s, has so little to tell about the movement of brutality and brutality which differentiated the lives of nearly everyone in Bangladesh, youthful or elderly, man or woman, who existed in and around Brick Lane before the present time of renovation. Even the dream of Nazneen’s daughters to have a better chance of education, to find an appropriate husband, is more than a generational appropriate, or a strife between custom and modernism. Sandhu describes that struggle as “it signifies a fervent attempt to become less dormant, less likely to be handled as a social punch case. ‘Never again’ is the implicit doctrine by which today’s Bangladeshis live.” (13).

Surprisingly, Nazneen never thought of going back to her country especially after having the sewing job and being into a relation with Kareem who promised to marry her after getting divorced from her frog-face husband. She decided to stay there “in her new society although her husband went back home, hoping to have a new start there, living on the hope that his family would join him

someday.”(Abdallah 38) So, the story begins with the act of Nazneen’s birth accompanied with the proverb saying, “Man mustn’t resist fate”, and ends with Nazneen putting her skates on and wearing her Sari and starting to achieve her ever dream. For the first time in her life she can breathe freedom and taste-free will to do whatever she likes. She suffered a lot to reach that moment. At the end of the story, the reader is surprised to touch the radical change in Nazneen’s character. After she was very obedient to her husband and devoted to her daughters, now she decides to resist her fate and decides to live the life she ever dreamed of. She has decided to remain in London with her two daughters and leave her husband who insists on going back to Bangladesh to pursue her dream and to catch the new love that appeared recently in her life, that love which gives meaning to her life at last. Now she feels that her shout from now and on matters and she is ready to fight to release her past suppressed shouts.

### Conclusion:

Monica Ali’s masterpiece *Brick Lane* sheds light on the most important crisis that faces an immigrant female heroine which can be summed up in the word alienation. As we can see, the alienation of the immigrant female heroine is caused not only by the othering viewpoint of the new community but also by the hostile drift of the society’s male-controlled and conservative background along with the feelings of segregation, humiliation, alienation and misery. In this way, as both an immigrant and as a woman, these women are signified by Nazneen, undergo dual estrangement in the new community. However, in *Brick Lane*, this estrangement, which has both sociological and psychological dimensions, is settled down with the liberty and assimilation of Nazneen. Though many practices of Nazneen’s life prove her feelings of loss, alienation and powerlessness, as Bentley states in *Contemporary British Fiction*, “the novel as a whole, shadows her steady liberation as she begins to come to terms with the alien environment in which she is located at the opening of the novel” (88). Consequently, what appears is “Nazneen’s fight for finding her personality through her rising self-assurance and willpower” (Kanal 56). At the end of the novel, Nazneen’s willpower to make her own choices for example not going back to Bangladesh with her husband, ending her love relationship with Kareem, beginning a new life with her two daughters and making her own life, makes it possible to take over estrangement and to assimilate into the society as a self-governing immigrating woman.

Eade states in his book *The Cultures of Economic Migration International Perspectives* 2008 Monica Ali’s novel is formed by “current sole matter in which individual freedom is achieved by allocating labor and individual practices with other local, non-compliant Bangladeshi females” (34). Therefore, Nazneen locates her room in the globe which she has been viewing from the outside for many years. Kanal notes in *The Celebration of Acculturation in Monica Ali’s Brick Lane* that “What Monica Ali attempts to investigate, and concentrate on is the belief that though dislocation leads to estrangement and self-quest, it is significant to settle oneself with the notion of assimilation” (54). So, in conclusion, we realize

that this socialization procedure leads to Nazneen's obtaining a new and altered character that is "controlled by her own personal reason and uncomplicated insight not by a man supremacy." (55).

Naznin's final decision to stay in London is the great transfer of her character and finally her fate rewards her and shapes a wonderful destiny for her. However, this does not surprise us. The radical change in her character is a direct result of the bitter experiences that her fate prepared to her. The human being must struggle to preserve his ever-threatened existence. When we turn the last page of the novel *Brick Lane*, the impression remains what we have in our memory is not only the events that we have lived in the novel, but also the transparent spirit that has been able to suggest to it a distinct style, which holds things and feelings in a seductive, mysterious and lovable way, in which the narrator is absent and we only hear the voice of life and its constant hymn composed by a fair fate.

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