



The Reluctant Author: A Study of Ambiguity and Its Role in Meaning-Making in Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*

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Abstract

In Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, a young man named Changez is shown sharing a table with an American, and in the course of the evening, pouring out his life story to the foreigner. As the evening unfolds, Changez relates how he got accepted at Princeton and secured a lucrative position at a prestigious firm, fell in love with an American girl, and in the aftermath of 9/11, became disillusioned with America and its set of values. In depicting the dilemma of his protagonist and laying out the central conflict of the novel, Hamid shows a certain degree of ambiguity, which results in the creation of an amorphous space in which hostilities and uncertainties reign free. This article aims to explore the text of the novel, highlighting the many ambiguities inherent in the narrative, and by doing so, show how Hamid's technique leads to a conflation of identities and binary oppositions, creating a duplicitous text in which the east and west both act as violent and disruptive fundamentalists.

Keywords: ambiguity, disillusionment, terrorism, the other