

THE ANALYSIS OF THE MEANING OF HOME FOR IMMIGRANTS IN *THE ESCAPE* USING STUART HALL REPRESENTATION THEORY

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Abstract

For a lot of people, home is a place that serves the purpose only to gather and take a rest. But, for immigrants, especially one that lives away from their birthplace, home is something that they always miss a lot, since they live far away from their homeland. For Moslem, they have certain events where they are able to go back to their home and it is called Eid Al-Fitr. There is something about the way Samir finds the meaning of home through the journey that he must do to escape from his trauma due to the death of his wife. In order to find the actual meaning of home, Representation Theory by Stuart Hall will be applied in this research by understanding the way Samir see's home. The result from this research will provide readers about the actual meaning of home, whether home is a place to take a rest or about where someone's heart belongs too.

Keywords: *escape, home, immigrants, Moslem*

INTRODUCTION

Home is a special place for anyone including immigrants. Immigrant is a person living in a country other than that of his or her birth. No matter if that person has taken the citizenship of the destination country, served in its military, married a native, or has another status – he or she will forever be an international migrant (Bolter, 2019). For immigrants, the value of home is precious because they could live on different continents that are so far away from their origins. Different from a house, which refers to a building, home is more likely known as a memento or something to remember, which means home especially for immigrants is something that will always be remembered as something invaluable when they are far from their birthplace.

The experiences of home felt by immigrants are often shown in literary works. There are many novels and short stories that tell stories of immigrants like *The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri, *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair, and *The Escape* by Qaizra Shahraz. In *The Namesake*, the story tells about Gogol Ganguli, a first Bengali – American, as he navigates the complexities of growing up in the U.S. while feeling the constant pull of his parents Indian heritage. The novel explores themes of identity, belonging, and the challenges of balancing two contrasting cultures, as Gogol struggles with his unusual name and the expectations placed on him by both his family and society. In *Americanah* the story tells about Ifemelu, a young Nigerian woman who moves to the United States for college and experiences the complexities of race, identity, and culture in a country that views her as “black” for the first time. The novel explores her romantic relationships, the struggles of adapting to American life, and her eventual return to Nigeria, where she grapples with the changes in both herself and the country she once called home. In *The Jungle* the story tells about Jurgis Rudkus, a Lithuanian immigrant who moves to Chicago in search of the American Dream but instead faces the brutal realities of exploitation and poverty in the meatpacking industries. The novel exposes the inhumane working conditions, corruption, and social injustice experienced by immigrant laborers, ultimately serving as a powerful critique of unchecked capitalism in early 20th-century America. The main course for this study is *The Escape* by Qaizra Shahraz; this story tells about Samir who lost his wife and is grieving for her death. He is depressed by his loss so he went back to Pakistan to visit his parent's graveyard and also looking for the meaning of home. There is one thing in common with

all of those stories, which is that all of the main characters are immigrants who lived so far away from their home, they have to adapt to the new culture, habits, and a whole lot more.

Due to the setting of the short story, which happened in a Moslem family, the Moslem values direct the story including the Moslem view of home. According to surah An – Nahl 80: *And Allah has made your homes a place to rest, and has given you tents from the hide of animals, light to handle when you travel and when you camp. And out of their wool, fur, and hair He has given you furnishings and goods for a while* (Q.S. An – Nahl 80). The relationship between this surah and the stories is that home here provides the practical purpose as a place to sleep and rest while also being able to gather with families.

This study is to find the meaning of home which will be analyzed through Hall's representation theory. Stuart Hall's representation theory propose that to represent something is to describe or depict it, to call it up in the mind by description or portrayal or imagination; to place a likeness of it before us in our mind or in the senses and to represent also means to symbolize, stand for, to be specimen of, or to substitute for. This means that to find the actual meaning of home, this theory will be applied by understanding the way Samir see's home.

This article is about what is the meaning of home, whether it's about where someone is originally coming from or somewhere the heart and the minds belong to, especially for immigrants who went really far from their home.

METHODOLOGY

In this paper, a qualitative method is used to analyze the text. Kothari (2004) explains that the qualitative method is a process that mainly focuses on a qualitative phenomenon, such as quality or kind and investigates human behavior. This research is crucial in behavior science as it helps to analyze factors that motivate people to behave towards certain things. A researcher can produce descriptive data about the person or activity that was the topic of the short story using the qualitative research methods. Moreover, Kumar (2011) explains that the main quest of qualitative research is to understand, explain, explore, find, and clarify circumstances, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and experiences of a group of people.

The collection and analysis of the text will be carried out in stages. First, to apply close reading techniques to get a good understanding of the short story and focus on Samir as the main character in *The Escape* by Qaizra Shahraz. Second, the data will be gathered in the form of quotes, statements, and the actions by the main character. All of the collected data will be clustered in the Stuart Hall Representation Theory. The writer will see the journey that Samir must do in order to understand what the meaning of home is by clustering the idea of what is home for him.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are several talking points here in this research in order to find the actual meaning of home.

Home as a Place for Resting

"Home" (*rumah*) is a building or place used as a residence for individuals or families, providing shelter, protection, and a space to live, rest, and carry out daily activities. (KBBI, 2016). The definition of home is inline with the meaning of home in *The Escape*, where house is known for the practical purpose.

He had a large five bedroom detached house...

He kept himself in the master bedroom... Only when the grandchildren visited did he unlock some of the doors. He spent his time in his new favourite spot, the chair at the dining table next to the window and radiator. He sat there leafing through The Times, the Daily Jang and The Nation, watching the traffic go past on the busy road (Shahraz, 2009).

The way to understand home as a place for sleeping and resting means home is known for practical purposes. Samir has five bedrooms in his house, he and his wife sleep in the master bedroom while the rest are occupied by his children. Since he lives alone he locked some of the room and only opened it when his grandchildren visited him. Since Samir lived

alone he spent most of his time at his newfound spot which is at the dining table that is placed near the window and the room heater. While he enjoyed the new spot, he also read some newspapers like The times, The Daily Jang, and The Nation while also watching the nearby traffic down the road.

Home as a Place Full of Memories

Home is understood as more than just a physical space – it is a meaningful place imbued with personal and shared memories, where experiences and relationships shape a profound sense of belonging. (Relph, 1976). The definition is inline with the story where home not only serves the purpose as a practical use, but also where all memories are stored inside the house.

Last year his entire family had been there. If he closed his eyes he could see his children helping themselves to the food, with him happily beginning the Eidhi money giving ritual. Five pounds notes for the little ones, ten for the older teenagers, and crispy twenty pound notes for his daughters and daughters-in-law. In the steamy warm kitchen with the noisy fan purring away at the window, the smell from a pot of pilau rice and trays of roast chicken and kebabs in the oven would set everyone's mouth watering. Dinner was a prompt affair; always at one o'clock, served by the women of his household, moving elegantly around the room; their rustling ghararas and lenghas sweeping the floor and the long dupattas hanging at their sides. The boys would be in their shalwar kameze and sherwanis. By two, the whole family would be sitting around the table chatting, relaxed and happy, some still spooning away trifle and gajar halwa (Shahraz, 2009).

A lot of memories are created at home especially when there is some major event at that time. Last year Samir's family celebrated the Eid Al-Fitr event in his house. At that time a lot of activities happened in order to make the celebration as delightful as possible, like when Samir's children prepare the food. One of the "rituals" that always happens during this event is the money giving ritual. Usually the parents or the elders will give a small amount of money for their children because they are able to finish the fasting month. As a result, they got the money as their gift. The amount of the money is different for each family, it all depends on their own rules and regulations, some got a lot of money, and others got little, even no money at all. In this sort of time, the kitchen usually becomes the busiest part of the house, since a lot of cooking happens. What kind of food is different from country to country, since Samir's origin is Pakistan, his family served the Pakistani delicacy. His daughter cooks the pilau rice, roasted chicken and kebab, so the smell of the kitchen is wholesome and will make everyone hungry. Dinner timing can vary depending on what they are cooking and how long it takes to be ready. Dinner is served mostly by women since they are the ones who cook in the kitchen. The dress that Samir's daughter wears is a Pakistan traditional outfit where they wear a long skirt and some fabric that hangs up on their sides and the same thing happened for Samir's son where they are wearing the Pakistan traditional outfit as well. After a big feast, Samir's family take it all easy, they are chatting to each other, enjoying their time, and just relaxing, enjoying the rest of the day.

Home as a New Destination

A new home is when someone left his old house for a new one. They left the old house because either the place is rotten and it is not justified to fix, or to help them to get rid of the old traumatic memories by leaving all of it in the old house.

Two weeks after his arrival Samir had moved to an elderly people's home, leaving his five bed roomed detached house to his four children...

He had a large five bedroom detached house but with his wife and family gone all the joy of living had fled. He kept himself in the master bedroom, hating to enter the other rooms in the house, especially the one with his wife's clothes (Shahraz, 2009).

A new home is obtained when the owner leaves his old house. 2 weeks after Samir went back from Pakistan, he decided to move to elderly house and left his old house and inherited it from his children. The reason for such an action is caused by the death of his wife. Samir has a quite large house with five bedrooms inside it, and he and his wife slept in the master

bedroom while his children occupied the rest of the bedroom. Samir lives in a deep sorrowness after his wife has passed away to the point where he locked a room where his wife put her clothes in. This action indicates that Samir cannot stand the death of his wife, and everything that reminds him of her is kept inside and locked. In order to escape from his sorrowness, Samir decides to leave his house and live in the elderly house, an action to escape from his trauma in order to have a happier life even though his wife has passed away.

CONCLUSION

From the research that has been done, it is clear that Samir missed his wife and even went to an action where he closed a room that contained her wife's clothing to help him from his sorrowness. In order to get rid of his own sadness, Samir deliberately left his detached house for his children and lived out the rest of his life in the elderly house. The title *The Escape* is making so much sense here since what Samir wanted is to escape from his sorrowness. So he saw home as a traumatic place and he wanted to escape from that trauma and for Samir home is a place where his mind and heart belongs.

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