

## A Comparative Analysis of Western and Islamic Values in the Short Story “My Son the Fanatic”

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### ABSTRACT

“My Son the Fanatic” is a short story, written by Hanif Kureishi, which explores the themes of identity crisis, radicalization, assimilation, cultural transformation and conflict. Cultural conflict is a persistent issue even in today’s globalized society. Much research is conducted exploring the themes of identity crisis and cultural transformation in this story. Not enough research is found investigating the aspects of cultural conflict and clash depicted in the story. The current study thereby using qualitative methodology, aims to analyze the cultural clash in the story through comparative analysis by applying Huntington’s cultural clash theory. The analysis of the study conducted is expected to reveal how the contrasting experiences of the characters in the story illustrate the tension between Western and Islamic values.

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### Introduction

Cultural conflict is a significant theme explored throughout literature, illustrating the tensions that occur when individuals from diverse backgrounds collide owing to disparities in belief systems, practices, and values (Adichie, 2013). These tensions could occur internally, as characters struggle with their own cultural identity in a world that may not completely accept it, or externally, as characters manage encounters with people from different cultures. Literature provides an opportunity for investigating the nuances of cultural conflict, highlighting the tendency to generate division and misery (Moehringer, 2005). It also represents the potential for understanding and even bridge-building. By tackling these contradictions, literary works inspire readers to reflect on their own cultural biases and develop empathy for others from diverse backgrounds. The absence of a strong cultural identity can leave individuals feeling alienated, rootless, and perpetually “in-between” cultures (Ahmad, 1992) This internal struggle has serious psychological and societal consequences, as people look for a feeling of connection and purpose in a world that appears to provide neither. Cultural conflict arises when deeply held values, beliefs, and customs of different groups clash (Shapiro, 2017). People from distinct origins have different perspectives on religion, family, authority, and social conventions. These disparities can result in miscommunication and discord. Friction can erupt when these contrasting styles collide (Lewis, 2009). Cultural conflict can also manifest in disagreements over social norms, religious practices, or dietary restrictions. Diasporic people face unique cultural conflicts as they navigate the intersection of their ancestral heritage and the dominant culture of their adopted home. Samuel P. Huntington, a political scientist, proposed a theory in his book, “The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order” (Huntington, 1996). He proposes that culture, rather than ideology, will be the primary source of conflict in the post-Cold War world. He argued that future global conflicts would be rooted in cultural differences rather than ideological or economic disparities. Huntington identified eight major civilizations, including Western, Islamic, and Latin American (Ignatieff, 2004). He predicted that these civilizations, with their distinct values and traditions, would inevitably clash due to fundamental incompatibilities. In his view, Islam stands as a distinct civilization inherently at odds with the West. Huntington identifies core beliefs like individualism, liberalism, and Christianity as defining the West. Islam, on the other hand, emphasizes collectivism, religious law, and a rejection of Western secularism. This fundamental difference, according to Huntington, creates an inevitable clash. Hanif Kureishi is a British Pakistani novelist, playwright, and director whose works examine cultural identity, migration, and the intricacies of family dynamics. Kureishi was born in London to Pakistani immigrants, and his creative work frequently shifts between East and West, relying on his own bicultural background (Wikipedia, 2024). His characters are concerned with questions of belonging, tradition, and the search for meaning in a globalized society. Kureishi’s writing is praised for its keen wit, social critique, and candid representation of human emotions. He has won several accolades, including the Whitbread Award for his novel *The Buddha of Suburbia* and the James Tait Black Memorial Prize for *Intimacy*. “My Son the Fanatic” is a powerful short story by Hanif Kureishi that delves into the clash between tradition and modernity, specifically within the context of a Pakistani immigrant family living in London (Kureishi, 1994). The story centers around Parvez, a taxi driver who has assimilated into British life, and his son, Ali, who undergoes a dramatic transformation towards Islamic extremism. Through their strained relationship, Kureishi explores themes

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of cultural alienation, generational conflict, and the struggle to maintain one's identity in a society that often pressures assimilation (Kureishi, 1994).

### Literature review

Cultural conflict is a recurring theme in literature, reflecting the complexities of navigating diverse values and identities in an interconnected world. A person's sense of belonging is shaped by a dynamic mosaic of factors that make up their cultural identity. Language, religion, culture, ethnicity, and values are all included (Berry, 1997; Hall, 1990). These components are dynamic; they change because of social interactions, life experiences, and exposure to various cultures. This results in sentiments of cultural hybridity, which is a distinct fusion of influences. Interactions between people or groups from different backgrounds can result in cultural disputes. Divergent values and beliefs, such as opposing views on gender roles, religion, family structure, and social conventions, may be the root of these disputes (Berry, 1997). These distinctions can cause miscommunications and conflicts during conversations, which can exacerbate tension and strife. Hanif Kureishi "My Son the Fanatic" exemplifies this dynamic, portraying the clash between Western and Islamic values through the turbulent relationship between a Pakistani immigrant father, Parvez, and his British-raised son, Ali. This literature review explores existing scholarship on cultural conflict in "My Son the Fanatic" and identifies a gap that this study aims to address. Several scholars have examined "My Son the Fanatic" through the lens of identity crisis and cultural transformation. Studies by Ahmed (2010) and Amin (2012) explore how the story depicts the challenges faced by immigrants in negotiating their identities between their heritage and the pressures to assimilate. Additionally, researchers like Murshed (2015) analyze the psychological aspects of Ali's radicalization, highlighting the complex motivations behind extremism. While the themes of identity and radicalization have received significant attention, a critical gap exists regarding the in-depth analysis of cultural conflict within the story. Limited research examines the specific clashes between contrasting Western and Islamic values within the narrative. This study aims to bridge this gap by employing a comparative analysis framework. Drawing on Samuel P. Huntington's theory of cultural clash (Huntington, 1996), the study will dissect the points of tension between Western and Islamic values as experienced by the characters. This comparative approach will delve into how Parvez and Ali embody contrasting worldviews regarding family, faith, and social norms, leading to cultural conflict. Huntington's theory posits that civilizations, defined by shared religion, language, and social values, form the fault lines of future conflict (Huntington, 1996). By applying this framework, the study will analyze how the contrasting cultural views of Parvez and Ali create friction and tension. This analysis will reveal how their experiences illustrate the potential for cultural clashes highlighted by Huntington's theory. By focusing on the comparative analysis of Western and Islamic values within "My Son the Fanatic," this study offers a novel perspective on the cultural conflict depicted in the story. This approach not only enriches the existing scholarship on Kureishi's work but also contributes to the broader understanding of cultural clashes in a globalized world.

### Problem Statement

*My Son the Fanatic* is a short story by Kureishi which focuses on the themes of immigration, assimilation and identity crisis. However, there is limited research available to identify the cultural conflicts in the story. The current study thereby aims to explore the cultural conflicts in this story through the lens of Huntington's cultural clash theory.

### Research Objectives

- 1.To examine the contrasting experiences of Parvez and Ali in "My Son the Fanatic" illustrate the tension between Western and Islamic values?
- 2.To utilize the concept of cultural clash to explore the challenges faced by characters in Kureishi's "My Son the Fanatic"

### Research Questions

- 1.How do the contrasting experiences of Parvez and Ali in "My Son the Fanatic" illustrate the tensions between Western and Islamic values?
- 2.How does Kureishi's "My Son the Fanatic" utilize the concept of cultural clash to explore the challenges faced by the characters in the story?

### Research Methodology

The current study is done by using a qualitative approach to collect data. Crotty (1998) states that qualitative research is a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live in. The data studied and used for current research is gathered through books, articles and online websites. The current study is conducted by using Tilly's approach to comparative analysis. Tilly (1984) distinguishes four types of comparative analysis namely: individualizing, universalizing, variation-finding and encompassing (p.82). Comparative analysis is primarily used to explain and obtain a better knowledge of the causal

processes involved in the formation of an event, feature, or relationship, typically by bringing together changes in the explanatory variables or factors (Pickvance, 2005).

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of the study conducted revolves around the implementation of Samuel P. Huntington's theory of cultural clash through comparative analysis. The theory put out by Samuel P. Huntington in his 1996 book "The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order" suggests that cultural fault lines, as opposed to ideological or nationalistic ones, will be the main causes of future international conflict (Huntington, 1996). He contends that these conflicts would arise from large cultural groupings such as Western and Islamic based on shared religion, language, and social ideals (Huntington, 1996). This viewpoint highlights the disparate and frequently contradictory values held by various civilizations, which can cause friction and even war when they come into contact. An individual's feeling of belonging is shaped by their cultural identity, which is a dynamic and complex term. It includes a patchwork of components, such as language, religion, customs, ethnicity, and values that influence a person's sense of which they are (Berry, 1997; Hall, 1990). These components are dynamic and change because of social interactions, life experiences, and exposure to various cultures. This results in sentiments of cultural hybridity, which is a distinct fusion of influences. Interactions between people or groups with disparate cultural backgrounds can lead to disputes. There are various reasons why these conflicts may arise, such as worldviews on social norms; religion, gender roles, and family structure are frequently in conflict between cultures. When people communicate, these variances may cause miscommunications and conflicts (Berry, 1997). While wanting to maintain their heritage, immigrants may experience pressure to assimilate into the mainstream culture. Families and communities may experience conflict because of this tension (Berry, 1997). Historical power disparities and the legacy of colonialism can exacerbate cultural conflict. The belief that one culture is better than another can lead to resistance and animosity. The possibility for conflict resulting from variations in these fundamental cultural values is highlighted by Huntington's theory. He contends that because different civilizations have different historical experiences, religious beliefs, and social standards, they frequently lack a common platform for understanding (Huntington, 1996). This lack of common ground may cause miscommunications and erroneous interpretations, which may turn into hostilities.

### **Analysis and Discussion**

Huntington argued that cultural differences, rather than ideology or economics, are the primary causes of conflict in multi-cultural societies. "My Son the Fanatic" serves as a microcosmic illustration of this notion. Parvez and Ali's opposing worldviews create an imbalance within their own family unit, illustrating how cultural tensions can permeate personal relationships and even cross generational lines. The story is a compelling example of how deeply rooted cultural values may cause friction and a sense of alienation, even in ostensibly homogeneous cultures.

### **My Son the Fanatic**

Hanif Kureishi "My Son the Fanatic" depicts a strong clash of generations and cultures, echoing the basic concepts of Samuel P. Huntington's "The Clash of Civilizations" theory (Huntington, 1996). The plot concentrates upon Parvez, a Pakistani immigrant in England, and his son Ali, whose opposing opinions represent the fault lines Huntington sees between Western and Islamic cultures. Parvez indicate a desire to assimilate into Western civilization. He works as a cab driver, an apparently ordinary job far apart from his prospective prior life in Pakistan (Kureishi, 1997). He engages in prohibited actions in Islamic culture, such as drinking alcohol and having a covert connection with a prostitute. These decisions reflect his disconnection from his cultural roots and his adoption of individualistic Western ideas. Ali, on the contrary, represents a rejection of these principles and an increasing acceptance of hardline Islam. He opposes Western materialism and expresses outrage at Western foreign policy, which he sees as oppressive to Muslim states (Kureishi, 1997). This transition towards a more collectivistic perspective, emphasizing the value of religious identity and community, contrasts sharply with Parvez assimilations approach. The conflict between Parvez and Ali is more than just a generational difference; it demonstrates the underlying cultural tensions that Huntington emphasizes. Their differing ideologies are causing tension inside their family unit, serving as a microcosm of the larger societal clashes predicted by his thesis (Huntington, 1996). "My Son the Fanatic" is a jeopardizing reminder of how deeply rooted cultural norms lead to alienation and misunderstanding, even among family members.

### **Western and Islamic Worldview**

Cultural clash occurs when individuals experience a conflict between their own cultural background and the dominant culture of their environment (Smith, 2001). This clash can arise from differences in beliefs, customs, values, and traditions. It often manifests as a sense of alienation, confusion, and difficulty reconciling one's heritage with the demands of adapting to a new culture. Hanif Kureishi "My Son the Fanatic" presents a powerful example

of cultural identity clash through the relationship between Parvez, a Pakistani immigrant in England, and his son Ali. The conflict between Parvez and Ali exemplifies how cultural differences, particularly those based on religion, can create tensions. Huntington argues that such differences have a greater impact on global conflicts than economic or ideological factors (Huntington, 1996).

*"Parvez had ordered his own wife to cook pork sausages, saying to her, 'you're not in the village now, this is England. We must fit in.'" (p.104)*

Parvez insistence on pork sausages exemplifies his desire to assimilate into Western culture. Huntington highlights the importance of cultural values. Pork consumption directly contradicts Islamic laws, signifying Parvez attempt to shed his cultural identity and embrace Western customs. His statement, "you're not in the village now, this is England," reinforces this point, suggesting a complete severance from his past life. By choosing pork, Parvez is not just changing his diet; he's engaging in a symbolic act of assimilation. He attempts to demonstrate his willingness to adopt Western customs, even if they contradict his cultural background. This highlights the pressure immigrants sometimes feel to conform and shed aspects of their identity to fit into the dominant culture. The urgency in Parvez directive, you are not in the village now, this is England. We have to fit in," suggests a sense of desperation. He emphasizes the geographical location of England, highlighting his desire to belong to this new culture. Choosing pork becomes a desperate attempt to demonstrate his willingness to adopt Western customs, even at the cost of violating his religious beliefs.

*"The boy explained that Parvez had broken countless rules of Koran. He asked his father if he didn't relish pork pies. (p. 103)*

Ali's disapproval of pork sausages reflects his adherence to Islamic laws and his rejection of Western assimilation. He acts as a voice for the "Islamic civilization" within Huntington's theory, prioritizing religious values over adopting Western customs (Huntington, 1996). His question, "if he didn't relish pork pies?" carries a judgmental tone, suggesting his disapproval of his father's choices. By explaining that Parvez has "broken countless rules of Koran," he prioritizes religious values over adopting Western customs.

The dialogues between Parvez and Ali showcase the complexities of cultural identity and assimilation. Through the seemingly simple instance of meal, Kureishi exposes the deep cultural divide between father and son. Huntington's theory helps us understand how seemingly mundane choices, rooted in religious beliefs, can become a battleground within a family, reminding us of the challenges faced by immigrants and their children in navigating a world with competing cultural demands.

*"The taxi drivers know prostitutes well, sometimes the women would join them for drinking" (p. 100)*

The indication of Parvez's involvement with prostitutes and alcohol consumption becomes a point of contention within the family, reflecting a cultural clash through the lens of Samuel P. Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" theory (Huntington, 1996). The text doesn't explicitly state Parvez's actions, but the mention of prostitutes and drinking implies activities strictly forbidden in Islam. These restrictions are rooted in religious teachings and social norms within Islamic cultures.

Huntington argues that cultural values, including religious beliefs and social norms, are core aspects of what defines a civilization (Huntington, 1996). By engaging in activities forbidden by his religion, Parvez can be seen as attempting to shed aspects of his Islamic identity. Huntington's theory suggests that cultural clashes often arise due to the desire to assimilate into a dominant culture. In Western societies, alcohol consumption and casual sex work are more prevalent compared to some Islamic cultures. Parvez's actions, therefore, are interpreted as an attempt to fit in with the cultural norms of his new environment.

*'Don't you know it's wrong to drink alcohol?' (p. 103)*

Ali, on the other hand, stands as a stark contrast. His sharp question, "Don't you know it's wrong to drink alcohol?" reflects his unwavering adherence to Islamic teachings. Through Huntington's framework, Ali embodies the Islamic civilization, prioritizing religious values and criticizing his father's actions (Huntington, 1996). This clash showcases a fundamental difference in values: Parvez prioritizes fitting in over religious restrictions, while Ali remains deeply committed to his Islamic beliefs. These contrasting views highlight the evolving cultural identities of the characters. Parvez's actions suggest an attempt to shed his Pakistani identity and embrace Western norms. Ali, on the other hand, clings to his religious and cultural roots. The story portrays a tension between Western cultural norms and Islamic values.

The presence or absence of a beard becomes a potent symbol of the cultural clash between Parvez and Ali. Seen through the lens of Samuel P. Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" theory, this clash reflects the deeper tensions between cultural values and assimilation (Huntington, 1996).

*"Ali had asked his father why he didn't have a beard, or at least a moustache" (p. 105)*

Ali's question showcases his growing commitment to his Islamic identity. For him, the beard signifies a visible sign of his faith and a way of life. He desires his father to embrace this symbol as well. This aligns with Huntington's concept of civilizations being defined by shared values and traditions. Ali's desire for a beard reflects his commitment to the "Islamic civilization" within Huntington's framework (Huntington, 1996). The beard transcends its physical form, becoming a powerful symbol of religious commitment and cultural identity. For Ali, the beard

signifies his deepening faith and his adherence to Islamic traditions. The beard becomes a marker of Ali's cultural background and a rejection of Western cultural norms that do not prioritize facial hair as a religious symbol.

*"But he is growing a beard" (p. 101)*

Parvez's observation highlights his surprise and potential disapproval of Ali's new appearance (Kureishi, 1997). Beards are often associated with stricter adherence to Islamic traditions. Parvez's lack of facial hair suggests a disconnect from these practices, prioritizing assimilation into Western culture over outwardly expressing religious devotion. It suggests a potential disconnect from his Islamic heritage. Huntington argues that cultural values, including religious practices, are core aspects of a civilization (Huntington, 1996). Parvez's lack of facial hair signifies a downplaying of his religious identity, prioritizing assimilation into the dominant Western culture where beards are less common. This aligns with Huntington's view that cultural clashes can arise when individuals attempt to shed aspects of their heritage to fit into a new environment. The contrasting views on facial hair highlight the gap between Parvez's efforts to assimilate and Ali's embrace of his cultural and religious heritage.

*"The West was a sink of hypocrites, adulterers, homosexuals, drug takers  
And prostitutes." (p. 104)*

This viewpoint of Ali encapsulates the clash of civilizations as outlined by Huntington's theory. Firstly, it reflects a clash of cultural values and moral frameworks between Western and Islamic civilizations. From Ali's perspective, Western society represents moral decay and depravity, contrasting sharply with the Islamic emphasis on piety, modesty, and adherence to religious principles. This highlights the deep-seated cultural differences and ideological divides between the two civilizations, where each perceives the other as morally inferior or corrupt. Secondly, Ali's characterization of the West underscores the perception of cultural superiority and inferiority inherent in the clash of civilizations. By labeling Westerners as hypocrites and sinners, Ali positions Islamic civilization as morally superior and spiritually pure. This reflects a sense of cultural pride and self-assuredness, where adherents of Islamic beliefs perceive themselves as guardians of moral righteousness in the face of Western decadence. Such sentiments exacerbate tensions and fuel animosity between the two civilizations, perpetuating a cycle of mutual distrust and disdain.

Ali's portrayal of the West as a "sink" implies a sense of cultural pollution or contamination, suggesting that Western values and practices pose a threat to the moral fabric of Islamic society. This echoes Huntington's assertion that clashes between civilizations often occur at the level of cultural identity, where perceived threats to one's cultural or religious identity provoke defensive reactions (Nicora, 2008). Ali's characterization reflects this defensive posture, as he seeks to preserve the purity and integrity of Islamic values in the face of perceived Western encroachment. Ali's statement exemplifies the clash of civilizations as a clash of worldviews and ideologies. The West and Islamic civilization are depicted as diametrically opposed in their beliefs, norms, and practices, leading to mutual incomprehension and antagonism. Ali's condemnation of Western society reflects a rejection of Western secularism, individualism, and moral relativism in favor of Islamic religious orthodoxy and moral absolutism. This ideological confrontation underscores the deep-rooted cultural and ideological fault lines that define the clash of civilizations, perpetuating a cycle of conflict and confrontation between the West and the Islamic world.

*"You are too implicated in Western civilization" (p. 104)*

Ali's statement highlights the cultural differentiation between Western and Islamic civilizations. In Huntington's theory, civilizations are distinct cultural entities with their own values, norms, and traditions (Huntington, 1996). Ali perceives Parvez as being deeply intertwined with Western culture, which he views as antithetical to Islamic values. It underscores the importance of cultural identity in the clash of civilizations. According to Huntington (1996), cultural identity forms the basis of conflict in multi-cultural societies. Ali accuses Parvez of being overly assimilated into Western civilization, suggesting a dilution or erosion of his Islamic identity. It implies a perception of Western cultural dominance and influence. Huntington argues that conflicts between civilizations often arise from perceived threats to cultural or civilizational identity (Huntington, 1996). Ali's accusation suggests that Parvez's alignment with Western culture poses a threat to Islamic values and identity. Ali's assertion reflects a sense of cultural arrogance or superiority. Huntington discusses how civilizations may develop a sense of superiority or disdain towards other cultures, viewing them as inferior or misguided. Ali's statement is interpreted as a critique of Parvez's perceived cultural inferiority. It indicates concern about cultural intrusion and the deterioration of traditional values. Huntington suggests that clashes between civilizations occur when one civilization encroaches upon the cultural and political space of another (Huntington, 1996). Ali's accusation suggests that Parvez's immersion in Western culture encroaches upon the domain of Islamic values. This exemplifies the application of Huntington's cultural clash theory by illustrating the tensions and conflicts that arise from differences in cultural identity, values, and influence between Western and Islamic civilizations.

*Parvez kicked him over. Then he dragged the boy up by his shirt and hit him. The boy fell back. Parvez hit him again. The boy's face was bloody. Parvez was panting. He knew that the boy was unreachable, but he struck him, nonetheless. The boy neither covered himself nor retaliated; there was no fear in his eyes. He only said, through his split lip: 'So who's the fanatic now?' (p. 108)*

This excerpt from the story illustrates a dramatic confrontation between Parvez and Ali, embodying the clash of civilizations through the lens of Huntington's theory. Firstly, Parvez's physical assault on Ali reflects the manifestation of intercultural conflict and violence as described by Huntington. In Huntington's framework, clashes between civilizations often escalate into physical confrontations due to deep-seated cultural and ideological differences (Huntington, 1996). Parvez's violent reaction symbolizes the breakdown of communication and understanding between Western and Islamic cultures, leading to resorting to physical aggression as a means of asserting dominance or expressing frustration. Ali's defiant response to Parvez's violence underscores the resilience of cultural identity and the refusal to succumb to external pressures. Despite being subjected to physical harm, Ali maintains his composure and challenges Parvez's actions by questioning his own fanaticism. This defiance represents the assertion of Islamic cultural identity in the face of Western dominance, echoing Huntington's assertion that clashes between civilizations are often driven by the desire to preserve cultural integrity and resist external influences.

The absence of fear in Ali's eyes during the confrontation highlights the disparity in perceptions of power dynamics between Western and Islamic cultures. Huntington argues that clashes between civilizations are characterized by perceptions of cultural superiority and inferiority, leading to power struggles and conflicts (Huntington, 1996). In this instance, Ali's lack of fear suggests a steadfast belief in the righteousness of his cultural values, challenging Parvez's attempts to assert dominance through physical violence. Ali's question, "So who's the fanatic now?" depicts the irony and complexity of intercultural conflicts depicted in Huntington's theory. While Parvez perceives Ali's adherence to Islamic values as fanaticism, Ali turns the accusation back on Parvez, challenging the validity of Western cultural norms and highlighting the subjective nature of cultural judgments. This exchange reflects the clash of interpretations and perceptions between Western and Islamic cultures, illustrating the deep-seated cultural misunderstandings and tensions that underlie the clash of civilizations.

### Conclusion

The short story "My Son the Fanatic" offers a compelling portrayal of the clash between Western and Islamic values through the characters of Parvez and Ali. Through a comparative analysis of their interactions and ideologies, the study revealed the profound cultural differences and tensions that underpin the clash of civilizations, as outlined in Huntington's theory (Huntington, 1996). Parvez's personal journey suggests a yearning for a life less constrained by tradition. Parvez's assimilation into Western culture and Ali's steadfast adherence to Islamic principles serve as microcosms of broader cultural conflicts, reflecting the complexities and challenges inherent in navigating the interplay between Westernization and traditional values. Throughout the story, Parvez and Ali's contrasting perspectives on religion, morality, and identity illustrate the divergence between Western secularism and Islamic values. Parvez's embrace of Western culture symbolizes the allure of modernity and individualism, while Ali's rejection of Western values underscores the resilience of Islamic tradition and identity. Their contentious relationship and eventual confrontation epitomize the clash of civilizations, characterized by cultural misunderstanding, ideological discord, and, ultimately, violence. The story, amidst the discord and conflict, highlights moments of introspection and reconciliation, suggesting the possibility of mutual understanding and compromise. As Parvez grapples with his son's rejection of Western values and Ali confronts his father's assimilation, both characters undergo a process of self-discovery and reevaluation. In doing so, they challenge the binary opposition between Western and Islamic values, offering glimpses of common ground and shared humanity. "My Son the Fanatic" serves as a poignant exploration of the complexities of cultural identity and the enduring tensions between Western and Islamic civilizations. Through its nuanced portrayal of Parvez and Ali's relationship, the story prompts readers to reflect on the profound cultural differences that shape our worldviews and the potential for dialogue and understanding amidst cultural diversity.

### Disclosure Statement

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