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The Exploration of Ambivalence in Dr. Naveed Shah's Character through the Psychoanalytic Social Context in *American Dervish*

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Abstract

This research aims to use a postcolonial perspective to describe ambivalence in Ayad Akhtar's novel *American Dervish*. Ayad depicts Dr. Naveed Shah's experiences as a member of the American community. This research examines the interplay of Naveed's psyche and ambivalence within the theoretical framework of Karen Horney's psychoanalytic social theory, drawn from her book "The Self Analysis", is examined through context and cultural norms. In this study, characters are identified and classified based on their status as colonizers or colonized. In various postcolonial literary studies, the relationship between East and West, colonizer and colonized is regarded as a hierarchical relationship in which one side oppresses the other. However, this study does not simply view colonizers and colonized in a hierarchical relationship. This study found that psyche and ambivalence are visible through the depictions of main character who changes his identity, culture, and religion. Ayad Akhtar sought to highlight the difficulties Muslim immigrants face in American society. Ayad Akhtar's design embodies the behavior of immigrants who face problems throughout their lives until they find a way to integrate them into their new society.

Key words: Ambivalence, Character Psyche Analysis, Identity, Psychoanalytical Social Theory, Immigrants Troubles.

Introduction

Worldwide societies have unique standards and values that shape individuals' personalities, making them both similar and distinct. While most people conform to societal norms, some resist or challenge them, leading to cultural evolution. Authors use this tension to create characters with diverse traits and responses to societal changes. Ayad Akhtar's novel *American Dervish* explores how Dr. Naveed Shah, Hayat Shah, and Munir Shah navigate imperial influence, exhibiting ambivalence that sparks postcolonial discourse. This study reexamines the novel's non-American characters through psychoanalytic social theory, revealing how ambivalence leads to neurotic schemas and hybridized identities.



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The analysis draws on Karen Horney's theory to understand how characters respond to societal pressures in unique ways, reflecting the complexities of human experience.

Background of Study

In this paper, I have applied Karen Horney's social theory to analyze the main characters in Ayad Akhtar's novel *American Dervish* (2012), exploring their ambivalence, conflicts, and inner emotions in the context of Muslim society and their journey from Islam to atheism, highlighting the impact on their psychology and relationships. In this research, I use Karen Horney's psychoanalytic social theory to interpret the protagonist in the selected novel.

I have interpreted him as an independently in psychological strife with his family and the society in which he lives. The paper is focusing on the character's inner conflict and anxieties, which associate with his interrelation with his family and other members. Psychoanalytic social theory is used to study the main character emotions, behavior, thoughts, childhood experiences and reactions expressed through his character. In his book *Imagining Psychological Approaches to Human Character and Conflict in Literature* (1997), Bernard J. Paris states, "Trying to understand the behavior of emotionally attracted characters. This is conceivable as we understand the attitude of the characters to which we are attracted" true individuals" (Characters and Relationships xi). Therefore, it is speculated that Ayad had his characters exhibit the same indication because he wanted to show how conflicts in the environment can cause a person to become psychotic.

Ayad's *American Dervish* can be taken into consideration a terrific example of postcolonial condemnation, wherein the western and non- Western represent the racial "other". Right here, their language is a crucial device for analyzing and knowledge their duality, divided, hybrid and ambivalent identities. Mobility or the dearth of concrete identification is very other important challenge of postcolonial critics.

Statement of Problem

Ambivalence is closely related to the fluent identity of Dr. Naveed Shah's character, which causes the character to have an identity crisis in the novel. Problems arise when character discovers himself to have bewildering uniqueness and discover himself to be a jumble of hybrid identities. In this article, the author focuses on characters who exhibit inner ambivalence because the character of Dr. Naveed is a main figure worthy of analysis. For example, he is an atheist and opposes culture, norms, and religion.

Research Questions

The aim of this research is conducted to search out the answers of given below following questions.

How ambivalence and neurotics trends are shown in Naveed Shah's character?

What are the effects of Naveed Shah's ambivalence on the others and his own life?

Objectives of the Study



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This research highlights the significance of change in the Cultural Revolution, providing insights for scholars to know the impact of cultural factors on their work. It introduces new perspectives on history and culture, benefiting postcolonial studies and creative projects. The findings have far-reaching implications, contributing significantly to existing knowledge and extending beyond current cultural boundaries.

This study specifically addresses.

- a. To examine (find) contradiction in the novel.
- b. To search out the main character's psyche based on psychoanalytical social theory.
- c. To find out the way how ambivalence and identity issue can be applied to tempt psychoanalytical theory analysis into *American Dervish*.

Literature Review

The previous study was conducted by Wendy B. Smith (2007) at the University of Southern California. Her research, "*Karen Horney and Psychotherapy in the 21st Century*" is based on the psychological theories of neurotic anxieties, neurotic tendencies, and the self. Many of the ideas currently presented in psychology and psychoanalytic networks from this research are based on ideas developed by Karen Horney in the first half of the 20th century. This study outlines Horney's supposed disconnect with Freud and prefaces her then-questionable views on inspiration and relationships. The similarities between Horney's ideas and hypotheses about connections between individuals in ego psychology, inter subjectivity, and climate are examined. This study presents two clinical examples of Horney's theory and excessive theory.

Horney builds a relationship between the internal and external world with a positive enhancement mindset and an open system. Her conception of the individual governs the particularities of individuals, whether or not there are still hidden characteristics that perceive the more normal ways in which individuals organize themselves in response to disruptive encounters in early life. Her affirmative views on policy and progress and the potential of humankind to evolve were supported by subsequent research on the brain and newborns.

The previous research was conducted by Anita Sakti (2009) from the English Department of Semarang State University. Her research plan is "*Human rights conflicts in Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*". She said that internal conflict is a warning sign for individuals. It is important in everyone. In drama, especially in fiction, as she suggested, the internal conflict of others between conflicting goals helps us to understand ourselves better in the thinking process, especially when dealing with similar problems. It uses expository qualitative research and uses Karen Horney's psychological theory to investigate the causes of coping with indecision. I have studies two positions divided into two groups: primary sources and secondary sources. The first source is the novel "*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*". Secondary data is obtained from books, magazines, newspapers, the internet and encyclopedias. The information it receives from fiction is the structure of sentences, idioms, quotations, open sentences, hidden meanings; the information it receives from other sources is discipline, search, and appropriate place. Gather information by reading carefully, discerning, and organizing into comments.



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The previous study was conducted by Saifullah Ahmad (2020) from the International University of Business, Agriculture and Technology. His research is "*Exploration of Ambivalence and Hybridity in Tempests*." Sheikh Saifullah Ahmad (2020) explores the spark of conflict created by the unexpected connection between Caliban and Ariel in *The Tempest*. Caliban is a colonized, self-segregated person who cannot repeat himself to the European colonizers. These pieces cause Caliban and Ariel to interfere and fight against Prospero, risking losing Prospero due to the pioneering heritage that supports their interbreeding, thus undermining their next freedom. "The power is strong." The conflict between Caliban and Ariel demonstrates the merging of the characters in a hybrid development that welcomes the judgment of postcolonial critics.

This study reveals that characters' confused identities and complex personalities can lead to problems. It offers a fresh perspective on non-European characters' ambiguous depictions in literature, exploring their indecisiveness and mixed representations through postcolonial theory, specifically Homi K. Bhabha's concepts of ambivalence and hybridity. The research aims to identify human standards in novels and uncover inherent conflicts, aligning with my exploration. Focusing on "*American Dervish*", the author analyzes ambivalence in the text, recognizing it as a common and intriguing issue. She finds, contain multiple standards - polite codes and fair rules that respect individuality.

The next study was a survey of past research, directed by Luscher (2011) at the University of Konstanz, Germany. The study talks about ambivalence, authorizing *Ambivalence: "Sensitive Structures for Intergenerational Relations Research and Practice"*. He chose ambivalence because that's what countless people in the universe are saying. Ambivalence understands the dynamics between personal effort and consideration. This research suggests that ambivalence can see as key to talk each other. This research is endorsed by Blumer's (1954) theory, which uses inner conflict as a component to create the view that has dominated human scientific focus since the 1970s, regarding struggle and perseverance, such as between older and younger adults. Feelings that are contrary to something different can cause inner conflict. According to his research, ambivalence appears to be a condition. It is similar to the alternating perspectives between young and old. He considered he should lead research on ambivalence.

The further study was conducted by Plight (2005) at the University of Konstanz, Germany, who provided a critical perspective on previous study. The study discusses *Ambivalence, discomfort, and motivated information processing*. The study sheds light on the growth of ambivalence. Drawing on Petty Dan Krosnick (1995), he argued that mindset consists of four measures such as persuasion, anticipatory tendencies, adjustment, and factual progression. Someone has a habit of completing her questions paradoxically by holding a positive perspective and ignoring the negative angle. The study was coordinated by 60 members of the University of Amsterdam, including 36 women and 24 men, typically between 19 and 24 years old. The purpose of his research was to understand members' ambivalence. They were eager to think about contradictory questions.

The author uses Karen Horney's qualitative description techniques and psychoanalytic social theory. The author used two types of sources in his search process. Original sources include the novel *American Dervish*. The second source is encouraging information such as psychological journals, books, dictionaries,



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the Internet, and previous research that is relevant to my research.

Theoretical Framework

The researcher applies psychoanalytic techniques to investigate the inner conflicts and psychological issues of the novel's characters. The analysis draws on the three-facet model of neuroticism tendencies to explore the characters' ambivalence and inner struggles. The author utilizes psychoanalytic research methods to examine the characters' inner conflicts, supported by evidence from various sources, including psychology books, past studies, journals, and online resources. The aim of this analysis is to illuminate the characters' inner conflicts, and the author's thorough research and argumentation strengthen the validity of this study.

Methodology

A qualitative content analysis method is used as a literary research in order to complete the study. The initial source of data collection is the text of Ayad Akhtar's *American Dervish* (2012) and the secondary sources of data include books, journals, articles, reviews, thesis, masters and doctoral thesis, newspaper articles and book review. I read the text of "*American Dervish*" and the criticisms of famous Ayad critics to discover the conflicting portrayal of non-Americans. In this research, qualitative method is used to clarify the research questions. Additionally, I followed the APA Research Paper Writers Manual 6th Edition Writing style and citations.

Scope and Limitations

This academic study has specific boundaries. As indicated by the title, it focuses solely on "*American Dervish*" and employs qualitative content analysis. It delves into the ambivalence and psychology of the main character, offering new perspectives and enriching existing knowledge. This research contributes to literary analysis and provides fresh postcolonial insights into understanding "*American Dervish*", enhancing the field of literary studies.

Karen Horney Social Historical Context

Karen was born in 1885 to a protestant upper middle class family in Hamburg, Germany. Her father was Norwegian captain, and a devout Bible reader. Her mother, a progressive Dutch woman, supported her daughter's decision to pursue medical research, which was uncommon for women during that era (kelman, 1967). According to Marianne Eckardt, her mother had clear objectives in mind as she pursued her career. "She recognized early on in her medical research that, she would focus on psychoanalysis" (Natterson, 1966, p. 451)

Horney pursued her medical education at the universities of Freiburg, Göttingen, and Berlin. Following her psychoanalysis sessions with Karl Abraham, she became one of the founding members of the Institute of Psychoanalysis in Berlin. In 1932, Franz Alexander extended an invitation to her as the deputy director of the Chicago Psychoanalytic Institute, where she served for two years before relocating to New York to join the New York Psychoanalytic Institute. There, her unconventional perspective was met with controversy, and in 1941 she was removed from her teaching position at the institute. In the same year, she established the American Institute of Psychoanalysis and held the position of



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dean until her passing.

The scientific theories of the 19th century were centered on closed systems and determinism, which provided the mental backdrop for Freud to formulate his groundbreaking ideas. In the early 1900s, individuals started to embrace more flexible perspectives, where they could recognize a certain level of determinism, while also acknowledging the importance of moral and aesthetic values (Kelman, 1967).

Basic Anxiety

Basic anxiety is defined as the feeling of insignificance, smallness, helplessness, abandonment, vulnerability in a world filled with deception, abuse, attack, insult, betrayal, and jealousy (Horney: 1937). This anxiety stems from the conflict between dependence on others and the desire for autonomy, leading to feelings of hatred and resentment towards caregivers. Suppressing anger leaves children vulnerable and unable to recognize potential dangers. Horney believed that this sense of helplessness and lack of protection contributes to neurotic adults' anxiety about feeling powerless in a hostile world. Basic anxiety plays a crucial role in child development, influencing attitudes towards oneself and others. It arises from various factors, including dominance, insecurity, unpredictability, disregard for the child's needs, and lack of reliable support. Under the influence of basic anxiety, individuals experience emotional separation, alienation, loneliness, and self-doubt, leading to distrust and hostility towards others, making it difficult for them to seek comfort, protection, and love.

Horney's Theory of Neurosis

Horney thinks that everyone has an inner core force, which is shared by everyone, but everyone has a unique personality. She believes that this power is the source of development. She calls this power the "true self" (Horney, 1950, p. 18). Everyone needs love and friction or setbacks to grow up healthily. If a person in the environment cannot love his child, or "can't even imagine him as a specific individual" (p. 18), he will alienate his true self and creates basic anxiety. Everyone develops strategies to deal with the environment, but in general, what Winnicott calls "good enough" environments these strategies can be flexibly adopted or abandoned depending on the situation. For children who develop basic anxiety due to harsh or indifferent environments, strategies can become extreme and rigid, causing internal conflicts between strategies. A child tries to resolve conflicts by making a strategy dominant, which often harms his or her interests.

I have provided a detailed explanation of these approaches or solutions to convey the power and applicability of the model and lay the foundation for discussing the model's relationship with other current theories and ultimately with subsequent clinical cases. However, first, let's introduce Horney's self-view will lay for our understanding.

Horney's Concept of Self-idealized

Horney divided the self into three variations: the true self, the proper self, and the real self. The true self refers back to the range of opportunities that exist in everyone, along with temperament, abilities, talents, and inclinations. This self is the supply of values, a healthful conscience, and an experience of energy. The



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real self is a "feasible self" that can't completely develop without fine surroundings (Horney, 1950; Paris, 1999).

The ideal self is created in response to anxiety generated by problematic circumstances. When the real self is unable to induce sufficiently positive or growth responses from significant others, the child is alienated from the real self. It attempts to solve the feelings of isolation and/or hostility through the fantasy ideal self that holds an imaginary promise to feel positive identity and satisfying internal needs for security and security. The energy is diverted from the real self - realization to the goal to achieve the ideal self, which of course is unattainable and therefore "impossible self". Horney referred to the persecution of the ideal self as a "search for fame". This search implies the need for perfection, neurotic ambition and, often, a need for vindictive victory (Horney, 1950). It is noteworthy that the ideal being also contains being despised that it is not up to the fantasy and impossible expectations.

The conceptual self or the image is the product of failure to fulfill the exaggerated compensation requirements of the idealized self. Self-Hatred is a wrath of the idealized self in the real self because he could not live according to his "should" stand. Horney's concept "Tyranie Bounds" (Horney, 1950) describes a strong need to achieve a spectacular self -concept to avoid unbearable helplessness and weakness in the enemy or indifferent world. So, 'shoulds' is tending to be extreme, for example "I should always understand others" or "others should never hurt me". Ultimately, the real self is a integration of power and weaknesses, set of tactics and efforts that tell the individual present existence in the world. In this condition, the true self is close to the real self; under good circumstances, the true self is close. In less positive contexts, there is a huge difference between the two (Paris, 1999a).

Horney's Neurotic Trend Schema

Neurotic tendencies are short-term coping mechanisms that individuals employ to navigate the world within them. All of the strategies are potentials. The anxious person is unable to utilize them in a manner that is customized to their unique circumstances. Every fundamental attitude has both a positive and a negative aspect (Horney, 1945).

The initial approach is to move closer to individuals. The person desires to be well-liked, desired, accepted, safeguarded, and to feel secure. It is conceivable that selflessness might be required. The ability to establish a positive connection with the external environment is the key value.

The second approach is to challenge individuals directly. Life is viewed as a constant battle between oneself and the world, and individuals feel the need to dominate and control others to achieve success. The individual suppresses his emotions to prioritize practicality and must battle the more tender emotions that arise. The individual can prepare himself for success in a competitive society by employing this strategy.

The third and last strategy is to focus on isolation, distancing oneself from others. This approach satisfies the need for freedom and self-dependence. The individual is neurotically detached and tries to exclude anyone or anything from becoming important.

To asset that people can achieve wholeness and peace in a difficult world. This is a version of the three primary strategies Horney described in her 1945 book, *The Conflicts within Us*. In 1950, she published a book called *Neurosis and Human*



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Growth, in which she described solutions to each neurosis in more detail and specificity. In later developments are described approaching people as a humble solution" that includes an appeal to love. In this case, the idealized self glorifies suffering and annihilation, and in extreme cases leads to pathological dependence others. Behavior toward people is called "extended decision", and its main attraction is control. The idealized self is superior and magnificent here. It demands admiration.

Finally, being away from the individuals is portrayed as "resigning"; a sense of freedom is the goal. Horney believed that this was the most fundamental solution to conflict because it was the most limiting of life and growth. All tendencies are existed in everyone; among neurotics one tendency prevalent in a self-destructive manner. A brief overview of some key points of Horney's theory of neurosis aligns with the principles of ego psychology and attachment theory, providing evidence for its validity.

Dr. Naveed Shah's Character

Dr. Naveed claimed that he had never read a book in his life, but he was a successful doctor and an intelligent man. This is part of the anti-intellectual posture that both Nathan and Hayat want to undermine; as they point out that he has written and edited many books. Dr. Shah did not agree with his religious upbringing. He is a secular Muslim who hates mosques and thinks imams are gullible fools. He has a volatile personality and is prone to alcoholism and rage. He had extramarital affairs but still treated his wife fairly.

Analysis of Character Psyche

Muslim writers and visionary creative have depicted the diversity of this religious community, despite the generalization that Muslims are a solid local community of fundamentalists and a society based on dubious fears of their oppressors. They counter the homogeneous negotiation of the so-called "Muslim world" in standard culture by depicting a conflicted society in dialogue with multiple voices. The novel *American Dervish* undoubtedly emerges as the most important structure showing the majority of people in Muslim societies. Mikhail Bakhtin (1981) describes the category of fiction as "a sort of social debates types and, further, a variety of individual voices, creatively coordinated". It is the class capacity to forge connections between "heterogeneous, multivocal, multistylistic and often multilingual components" that is a classic element of true novelistic interpretation.

This study focuses on Muslim ambivalence in Ayad Akhtar's novel *American Dervish* (2012). It is written by a male author and featuring a male protagonist who wants to assimilate into the United States. *American Dervish* has been hailed as "the great American Muslim book" (Boyagoda 2012). Although the novel's setting is not exclusively focused on the Muslim community of 1980s Milwaukee, its multivocality and diverse cast of characters, described as an "unruly mass" of varying shades of brown (Akhtar 301), make it a significant work that weaves Islam into the fabric of American society. Given the complexity and polyphony of meanings in the novel, it merits further study, particularly in the current historical moment of backlash between Islam and the United States. *American Dervish* is also notable for its bildungsroman structure, which tells a



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story of personal development that reflects the broader experiences of a multicultural society (Cheah, 2003).

The Neurotic Impact of Dr. Naveed on People and Himself

To better understand the main characters, this study is examined Dr. Naveed Shah's personality and behaviors. Dr. Shah possesses a unique ability to discern a person's character and background from his appearance. However, when anxious or idle, he sometimes turns to drinking and escapism. This exploration aims to uncover the motivations behind Dr. Shah's actions, providing insight into his character and enhancing both the author's and readers' understanding of his personality.

Naveed's Self-Idealization

Naveed rough style resolves his essential conflict with people. Horney believed that, for him, life was a battle of all against all, with the devil ultimately winning (1945; p 63). The character of Naveed lacks the love, affection, and hope he gets from his parents. As a child, Naveed faced trouble from his parents and a lack of love and religion. When Naveed was a child, her mother abused and beat him for morning prayers. This sentence had a great impact on his character and childhood training. He could not live in a normal Muslim family and the family had little understanding of Islam. Hayat said that according to the mother, the father's aversion to faith came from the fact that his own mother used piety to abuse her children, beating them out of bed for morning prayers if they did not devote time to prayer, don't feed them. "But that doesn't mean he doesn't still believe in Allahmia," Mother would add, assumingly (*American Dervish*, 36).

Horney believes that in early childhood, these individuals give up any expectation of having loving parents. Horney also believes that the way to confront people is for guardians to combine disregard with basic contempt and embarrassment. Dr. Naveed became an unbeliever because he disliked Islam. Naveed's parents weren't very interested in him. This is the reason he is against Islam. He disliked the Imam, he did not address the people in a good way, and he felt dissatisfied in the company of Muslims. They don't work for Islam, they work for money. He wouldn't donate to the mosque. "Souhef asked Father for a donation. Father declined" (*American Dervish*, 125).

As a child, Naveed told the Imam. A good man was a friend of my father. His experiences with Jews are shown. Naveed and his father tried to escape from Muslims but found comfort in the company of Jews. Dr. Naveed Shah found his affection and fulfillment in a Jewish girl after changing his behavior and thoughts towards his wife. "I heard more tales from Mother about Father's mistresses than anything" (*American Dervish*, 21). Naveed tells his better half Munir that no matter how much he loves the white lady, he despises her. Moreover, she asserts: "He doesn't like my mouth," he told me. He doesn't like the mouths of his white prostitutes the way he likes them. Free heart, free mind, free mouth, he said. Not like Oriental women, who are heavy and dark and mentally bound" (*American Dervish*, 144). Muneer doesn't like Naveed's rude behavior with women and not respect the women. She focused and said, "However, a man who drinks and cheats on his wife doesn't have any credibility; she likes to say that" (*American Dervish*, 167). Naveed's father preferred to drink, and he started drinking too. This has an effect on the child's life because



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the child learns these things from own family and society. Consequently, the child learns not to expect affection from others and, moreover, to combat scrutiny by developing a tough "I'll get you before you get me" attitude towards others.

Dr. Naveed's activities were opposed to the Muslim society. When he was a child, he saw that his father had a good relationship with the Jews and said that the Jews were good. They were honest and respected women. Hayat says, "I never met my grandfather, but I heard that he respected Jews, a respect that came from his experience living with Jews as a student in England after World War II" (*American Dervish*, 82). But while my grandfather's respect for Jewish culture was specific to certain spiritual qualities that he considered a true extension of life, my mother's admiration for all things Semitic was far more eccentric (*American Dervish*, 83). It was a system of transition from one generation to the next, and Naveed struck up a friendship with his colleague Nathan Wolfsohn, a polite guy from "Boston," Jewish, sociable people." Naveed belong to a third-world village, Muslim rough hewn and sardonic. Their fellows at hospital called them the Odd Couple" (*American Dervish Ibid*).

The Impact of Dr. Naveed Shah Ambivalence in *American Dervish*

The other characters in the novel were influenced by Dr. Naveed Shah. Hayat and his mother were affected by their attitudes and distanced themselves from the people. He was unable to receive Islamic education because of his father's ambivalence. His father, Naveed, has a dual character that complicates his life. Hayat's parents aren't religious. Mina took up the responsibility of teaching the Quran when she arrived. Hayat didn't hear any religious stories from his parents or his mother but he heard white mistress stories from his mother. "I heard more tales from Mother about Father's mistress than anything else" (*American Dervish*, 33). As Munir suffered from her significant other, she began to instill in her child the idea that he should avoid Muslim attitude toward ladies and adopt Jewish behavior. Many times, she revealed to her child that she might want to see him behave like a Jew rather than a Muslim. There is a conception of Muslim people; they treat women badly because they do not respect his wife. Naveed no longer accompanies his wife because he does not love her. He falls in love a Jewish girl. Munir's life was influenced by her husband, who also had a great impact on the lives of her children. She tells her son and says: "Father, with a white woman by his side, both leaned over a lot of garbage, collecting pieces of garbage with the teeth" (*American Dervish*, 111). The mother never saved any time or tried to show Hayat how unique the Jews were compared to the Muslims in their treatment of ladies. Jews respect them; but Muslims are rude. "Promise me, behta. Promise me not to end like him. You won't live like him" (*American Dervish, Ibid*). Apparently, Hayat received his admiration for the Jewish people from his parents, and the Jewish people from their parents. Like his father, Hayat had a Jewish girlfriend named Rachel.

Hayat was ready to attend Professor Edelstein's lecture. Hayat's father and ancestors shaped their views of Jews from their encounters with them. Naveed's attitude was the reason for this. The impact of his father's childhood experiences, contrary to culture, religion and people, must be confronted by his son Hayat. He has complex attitudes that are psychic. The life experiences of Hayat's grandfather made him respect Jews. According to Hayat's grandfather, Jews are



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extremely considered to be learning, "not remembering roles and regurgitation of the tradition he considered common to Muslims" (*American Dervish*, 101).

Hayat's father, Naveed, has an ambivalent attitude towards Islam, preventing Hayat from receiving proper Islamic education. Hayat's parents are secular and atheist, and his father forbids him from learning the Quran. However, when Mina arrives, she teaches Hayat Islamic principles and Quranic studies. Despite this, Hayat's father remains opposed to religious constraints, and Hayat retains a significant part of the Quran without knowing its original language. Hayat, being educated by Mina, memorizes a significant portion of the Quran (becoming a hafiz) and, out of concern for his father's well-being, prays to God to spare his father from punishment in Hellfire due to his sinful ways. "I heard Father's cries pain as the fires burned him" (*American Dervish*, 136). Hayat is driven to become a hafiz, memorizing the Quran, in hopes of securing a place in Paradise not only for himself, but also for his parents, thereby saving his father from Hellfire. "No matter how many drinks, no matter how many mistresses, Father would be saved" (*American Dervish*, 137).

Naveed, a former Muslim, dismisses the Quran and takes it away from Hayat to steer him away from Islam. "He pulled out and torn the pages and pieces of pages falling on his feet. He tore and torn and the carpet was covered with paper. And now his father danced and ground pages under his feet" (*American Dervish*, 169). Naveed justifies disrespecting the Quran due to his negative view of certain Muslims, seeing them as hypocrites who value wealth over God, and fears his son is following suit. Naveed, disillusioned with the Muslims around him, rejects Islam and its symbols, including the Quran, which he burns, telling his son it's because he wants him to be different. "You can't live a life according to the rules that give you others. You and I are the same. You have to find your own rules. I have run all my life from their rules, Hayat. All my life. You will be the same. Don't ask me as I know, but I" (*American Dervish*, 218). Naveed's flaws stem from his unstable mindset and troubled childhood experience.

The Analysis of Ambivalence Describe in *American Dervish*

American Dervish, a novel by Ayad Akhtar, explores the complexities of identity, religion, and cultural assimilation through the experiences of a Pakistani immigrant family, particularly Dr. Naveed Shah and his son Hayat. The story delves into the tensions between traditional beliefs and modern life, as the characters grapple with ambivalence, nostalgia, and the challenges of integrating into American society while reconciling their past and present. Through the protagonist's journey, the novel examines the struggles of the first and second generations of immigrants, identity formation, and the impact of cultural and religious conflicts on personal relationships.

The Ambivalence of Dr. Naveed Shah

Dr. Naveed Shah, a main character in the novel *American Dervish*, represents the older generation's loss of Islamic identity. He is portrayed as a complex, ambivalent figure, rejecting Islamic values and exhibiting both positive and negative traits, highlighting the struggles of cultural assimilation and identity formation. Naveed's wife, Muneer, remains silent about his infidelity, as he engages in extramarital affairs with a white mistress or prostitute, revealing his hypocritical and unfaithful nature. "I heard more tales from mother about father



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mistress" (*American Dervish*, 21). Naveed's character, depicted by Ayad, is a complex, ambivalent figure, showing both abusive and loving behavior towards his wife, Muneer, especially when drunk, revealing a troubled and conflicted personality. "When they have finished their dinner than mother and father get up and do something else they never did: they went for a walk together" (*American Dervish*, 116). Naveed's character, portrayed by Akhtar, exhibits a dual and conflicted psychology, struggling with a loveless marriage, seeking compromise with his wife, yet often failing to do so, revealing a tumultuous and ambivalent mindset.

Dr. Naveed Shah, despite his outward rejection of Pakistani culture and religion, secretly craves and cherishes traditional Pakistani food, like lamb chops, *naans* and *bhindi bhna*, revealing a deep-seated connection to his heritage. He lifted his class of *lassi* toward Mina and her son. "It's good to have you here, he said" (*American Dervish*, 26). After embracing American culture, he forgets everything and makes no difference between Halal and Haram. He eats pork and drinks alcohol instead of eating traditional food.

Naveed Shah, an atheist, shows ambivalence towards Islam, agreeing to visit a mosque with friend Nathan, despite having no interest in the religion or its community. He says to his friend "What the hell is wrong with you, Nate? Why are you wearing that thing on you head?" "We are going to mosque" (*American Dervish*, 123). Naveed Shah mocks Nathan for wearing a skullcap, ridiculing his interest in Islam, but shows tolerance and sympathy when his son Hayat wears one, revealing a contradictory and hypocritical attitude. "He says Nathan pointed to me. "He's wearing one," he said. Father shook his head. "He's a baby, Nate. He doesn't know any better" Nathan looked at me and kept my view with the complaint" (*American Dervish*, 123). Naveed Shah condescendingly tells Nathan he's too naive to understand what's good for him, implying superiority, while showing acceptance and support for his son Hayat's exploration of Islam.

Dr. Naveed Shah reveals his dual nature, sharing a story about Imam Souhef's request for a donation to the Islamic center, which he had refused, showcasing his contradictory behavior and ambivalence towards his faith. "When the Islamic centre was nothing more than a proposal scratched out in Souhef hand on piece of paper. Souhef asked father for a donation. Father declined" Imam Souhef returns, seeking donation for a Palestinian immigrant who escaped Israeli torture, appealing to Naveed's sympathies. "Naveed was moved and pulled out his checkbook" (*American Dervish*, 126). Naveed, a Pakistani immigrant, shows hospitality to Mina and her son, despite his past traumas. He struggles with language barriers, using Urdu at home but English in public, reflecting the challenges immigrants face adapting to a new country and culture. According to my research, this ambivalent attitude has great impact on him, family and other members of society. Hayat and his mother are badly affected by ambivalent attitude of Naveed.

Conclusion

In my analysis of Ayad Akhtar's novel "*American Dervish*", I applied psychoanalytical theory to explore how Dr. Naveed's childhood experiences shape his life and relationships. The novel offers insights into the Pakistani-American Muslim community and the challenges immigrants face adapting to a new culture. Through Dr. Naveed's character, Akhtar portrays neurotic



tendencies and ambivalence, which affect those around him, including Hayat and Muneer. My analysis reveals that Dr. Naveed's ambivalence stems from conflicting desires and a reluctance to confront his true feelings. Dr. Naveed's inner turmoil is evident in his daily life, particularly in his family relationships. Despite his strong bond with his son and wife, his reliance on his friend Wolfsohn creates conflict within him. This ambivalence affects not only Naveed but also his family, leading him to abandon his cultural heritage, language, and religion, embracing atheism instead. Ayad Akhtar's work explores the struggles between Eastern and Western cultures, religion, identity, and social issues, reflecting the author's own influences from Western scholars and theologians.

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