

**RESEARCH PAPER****Inspecting Core Issues of Male Protagonists in ‘The Runaways’ by Fatima Bhutto: A Freudian Psychoanalytic Study****¹Iqra Sarwar ²Muzzafar Qadir Bhatti* and ³Mawra Tariq Malik**

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***Corresponding Author** muzaffarqadir786@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

The present article aims at studying how the psychological experiences of a person when triggered by various social, sociological, and financial factors serve as a wake-up call for core issues, especially for the young generation being radicalized. While the manifest content of the text, *The Runaways* by Fatima Bhutto, suggests that the causes of radicalization are poverty, identity crisis, and alienation, this research significantly studies that apart from these sociological causes there are certain personal psychological factors involved. These psychological factors are core issues like fear of abandonment, low self-esteem, unstable sense of self, and fear of life. These core issues are the cause of why the male protagonists, of the novel, despite belonging to different geographical regions and having different life experiences, ended up in the same extremist organization. Theoretical insights of this research have been drawn from Freudian Psychoanalytic theory. The methodology used involves closed text reading in the light of the Freudian Psychoanalytic Theory. The research concludes that both the male protagonists are neurotic having an unconscious obsession with the fears and core issues.

Keywords: Abandonment, Extremism, Fear, Low Self-Esteem, Psychoanalysis, Radicalization**Introduction**

Fatima Bhutto (born 29 May 1982) is the niece of former Prime Minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto and granddaughter of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. She is a novelist, activist, and columnist. Her works include both non-fiction, *Whispers of the Desert* (2005), *8.50 a.m. 8 October 2005*, *Songs of Blood and Sword*, and fiction, *The Shadow of The Crescent Moon* (2013) and *The Runaways* (2018).

The Runaways is a “deeply empathetic and powerful” (Rao, 2018) story of three characters including Anita Rose (aka Layla), Salman Jamil (Sunny), and Mustafa (Monty). This work, “vividly written” (2018) as Sidwa claims, is a “terrifying and true” (Maher, 2018) portrayal of issues that are faced by young people especially minorities like Anita, in Contemporary Pakistan.

Anita Joseph Rose is a Christian young girl living in the slums of Machar Colony of Karachi with her mother Zenobia and her brother Ezra. Anita, living as a deprived and unfortunate, was made sensitized to radical poets like Habib Jalib and Faiz Ahmed Faiz, by her neighbor Osama. This served as an ignition for Anita to yearn for the lifestyle enjoyed by her classmates. Sunny is a BBCD (British-born Confused Desi) and the only son of Suleiman Jamil. He is motherless and lives in Portsmouth, England. Not being able to deal with his dilemmas of identity, particularly of sexuality, Sunny was lured by his cousin Oz who is a radical. Monty is a seventeen years old young boy and the only son of Akbar Ahmed and Zahra Begum. While at first being relatively happy with his life, Monty started his journey towards Ummah Movement because his girlfriend, Layla, left him behind. These three individuals are the “runaways” of Bhutto’s novel. Bhutto has adopted a style of

narration that involves frequent interruptions in the form of different points of view of characters, their stream of consciousness, and long monotonous descriptions which makes the whole narrative a jaunty prose. The plot of the novel revolves around the central idea of radicalization by portraying how these three protagonists were radicalized and started their journey towards the Ummah Movement in Mosul which is an extremist jihadist organization. The story suggests how young people, inflated with anger, pain, emptiness, and frustration, can fall easy prey to radicalization. The apparent causes of radicalization are "alienation, inequality, identity crisis, poverty, suppression, marginalization, sense of emptiness and status quo" (Raza, 20202, p.7). Bhutto delineates how, in the modern world, individuals are starving and suffering to get a place, real existence, status, and identity. But when they fail to gain the desired place and identity, start a war against the world. Bhutto has also attempted to justify religion as not being the very cause of radicalization since the West poses it as the biggest threat. According to her novel, it is not the religion that manipulates its followers for the war against humanity but some people of the society that exploit the religion for their causes, just as Abu Khalid who is the head of the Ummah Movement. Bhutto has also implied that how social media websites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tinder, and Snapchat have drastic impacts on the human mind. These websites create a constant desire to be seen and get noticed which can also make people suffer from identity dilemmas.

But what inspires this study is, that every person suffering from inequality, injustice, and identity crisis does not likely to get radicalized. Only a few members of that section of society get involved in such extremist activities. The researcher argues that the major part is played by a person's own psyche and core issues, in the process of radicalization.

Thus, this research strives to study that factors like class distinction, alienation, and identity dilemmas are not the sole cause of radicalization but the person's own insecurities and psychological up-bringing are involved because this is what motivates human beings' life decisions. To have a deeper understanding of the narrative, authorial intention, and implication of theoretical standpoints, the existing body of literature can be reviewed and revisited.

Literature Review

Bhutto (2018) was questioned, in an interview, about how people belonging to different sects of society, having distinct backgrounds, ended up being radicalized and sharing the same realization, "all lives lived in glass houses. And one's duty as a conscious man is to be a stone thrower." (Bhutto, 2018). Bhutto holds the view that the West tries to pose religion as the main cause and says, "They are all (characters) radicalized for different reasons but religion isn't one of them" (Bhutto, 2018). According to her, it is alienation, pain, frustration, anger, and isolation that makes young people more vulnerable to radicalization. The important aspect that Bhutto highlights is the role of social media. There are videos on social media and YouTube that contain American attacks, based on so-called nationalism, which are influencing young minds. Also, unlike other organizations, ISIS's videos of terror activities are available on social media. Thus, social media plays an important role in developing an approach in young bloods to join the groups of radicals. According to Bhutto, for passionate and "real fighters" like Lyla, it is the temptation of providing freedom and power that lures people to join radicals.

Shahida Bari reviews the pathways that lead youngsters in England and Pakistani societies towards Islamist extremism, as discussed in the novel *The Runaways* by Fatima Bhutto. As the three main protagonists are responsible for the plot movement, the novel is about their being turned into violent fundamentals. Bari presents poverty, inequality, alienation, identity crisis, and disaffection as leading causes of the conversion of the young generation into extremists. In the case of Anita Rose, it is the sufferings that she bears as being poor that made her end up in a Jihadist organization. Her desire for equality turned

into a rage as she read the Marxist Pakistani poetry of Habib Jalib and Faiz Ahmed Faiz. For Sunny, identity crisis serves as the main issue and Monty chose that path so that he could fit into the ideals of her lover, Layla.

The researcher Junaid Raza (2020) also conforms to the same factors that he mentioned in his study about the problem of radicalization that poisons the young minds of Pakistani society. He studied several human factors, along with non-human ones, that can turn people into radicals. The non-human factors include the thirst for tranquility and peace (Monty), sexual abuse and suffocation (Anita Rose,) and the influence of social media and alienation (Sunny). Other than internal conflicts, some people can also be manipulated by their peers Sunny was motivated to be violent by his cousin Oz and Monty started his journey toward Mosul because of Layla.

Along with issues like poverty, identity crisis, and alienation, there are other inflicting issues that astound the protagonists of the novel. Nyla Ali Khan (2020) explains the way in which the characters of Anita Rise, Osama, Sunny, Monty, and Abu Khalid represent certain miseries of different classes and sects having national and transnational identities. Anita Rose, being a poor Christian girl, was exploited through sex tourism. Anita ended up in an extremist organization because she was made to feel at the margin due to her gender, race, religion, and class. Osama provides the reader with a Marxist lens that serves as an approach to Marxist ideologies and realities like gender, sexuality, religion, race, and class. Sunny, an immigrant suffering from alienation, tried to assimilate into the new culture of England but failed. Because of this failure, he found an escape from Islamic fundamentalism so that he could find his origin and sense of having roots. Monty was radicalized as his sensibilities were attacked by the indignant views of Anita Rose aka Layla about the society's privileged class, afflicting the poor, and how religious minorities are criminalized in contemporary Pakistan. Abu Khalid driving the radical Ummah Movement impersonated a person dispensing the forum that can provide people with their authentic identity. For this reason, Anita, Sunny, and Monty fell prey to radicalization.

Since the present article attempts to highlight the psychological factors involved, Freudian psychoanalytic theory explores how childhood traumas like mother loss can affect a person's behavior throughout life such as the character of Sunny motivated towards death due to his unconscious and unhealed scar of loss of his mother. Examples of such characters and expressions can be found in classical literature as well. Moussa Pourya (2014) states that the "content of a text is in essence the projection of obsessional thoughts" (p.1). He presents that the cause of developing core issues and psychological problems like hysteria, dejection, and melancholia can be childhood traumas, like mother loss in the case of Emily Bronte, which people suffer from. The author also suggests that the literary character can be a symbolic representation of the psychological traumas of the author.

The psychoanalytic theory significantly relates these childhood traumas to the developing core issues. Freudian core issues like fear of intimacy, low self-esteem, fear of betrayal, and fear of abandonment can serve as a cause to make other core issues emerge. Hassan and Shah explore in what way the core issues have cause and cause-and-effect relationship. These researchers have studied how Santiago, the protagonist of the novel *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho, suffers from these psychological issues and how his fears are interrelated. Santiago's fear of intimacy with his parents pushed him toward the daughter of a merchant. Since he got attached to that girl, he developed a fear of abandonment and fear of betrayal. As an ultimate effect, Santiago developed low self-esteem because he thought that the girl would marry the baker. After all, the baker is more worthy of her than a shepherd like him. So, one core issue can lead to other core issues as well. (Khosro and Shah, 2016, p. 126-131)

Munir has also studied this relationship between core issues in her research. She has suggested how the character, De in Walker's *Everyday Use*, suffered from fear of

abandonment, fear of intimacy, and an unstable sense of self. She suggested how the identity dilemma serves as a cause of the emergence of core issues especially fear of abandonment and unstable sense of self. This can help to understand the character of Sunny more intimately, his issues of identity and psychological core. She particularly “relates (s) the main character’s background, childhood experiences, and her mental activities” (p. 291) to explore her core issues.

To make it further clear how this theory applies to literature, Hossain has carried out a descriptive study by exploring different texts from different psychoanalytic points of view. He has described how this theory is significant from four perspectives: studying the influence of the author's life on his literary work, exploring the characters’ motivation and behaviors, having an idea of how the work would appeal to the audience, and the role of language in constructing text (Hossain, 2017). The author has explored the Oedipus complex as the core issue of D. H. Lawrence as expressed in his novel ‘Sons and Lover’. Also, the analysis of literary characters like Meursault from ‘The Stranger’ by Albert Camus is included in his article.

The above reviewed literature clarifies that Freud’s theory does not have only practical application in the field of therapy and clinical sciences but also it can be helpful in studying the behaviors of fictional characters since literature is the reflection of real-life experiences. Freud’s theory of Psychoanalysis provides an understanding of six major core issues. Thus, it is used as a framework for studying the behavior and responses of the male protagonists in Fatima Bhutto’s novel *The Runaways* (2018).

Material and Methods

The methodology used in this text included the close-text reading and the descriptive analysis of the concerned text with a focus on the behavior, decisions the certain characters made, and especially their dreams. The psychoanalytic approach is majorly based on identifying the conscious or unconscious activity of the author’s mind which provides the world with an aesthetic product in the form of literary text (Handy & Westbrook, 1976). However, Tyson (2006) suggests that this approach can be used to define the thought process of characters from literary texts dealing with them as people. The research is exploratory.

This research was designed to investigate how the psychological core issues of individuals influence their decisions regarding significant life choices. Further, the objective of this study is to highlight the importance of a person’s psychological makeup in the context of radicalization.

The sample text was selected through handpicked sampling and the characters of Sunny and Monty were exclusively focused because the author had provided the details of their intricate thought processes. For data collection, both primary and secondary sources were utilized including books, interviews, articles, and other online data.

Theoretical Framework

Sigmund Freud, in his works like *Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), *Analysis of Phobia in a Five Years Old Boy* (1909), and *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (1933), proposed six core issues. In his book, *Critical Theory Today* (2006), Lois Tyson has attempted to arrange and explain these core issues namely: fear of abandonment, fear of intimacy, fear of betrayal, low self-esteem, unstable sense of self, and oedipal fixation. These terms can be reviewed in order to have a deeper understanding of the core issues of the male protagonists of the novel *The Runaways* (2018). Fear of abandonment is a condition when a person fears that his/her loved ones do not care about them or would desert them. Because of fear of intimacy, a person keeps himself at an emotional distance in order to

avoid being hurt. Fear of betrayal leaves a person with trust issues. Low self-esteem is another core issue due to which a person considers himself less worthy of life rewards, love, affection, care, and attention. Sense of having identity is crucial to one's stable self but those who are lacking this are said to have unstable self. Such people easily get influenced by other people and continually change themselves. Oedipal fixation refers to the unconscious attraction that people feel toward their parents of the opposite sex. Thus, Tyson emphasizes that "core issues stay with us throughout life, and unless effectively addressed, they determine our behavior in destructive ways." (p.17)

Core issues are unconscious, or there is an unconscious desire to keep them unconscious. Because "during sleep, the unconscious is free to express itself." (Tyson, 2006, p. 18), dreams can be important signifiers of the core issues. Also, Freud holds the idea that these core issues can shape behaviors and serve as a driving force. Sometimes, when the defense system of individuals collapses, the core issues come to the surface and they feel *anxiety*. Thus, the events where people feel anxious, are important markers of their psychological core issues.

Analysis

Youth joining Jihadist or extremist organizations is not a new subject and it has gained even more importance after the 9/11 attack. Most of the theorists have discussed socio-cultural aspects like identity dilemmas, poverty, and alienation that tend people to join extremist movements. But Freud holds the view that our behaviors and approaches towards life are driven by our psychological make-up and especially "core issues define our being in fundamental ways." (Tyson, 2006, p. 17) How these core issues influence a person's decision about life and how they can cause self-destructive behaviors, is what can be explored through Fatima Bhutto's novel *The Runaways (2018)*. Both the male protagonists of the novel, Monty and Sunny, end up in the Ummah Movement because of their obsession with their fears. Bhutto informs her readers that "Monty...was- and had always been- afraid" (Bhutto, 2018 p. 90)

According to Freud, our being is, essentially, the product of our role and status in our family. Monty is the only son of Akbar Ahmed and Zahra. His fears started to emerge when he first realized that he was less worthy and held no significant position for his father. Monty heard his parents fighting over him and got hit by the realization that their matrimonial bond started to get affected. It was the time when he developed *low self-esteem* as a core issue and developed a fear that it was because of him that his father was upset and his mother was disturbed. Akbar Ahmed wanted his son to be a "real man" while according to him, his wife was turning him into a "sissy." Like any other man, Monty had a repressed desire to command and control the world but he did know that he was not able to do so.

When Monty met Layla in the American School of Karachi, she seemed to have a bold, fearless, and mysterious personality and this is the reason he got attracted to her. Bhutto narrates it as "Monty wanted her because she was fearless" (Bhutto, 2018, p. 90). The fearlessness was the part of her power. After having Layla, the sense of unworthiness and low self-esteem vanished from his being. Layla was a "freedom fighter" and because of her, Monty was made sensitized with the Marxist realities like class disparity and marginalization of the poor so he felt morally uplifted. Before meeting Layla, Monty was only floating through the world: only after her, did he start occupying it. But Layla abandoned him and joined the Jihadists in Mosul. Monty, who felt heartbroken at first, when watched a LiveLeak video of her in Mosul, got hope of having his love back.

Thus, Monty set off to Mosul and the Ummah Movement so that he could bring Layla back. Monty suffered from *fear of abandonment* from here on. Since Monty got a hope of getting Layla back, he started to feel threatened by the fear that he would be abandoned by her. After spending months in Mosul, Monty and Sunny started their march to Nineveh,

guiding the other Jihadists. While Sunny was part of the journey because of his so-called cause, Monty was still in search of Layla because he thought he would find her in Nineveh. Thus, "he would have walked to Nineveh alone if it meant finding Layla" (Bhutto, 2018, p. 188). Monty's fear of abandonment manifests itself in two ways: through his dreams of Layla and the situations in which he becomes anxious. Most human desires, repressed emotions, guilts, and fears are in their unconscious, and during the time of sleep, they are free to express themselves. Monty's fear of losing Layla is expressed in his dreams. Monty dreamt only about Layla and Bhutto has described his two dreams. The manifest content of both the dreams signified his fear of abandonment i.e. he will not get Layla back. In both of his dreams, he saw Layla leaving. In his first dream, he saw Layla when her hair started to rise like a corona of stars and whenever she tried to speak, they fell onto her feet one by one. Monty saw himself asking: What are you doing? Where are you going? But she never answered and "That night he dreamed of Layla leaving" (Bhutto, 2018, p. 286)

In his second dream, Monty saw himself standing in a river and Layla at the bank of that river. Monty reached for her hand but she got back off. Monty felt that the currents of the river were driving them apart from each other and separating them. This dream implies that Monty was motivated by his desires for Layla. But Layla had already abandoned him once so she was at the bank. Bhutto describes this dream as "the currents were dragging them apart, Monty felt Layla pulling away from him... he took a step towards her, but froze, afraid" (Bhutto, 2018, p.306)

The events, in which a person gets anxious, signify the core issues of that person because it is the time of "return of the repressed" (Tyson, 2006, p. 17). Throughout the narrative, Monty had two panic attacks and grew worried, and both had one thing in common: Monty's fear of losing Layla forever and that she would die. The first circumstance occurred when Monty and Sunny arrived at the Mosul Dam, which was the Ummah Movement's second significant triumph after Mosul. When they arrived, the area was empty, with no indication of life or Jihadists. The first thought that haunted Monty was that Layla would be in danger. Monty started reaching out for his Thuraya irrespective of the fact that this could notify them about their exact location to the local militias. Monty has a panic attack when he thinks that it is going to be the end and he will die before regaining the sight of Layla. Monty had traveled to a different end of the world in search of Layla, fearing not getting her back, but at this moment his concerns were starting to plague him, making him numb. The second time Monty got anxious was when Abu Khalid, head of the Ummah Movement, once discovered the past of Layla being involved in sex tourism and ordered Sunny and Monty to kill her. It was due to his extreme fear that Monty stopped trembling and despite seeing every violence with Layla, Monty was not able to move. But as soon as Monty realizes that Sunny is going to make her abandon him by killing her (as death is the ultimate abandonment), Monty, overwhelmed by his *fear of abandonment*, takes the dagger from Sunny and stabbed it right into his ribs. The author describes this as,

"Monty holds the knife in his hand for a second or two and directs his thoughts. He breathes deeply and forbids himself to second-guess himself or regret what he is about to do... Monty spins on his heel and strikes the knife with all of his strength. After he pulls the blade out of Sunny ribs, Monty closes his eyes" (Bhutto, 2018, p. 421)

Like Monty, Sunny also suffered from low self-esteem because he was always compared with others by his own Dad. In classical psychoanalysis, the family is significant as Freud explained that it provides the basis for the primary development of the self. Thus, if the self feels threatened in the same primary environment, it remains shaken. Hence, Sunny's suffered from self-distrust and fragile self-esteem because "That was all Sunny ever heard at home. Be someone else. Do something else. Be better" (Bhutto, 2018, p.14)

It was the product of his father's lack of faith in him. Sunny was the only child of Suleiman Jamil and he wanted the best for his son. Suleiman had high hopes for his son, of

getting a Bachelor's degree from a prestigious university, having a luxurious life style, and a dream job. All his childhood, Sunny was raised listening to how his father sacrificed for him and what was expected of him to do. Also, Sunny, living in Portsmouth, started to feel emotionally abandoned due to his identity dilemma and being in a third space.

Since "Core issue can result from another core issue or can cause the emergence of another core issue". (Tyson, 2006, p. 17), Sunny's low self-esteem and sense of being abandoned by his father and society resulted in his unstable sense of self. Sunny was unable to hold a sense of having an identity. Being unprotected, afraid, and alone at Portsmouth, Sunny waited for someone who would help him uplift himself from his "troubled self". People, who suffer from an unstable sense of self and inability to hold an identity, are more liable to get influenced by other people. This was the reason why Sunny was motivated first by Oz (Ozair) and second by Aloush but the impact of Oz was more dominating. Oz was his cousin who came back from Syria where he volunteered himself for refugee camps.

When Oz returned, Sunny found him beautifully confident and at peace. Also, the family of Oz was satisfied with his "efforts". These were both the things Sunny was lacking in himself so, Sunny found Oz to be the only person who could help him and make him worthy of respect, love, and affection. Sunny started to spend time with Oz, a radical. Oz knew what Sunny was lacking and he offered him the same thing which was "the glory of their original self." (Bhutto, 2018, p. 102) Now Sunny was ready to set on a journey, to fight for a cause and to die. Sunny was prepared to end his life until he met Aloush in an underground café. Aloush was a DJ and played music in that café. Aloush praised him for his skills of beat and drums giving him a sense of worthiness for which Sunny was yearning and craving. Throughout his life, Sunny had a deep desire to be seen and it was Aloush who fulfilled it. Sunny was neither able to make his father proud nor he succeeded in impressing Oz. Whatever Sunny did until now was either for his father's sake or for Oz. But in the café, he played drums for himself and got appreciated by Aloush. It was when he forgot about his nothingness but he failed to understand his self. Sunny considered Aloush as a test at this point when he was ready to set off for a "sacred" cause. But deep down he knew its importance "he knew somehow that if anything held him back, it would be this, whatever it was" (Bhutto, 2018, p. 144) But the influence of Oz was stronger so he shrugged off this realization.

Oz sent him to Mosul and guided him about everything. At first Sunny thought Oz would join him later but when Sunny and Monty were traveling to Nineveh, he learned about his cousin's betrayal whom he considered his "spirit animal" and "true self". Oz, after sending him to the war, had backed off and joined an organization named *Reforming Radicals*. Oz has now started to preach how the radicals are a threat to the world presenting himself as a survivor of the extremist world. Sunny felt betrayed and for the first time, he realized that he had abandoned his Pa, house, Aloush, and every comfort for nothing. He knew nothing about the Movement and only watched a few videos on YouTube. And because of this, here amid the desert of Mosul, Sunny's core issue, an insecure sense of self, started returning. He mailed his father after months and he missed Aloush as well. Thus, Sunny felt himself swinging between two poles: death and life. But Sunny's relationship with the death was relatively more intimate because of the early death of his mother. Sunny was not bothered by it and did not seem to care about it because he never had a sense of motherly care, love, and affection. But, as the narrative progresses, it becomes clear that death drive of Sunny was stronger because of the early loss of his mother. His Thanatos caused a *fear of life* in him which made it easier for Oz to manipulate him. Now, after the betrayal of Oz, Sunny continued his journey toward Nineveh under the influence of his *death drive*. After a long journey across the desert, Sunny and Monty reached Nineveh. After reaching there, Sunny got to kill a man, the mayor of Nineveh, and in return, he earned the title of "*Abu Nineveh*". Finally, Sunny got a reward for his suffering and finally, he had been seen. Among all the people he knew, only this organization had given him a sense of rootedness and selfhood. But Sunny came to know that Layla dishonored the Ummah Movement because

her past sex tape was leaked. It was when Sunny displaced his anger of Oz onto her and decided to kill her because he thought she was a betrayer. So, Sunny was radicalized and his radicalization was continually motivated by his core issues.

Finding

From the detailed analysis of the textual cues and the stream of consciousnesses of Monty and Sunny, it was derived that both the characters suffered from the core issues.

The primary cause of these core issues was the dysfunctional families of Monty and Sunny. Home and family can provide a person self a safe place but for both the protagonists, this was not available. Instead, the constantly aggravating conflicts of Monty's parents and the high expectations of Sunny's father created an environment in which the core issues conveniently flourished. Both the characters had their respective fears emerge because of their family conditions.

In the case of Sunny, as suggested by Pourya (2014), the loss of his mother had an everlasting impact on him as the text provides the clues. This loss was significant because it led to the emergence of his first core issue. Moreover, Tyson (2006) suggested that one core issue can lead to another which was found in this study as well. Khoso and Shah (2016) have also affirmed this idea of the cause-effect relationship between various core issues.

Monty, though, had both parents but the relationship they experienced was not healthy. Like Sunny, Monty's father had exceptionally high expectations regarding his son which were humbled by Monty now and then. Hence, his wretched 'self' clung on to the hope of finding solace in his relationship with Anita. However, Anita's disappearance made him insecure. Hence, Monty suffered from fear of abandonment while Sunny suffered from fear of life, unstable sense of self, and low self-esteem.

Conclusion

Thus, from the analysis of the text, the conclusion can be drawn that both the characters, Monty and Sunny, became part of the Jihadist movement not only because they were infuriated but because of their psychological core issues. In the case of Monty, he was not even radicalized. He did not aim at being the permanent part of the movement but rather he just only wanted Layla back in his life. Monty joined that organization so that he would not be abandoned by Layla. This fear of abandonment was the reason for his joining the Ummah Movement. But in the case of Sunny, he had a more troubled psyche, suffering from low self-esteem, unstable sense of self, and fear of life. He was easily influenced by his cousin Oz, who betrayed him in the end. Sunny was constantly drawn towards self-destruction which is the ultimate effect of the core issues. Despite all the chaotic psychological issues, both Sunny and Monty had a common problem "The two of them were the same" (Bhutto, 2018, p.270). Both the male protagonists were obsessed by their fears and the person who seemed to them fearless became the center of their attraction. Monty loved Layla because she was fearless and Sunny was influenced by Oz because he was also fearless and confident. Thus, the psychological fears and core issues played an important role in bringing Monty and Sunny to the same place i.e. Mosul.

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