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**ANALÝZA KNIHY EXIT WEST OD MOHSINA HAMIDA
POMOCÍ INTERKULTURNÍCH ZNALOSTÍ
BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE**

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Anglický jazyk se zaměřením na vzdělávání

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**ANALYSIS OF EXIT WEST BY MOHSIN HAMID USING
INTERCULTURAL KNOWLEDGE
BACHELOR THESIS**

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Supervisor: William Bradley Vice, Ph.D.

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Prohlašuji, že jsem práci vypracoval/a samostatně s použitím uvedené literatury a zdrojů informací.

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ABSTRACT

Valnoha, Václav. University of West Bohemia. April 2024. Using intercultural toolbox and analyzing fantasy elements to depict *Exit West* by Mohsin Hamid.

Supervisor: William Bradley Vice, Ph. D.

This Bachelor Thesis examines the use of magical realism in Mohsin Hamid's novel *Exit West* and its contribution to the portrayal of the refugee experience. The novel tells the story of two refugees who flee their war-torn city for Europe in search of a better life. The thesis analyzes how Hamid uses magical realism to explore the experiences of refugees and the challenges they face in their search for a new home.

The research problem addressed in this thesis is the need for more intercultural analysis of *Exit West* and the limited understanding of the role of magical realism in the novel. The specific purpose of this thesis is to explore how Hamid uses magical realism to convey the experiences of refugees and to analyze the novel with the help of an intercultural toolbox. The scope of this work is limited to the analysis of the story and does not include a broader examination of the refugee crisis.

The results of this thesis show that Hamid's use of magical realism effectively conveys the experiences of refugees and explores the challenges they face in their search for a new home. The thesis concludes that *Exit West* is a powerful commentary on the global refugee crisis and the human experience of displacement. The recommendations of this thesis are to further explore the use of magical realism in literature and to continue to examine the refugee crisis from an intercultural perspective.

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INTRODUCTION

Within migration narratives, magical realism is an exceptional lens through which to view major themes in contemporary literature, such as issues of identity, displacement, and the complexities of intercultural interaction. This thesis provides a thorough analysis of *Exit West* by Mohsin Hamid. The novel is balanced between reality and fantasy and presents bittersweet insights into the life of migrants. Mohsin Hamid is a critically acclaimed British-Pakistani author who became internationally famous for his novels that elegantly explore details of modernity, identity, and politics. His stories critically map the global scenery and offer intensely personal and broadly relevant narratives.

Exit West is a progressive novel that presents the refugee crisis. It features magical realism by literally and figuratively incorporating the magical doors into the story. These doors allow Hamid to look at migration not only in its actual, physical dimension but also in a symbolic and metaphorical way, as it rewrites the personalities of his protagonists, Nadia and Saeed. By going past the conventional understanding of migrant journeys, Hamid inspires readers to reflect on more significant migration issues, challenge traditional migration narratives, and encourage more profound empathy toward those who migrate.

The idea of intercultural intelligence is essential to this exploration, as it directs the complexities of multicultural interactions. Intercultural intelligence is the ability to function effectively in diverse cultural settings. This competence is necessary for understanding the characters' interactions in the novel. This thesis suggests that *Exit West* is not just about migration, but it is a comprehensive novel with insights into how people address, reject, and accept cultural changes that come with displacement. This novel opens with a thorough but merciless realization of the migrant experience through the main characters, Nadia and Saeed, in their dealings with the relentless process of identity readjustment connected with the change of environments. This thesis will additionally illustrate the importance of their intercultural intelligence, as it enables their journey through new cultural landscapes and puts into perspective the essential role intercultural intelligence plays within the larger context of the story's exploration of displacement and cultural integration.

Magical Realism in the novel *Exit West* allows the analysis of these themes. Therefore, the magical doors perform two roles: they advance the plot and symbolize the new disorienting changes that occur in the lives of the migrants when they walk through the magical doors. This is where the fantasy aspects urge the reader to redefine and establish,

once again, the boundaries of nations and cultures and the human spirit. Nadia and Saeed walk through these doors, symbolizing the contrasting aspects of migration, such as loss and exploration, isolation and integration, and sorrow and optimism.

Furthermore, this thesis attempts to indicate the potential of this genre in an innovatively human way that can contribute to the academic discourses of magical realism. *Exit West* uses the capacity of the genre to merge the extraordinary with the ordinary, offering a narrative that echoes the experiences of migrants across the globe. In doing so, Hamid writes a story that bears witness to the elasticity of the human condition. He discusses how love, loss, and the desire for a place in this world are taking place behind the curtain of a constantly changing world.

In general, this thesis attempts to be an evidence-based reflection on the transformation that migration has caused in individual identity and intercultural relations through a deep analysis of *Exit West* and its use of magical realism. The life journey of Nadia and Saeed in this novel offers insight into the migrant experience, fully represented, as it reveals a new way of understanding the difficulties, challenges, and richness that life in an increasingly connected world can have. This study hopes that through the in-depth analysis of the narrative world of Hamid, it will come back with an increased level of empathy and a new outlook toward stories about migration and the magical doors that take one to explore the human heart.

CHAPTER 1 - CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE AND MAGICAL REALISM

Understanding Cultural Intelligence

To analyze *Exit West*, we need to understand a few concepts: Michele J. Gelfand, Chi-yue Chiu, and Ying-yi Hong believe that literature on culture and psychology correspond with each other. They write in their *Handbook of Advances in Culture and Psychology, Volume 5* (referred to as HACP), that the research on cultural intelligence originated from “two related needs in the literature on culture and psychology” (Gelfand et al., 2015, p. 274). Firstly, cultural intelligence addresses a necessity within cross-cultural psychology to move past merely describing and explaining behavioral differences across cultures. Though understanding cultural variations is essential, proficiency in operating effectively across cultures further involves the capacity to overcome and integrate these differences. Secondly, the emergence of cultural intelligence introduced a cohesive theoretical perspective to the disparate research on intercultural competencies, previously characterized by a multitude of traits derived through inductive reasoning as essential for navigating cultural boundaries (Gelfand et al., 2015).

On the other hand, Soon Ang and Linh Van Dyne, in their *Handbook of Cultural Intelligence: Theory, Measurement, and Applications*, argue that in a world of global opportunities and threats, there is a “great theoretical and practical need to develop cultural competence within many spheres of life – political, educational, organizational, and national” (Soon Ang, Van Dyne, 2008, p. 375).

The contrast between Gelfand, Chiu, and Hong’s focus on developing a theoretical understanding of cultural intelligence and Ang and Van Dyne’s emphasis on its practical application highlights slightly different points of view. While the first group seeks to enrich academic insights and incorporate cultural undertones within a scholarly framework, the second group emphasizes the practical need to cultivate cultural competencies in various everyday contexts to address global challenges and take advantage of opportunities.

Defining Cultural Intelligence

The term cultural intelligence eludes a single, definitive explanation. In the HACP, Gelfand et al. reference the definition of cultural intelligence as a “person’s capability to function effectively in intercultural environments” (Gelfand et al., 2015, p. 278). This definition captures the potential of people to fulfil the requirements of a broad range of intercultural contexts. Therefore, this definition aligns with the more general concept of

intelligence by highlighting the importance of adaptability within a particular setting, which is the intercultural environment. Cultural intelligence is distinct from other viewpoints on intelligence and culture. It varies from the competence to perform efficiently in a particular culture. Instead, it represents a broad array of competencies that enhance performance in diverse intercultural settings. This differentiation acknowledges that an individual may acquire the ability to operate successfully within one culture without necessarily being able to apply those learned skills to navigate effectively in a different cultural context. For instance, a female manager from China could perform exceptionally well on an expatriate assignment in Canada but may face challenges if assigned to work in Saudi Arabia (Gelfand et al., 2015).

From an anthropological point of view, people's behavior in diverse cultural environments is based on their cultural intelligence and is relative to their cultural intelligence quotient. Professor Beth Eisenfeld and US Marine Corps Captain Brian L. Alcorn describe the concept of cultural intelligence quotient. They explain this term as an "individual's capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings" (Alcorn & Eisenfeld, 2022, p. 149). To define the cultural intelligence quotient, a team of researchers in 2008 identified four necessary key elements. Those aspects are motivational, cognitive, metacognitive, and behavioral. Motivational CQ displays an individual's willingness to commit time and energy to study and operate in culturally different situations. Cognitive CQ is about an individual's knowledge of a disposed culture's norms, practices, and facts through education and personal experiences. Metacognitive CQ displays how people can use their mental processes to alter and gain cultural knowledge. This involves observing their mental process that regards their perception of culture. Additionally, people who have higher metacognitive CQ are, from the beginning, familiar with other people's cultural preferences and are constantly working on refining mental models of the particular culture. Behavioral CQ describes an individual's capacity to behave appropriately on culturally different occasions (Alcorn & Eisenfeld, 2022).

In addition to these scientific developments in comprehending cultural differences, there has been an unparalleled and swift spread of globalization, the expansive process of international integration and exchange, and connectivity among individuals from diverse cultures, simultaneously encouraging global connectivity and cultural exchange while enhancing cultural tensions and disparities. While globalization has prompted some to view the world as "flat", it has also intensified areas of cultural tension. Indeed, Nobel Prize

laureate Elie Wiesel identified cultural hatred as animosity aimed at individuals from different cultures as the principal cause of conflicts throughout history. Additionally, Professor Jeremy Ginges and anthropologist Scott Atran demonstrated how the profoundly ingrained sacred values specific to a culture can become catalysts for conflict between different cultural groups. In conclusion, globalization presents opportunities for enriching intercultural interactions within the evolving global village and amplifies challenges stemming from misunderstandings, tensions, and conflicts (Gelfand et al., 2015).

Initial Portrays of Main Characters

To understand cultural intelligence better, it is essential to introduce the two main characters from *Exit West*, who will be examined in greater depth in this thesis. To this end, I will examine arguments from Assistant Professor Rabia Faiz and two Bachelor of Science students, Ayesha Tariq and Hamna Ijaz, from the Department of English at the University of Sargodha in Pakistan.

Nadia, one of the main characters in the novel, is initially depicted as a strong and independent woman. She stands out by choosing to live by herself, wearing clothes that show off her unique style, and cycling, which challenges the usual expectations of her society. The textual lines describe her personality in the following way: “It is a self-customized emblem of her personality, one which also grants her operational Integrity in public contexts” (Faiz et al., 2023, p. 163). Her choice of clothing, particularly her black robes and cape, sets her apart and challenges traditional views on cultural norms and gender roles. Despite the unexpected nature of her attire, it represents her refusal to conform and her wish to maintain her individuality (Faiz et al., 2023). Some interpret the black robe as symbolic, but the author clarifies in the interview that it represents “whatever Nadia wants it to mean.” Therefore, the significance of black robes varies among individuals.

Surprisingly, despite her appearance, Nadia’s reality is more complex. As the story unfolds, we learn that her decision to wear black robes makes her “resist the claims and expectations of the world ...” (Hamid, 2017, p. 45). Her boldness is further highlighted by how she adapts her dress sense for safety, handles aggressive situations with men and the police, and relies on her instincts to avoid dangerous situations. Throughout the novel, Nadia’s journey reflects her growth and adaptability in a world filled with turmoil and upheaval (Faiz et al., 2023).

These facts would give the reader a hint that Nadia wears her black robe to hide in plain sight. She does not wear it for religious reasons but rather as a way of self-protection and maintaining some mystery about herself in her homeland. Her robe enables her to interact with the environment with minimum attention and distraction, as she fits into society's norms with her hidden unconventional and rebellious attitude and the need for personal freedom. She uses it as a veil to hide her identity in plain sight.

Saeed, the second main character, is initially introduced as a character marked by his calm demeanor and strong faith. However, as the story unfolds, his adherence to religious practices and spiritual identity becomes more ambiguous. Nadia initially perceives Saeed as devout, likely because of his beard, which she associates with regular prayer. However, when directly asked about his religious observance, Saeed concedes that he does not always perform his evening prayers, expressing regret with "Not always. Sadly" (Hamid, 2017, p. 2). This aspect of Saeed's character is further illustrated when the narrative describes how he and Nadia adhere to societal norms in their appearance, such as the rules on dress and beards and Nadia's compliance with the rules on hair. This careful balancing act of being visible without drawing attention is represented in the line:

They were dressed in accordance with the rules on dress and he was bearded in accordance with the rules on beards and her hair was hidden by the Rules on hair, trying not to be seen while trying not to look like they were trying not to be seen ... (Hamid, 2017, p. 83).

Beyond his religious practices, Saeed is characterized by his empathy and kindness towards others. He is very much attuned to the emotions and struggles of the people around him, often offering support and comfort. As the narrative progresses and they encounter various challenges, Saeed's character undergoes significant development. His experiences prompt a transformation, revealing a depth of character shaped by compassion and influenced by the circumstances he navigates (Faiz et al., 2023).

To conclude, this thesis looks further into the two protagonists' cultural intelligence from small details regarding how capable they are in handling and adapting to environments different from their cultural landscapes. Since cultural intelligence is about how well a person can adjust to new cultural environments, a systematic analysis shows that one is much more adaptable than the other. The difference is crucial because it helps highlight how deeply rooted the influence of cultural intelligence is in the ability of a person to relate effectively

and respond appropriately in diverse cultural settings. In this light, this thesis will attempt to show how cultural intelligence is evident by comparing adaptive behaviors and prove that greater adaptability is a clear sign of higher cultural intelligence.

Exploring Magical Realism

One needs to understand magical realism to appreciate the value of Mohsin Hamid's book *Exit West*. The novel explores the themes of migration, love, and identity against global socio-political matters. It is based on a firm background of the literary form that combines fantastical elements with realistic elements. This literary device combines the normal with the paranormal, motivating readers to rethink the ideas of place, identity, and belonging. The ordinary becomes extraordinary, and the supernatural becomes normal. He expands the narrative by fusing aspects that bring more emotional and psychological attachment to the migrant experience.

The description of magical realism is complicated. According to a website specializing in postcolonial studies, this term can be defined as “rational view of reality ...” and “the acceptance of the supernatural as prosaic reality” (Moore, 1998).

However, Professor Ikenna Kamalu believes societies are often complex and versatile, especially in postcolonial regions. He believes that magical realism can be described as “postcolonial, unevenly developed places where old and new, modern and ancient, the scientific and the magical views of the world co-exist” (Kamalu, 2008, p. 28).

From these conclusions, one can be aware that magical realism is perceived from many points of view. Each of them highlights a few elements within postcolonial backgrounds. For instance, the author Lindsay Moore (1998) points out the casual blending of rational and magical occurrences treated as nothing special. In contrast, Professor Ikenna Kamalu (2008) emphasizes the socio-cultural details in unevenly developed societies. In this context, these different studies of magical realism collectively demonstrate it as having a dual role in both a narrative technique and a reflection of cultural crossover.

The term “magischer Realismus”, or magic realism, was for the first time introduced in Germany in the 1920s. It was coined in association with the paintings of the Weimar Republic that aimed to capture what was mysterious about life beneath its everyday appearance. The second term, “lo real maravilloso”, or marvelous realism, emerged in Latin America in the 1940s. It describes a merging of natural and magical perspectives that reflect the diverse cultures of Latin America in its literature and art. “Realismo mágico”, or magical

realism, a third term, was introduced in the 1950s in the context of Latin American fiction and has since become the primary term for any narrative fiction that integrates magical events into a realistic storyline that is a matter of fact. In magical realism, the supernatural is not displayed as questionable. Instead, it is taken for granted, acknowledged, and woven into the fabric of literary realism (Shenbahapriya & Jamuna, 2019).

For example, in *Exit West*, the magical doors that symbolize migration are much more than devices in narration. The use of magical realism is a powerful metaphor for the disorientation that displacement brings, and the way human relationships go beyond these boundaries. This thesis will further elaborate on these two elements.

The term magical realism in the context of postcolonial literature is a way of interpretation that perceives colonialism and postcolonialism as dialogic social and political formations expressed in literary works. According to this theory, language is not transparent but always mediates and shapes the reader's world experience. Accordingly, novels written within postcolonial discourse are often about the perspectives of those who have been colonized or those who supported colonialism, depending on where and how these novels were written. Just because a writer or a novel does not explicitly deal with colonialism or postcolonialism does not mean that such concerns are not implicated in characters' actions or the assumptions underpinning their worldview (Shenbahapriya & Jamuna, 2019).

One of the authors who also chose the genre of magical realism to depict real-world issues is Junot Díaz in his novel *The Brief Wondrous Lives of Oscar Wao*. This novel combines the fantastical elements of magical realism with the life of Oscar Wao, a lonely Dominican American who struggles with a family curse and his demons. Through this imaginative story, the novel explores many themes, such as love, the nature of fate, and the brutal reign of dictatorship in the Dominican Republic, deftly blending the magical with historical and political truths. In the 2008 interview *In Darkness We Meet*, Junot Díaz said that he was thinking about how to describe the "extreme experience of being an immigrant in the United States ..." (Celayo & Shook, 2008) and the main genres were "science fiction, fantasy, and comic books ..." (Celayo & Shook, 2008), and are meant to talk about these "extreme, ludicrous transformations ..." (Celayo & Shook, 2008).

Temporal and Spatial Fluidity

The genre of magical realism has long provided writers with the ability to adjust the narrative to push back the boundaries of what is real and what is fantastical, what constitutes

the ordinary, and what seems miraculous. The techniques that magical realist literature uses to accomplish this are temporal and spatial fluidity. Temporal fluidity abandons linear timelines, allowing stories to thread through multiple timelines, fold into historical events, or explore cyclical time patterns, as Wendy B. Faris argues in her seminal work on magical realism and temporal imagination. What this aspect of magical realism calls for is to reconsider what we might know of time as characters might experience moments of déjà vu, interact with ghosts, or step into alternate realities, giving storytelling a richer, more introspective dimension (Abubacker Siddiq & Phill, 2018).

One of the abilities of spatial fluidity in magical realism is that it erases conventional boundaries and transforms everyday settings into gateways to fantastical worlds. Joseph Frank, in his *Spatial Form in Modern Literature*, reveals how magical realism blends the ordinary and extraordinary and transforms the familiar settings into symbolic terrains that call for exploration. This element enables characters to pass through mystical doorways, enchanted forests, or surreal landscapes, allowing narratives to overstep physical limitations and offering people a glimpse into endless possibilities of imagination. Through these shifting spaces, magical realism nurtures experiences that are simultaneously unforeseen and transcendent, highlighting the genre's ability to recreate the parameters of reality (Mitchell, 1980).

Where the genre fully succeeds is in its interaction with fluidity, which is both temporal and spatial. It lies in creating a complex narrative where the material and the immaterial combine. That thought finds a place in Gaston Bachelard's book *The Poetics of Space*. While Bachelard's book is not precisely about magical realism, his inquiry into spatial imagination and poetic habitation fits well with the genre's enchantment with transformational spaces. In magical realist books, even the most ordinary spaces can cover deep mysteries and ancient scenery to be archives of timeless wisdom. This genre demonstrates its remarkable ability to picture the world.

Generally, magical realism presents the concepts of time and space as something fluid, where the natural and magical elements are hidden. The genre demonstrates how fluidity in temporality and spatiality would enhance the story and allow for multidimensional adventures, opening a reader's mind to new, unexplored areas that the art of storytelling offers. Only by such an understanding of magical realism would one bring out the fusion of human experience and the endless possibilities of imagination with precision. The complicated nature of blending the ordinary with the magical enhances its capability to offer

a reader this unique lens through which to look at the world, thereby making it relatively enduring and prominent in the realm of literature.

CHAPTER 2 - PERSPECTIVES ON MIGRATION IN *EXIT WEST*

Journey Through Migration in *Exit West*

Exit West, written by Mohsin Hamid, who has personal experience with migration, tells the story of Nadia and Saeed's journey. During the PBS Q&A session, he revealed that he migrated to California when he was three years old, returned to the United States from Pakistan at the age of eighteen, and subsequently stayed in London before moving back to Pakistan. In addition, Hamid clarifies that although he can relate to some extent to the mental anxiety and disorientation caused by migration, the hardships that Saeed and Nadia face surpass his personal experience.

These two major characters find themselves forced to flee their country, where violence quickly escalates. Set in an unspecified postcolonial nation with a predominantly Muslim population, the novel starts in a city overwhelmed by refugees yet not entirely consumed by war. Both young professionals, Nadia and Saeed, lead urban lives relatable to many worldwide. Saeed values his family and religious practices, whereas Nadia, seeking autonomy, wears a black robe for protection. Their budding relationship faces a dire test as militant forces encroach on their city, mirroring conflicts like the battle for Mosul, the Syrian civil war, or the Taliban's resurgence in Afghanistan. To make the story universally relatable, Hamid, inspired by his hometown, Lahore, deliberately leaves the city unnamed, inviting readers from various backgrounds to see their city in the narrative, thereby broadening the novel's appeal (Bellin, 2022).

Analysis of Intercultural Dynamics in *Exit West*

Hamid incorporates a touch of magical realism by utilizing "magical doors" as a means for his main couple and other migrants to travel. This imaginative element allows Hamid to bypass the depiction of the physical challenges that migrants endure as they move from one location to another. By leveraging these magical doors, he also aims to represent migration as a universal occurrence driven by diverse factors (Singh, 2019).

Mohsin Hamid intricately weaves the narrative around magical doors that serve as a metaphor for the disparities between richer and poorer nations, as well as the challenges faced by migrants. He notes that "the doors of richer destinations were heavily guarded, but [...] the doors from poorer places, were mostly left unsecured ..." (Hamid, 2017, p. 101). This suggests a deliberate choice to leave the doors from economically disadvantaged countries open, possibly in the vain hope that people would return to their origins or simply

because the sheer number of such doors from poor areas made them impossible to monitor comprehensively. This aspect of the doors reflects the complex processes of migration and the obstacles migrants face, both in leaving their homes and upon arrival in new destinations (Babo & Hamad, 2020).

As the protagonists, Saeed and Nadia, migrate from their unnamed city to various locations like Mykonos in Greece, London in Britain, and Marin in San Francisco, each setting represents the contemporary struggles against migration and the societal stance towards migrants. The magical doors that often open into dark alleys or abandoned houses represent more than just the dangerous situations that drive people away from their homelands due to societal, political, or economic turmoil. They also represent the harsh realities that migrants face when they arrive in new places. These dark thresholds into unfamiliar territories highlight the marginalization and the less favorable conditions migrants often face, underscoring the adversity in adapting to new environments (Babo & Hamad, 2020).

In *Exit West*, a significant psychological characteristic observed among many migrants is their effort to maintain their unique cultural or religious identities. On the contrary, a few opt to blend into or adopt the cultural environment of their new surroundings. Within the narrative, Saeed exemplifies the former, holding onto his distinct identity, while Nadia embodies the latter, embracing the culture of their new setting. After relocating from their hometown, Saeed becomes more reserved, seeking companionship within his community. Even after his relationship with Nadia ends, he forms a connection with another woman from his community. His attire shifts towards more traditional garments reflective of his cultural background, and he engages in prayer more fervently: “He prayed fundamentally as a gesture of love for what had gone and would go and could be loved in no other way” (Hamid, 2017, p. 201). This is used to feel closer to his parents, as described by the narrator. This contrast between Saeed and Nadia highlights the diverse ways migrants navigate their identities in new environments (Singh, 2019).

Saeed grows weary of fellow migrants who travel with them via the magical doors, feeling increasingly alienated, which drives him to obtain a revolver for security. On the contrary, Nadia exhibits a spirit of adventure and openness, embracing individuals regardless of their community or beliefs. Her connections, including a friendship with a Greek volunteer, engagement with Nigerian migrants in their shared residence, and her eventual

relationship with a cook, illustrate her inclination to integrate aspects of the local culture into her life (Singh, 2019).

Nadia's experience highlights the complex impact of forced migration and transnationalism on women from societies marked by oppressive patriarchy. In their home countries, these women are marginalized by patriarchal norms, but as refugees, they encounter an opportunity to attain equality with men from their own cultures. This shared refugee status somewhat diminishes the dominant societal norms that maintained women's inferiority in their countries of origin. Therefore, for Nadia, being in a new country offers a chance for integration that her previous marginalized status did not allow. This contrasts with Saeed's experience, where the new cultural norms challenge his sense of masculinity. His interaction with a Nigerian woman makes him aware of his diminished authority and independence in this transnational context. Saeed's struggle to adapt and the psychological distress from being perceived as weaker underscore his sense of reduced status and a lack of voice in the new setting (Koshy, 2018).

Reality Check in *Exit West*

Exit West stands out due to its exploration of migration, offering a detailed look at migrants' experiences, their interactions with new cultures and societies, and the reactions they provoke. Hamid provides a thorough insight into contemporary migration, advocating for coexistence and a deeper understanding of others beyond geographical and cultural divides. Philosophically, the book suggests that life is a form of migration, with our evolving selves undergoing constant, albeit subtle, transformations. The title initially references the journey of Saeed, Nadia, and others to Western countries. However, a deeper analysis reveals it as a call for change in Western policies towards migrants, suggesting moving away from conflict towards coexistence as the only viable way to ensure humanity's survival and progress (Singh, 2019).

For the transnational second person, fleeing becomes the only viable path when returning to their original country is not an option due to persecution: "The mob looked to Nadia like a strange and violent tribe, intent on their destruction, some armed with iron bars or knives, and she and Saeed turned and ran, but could not escape" (Hamid, 2017, p. 131). For the transnational second person, fleeing becomes the only viable path when returning to their original country is not an option due to persecution. Refugees find themselves in a

distinct situation where, in their new place of refuge, they face the same kind of violent rhetoric that forced them to flee in the first place (Koshy, 2018).

Furthermore, it becomes apparent that the state, in collaboration with its “legitimate” citizens, plays a role in the displacement and marginalization of refugees.

After the riots, the talk on the television was of a major operation, one city at a time, starting in London, to reclaim Britain for Britain, and it was reported that the army was being deployed, and the police as well, and those who had once served in the army and the police [...] Saeed and Nadia heard it said that nativist extremists were forming their own legions, with a wink and a nod from the authorities ... (Hamid, 2017, p. 132).

The phenomenon of refugees’ transnationalism is viewed as a liability by the state, leading to their exile as a strategy for preserving “national security”. Consequently, the state acts as a mechanism of suppression, obstructing the efforts of transnational subaltern individuals to integrate into the new country (Koshy, 2018).

To achieve control and surveillance, the state prominently uses refugee camps. Anthropologist Liisa Malkki, in her work *Refugees and Exile: From “Refugee Studies” to the National Order of Things* (1995) describes the refugee camp as a “standardized, generalizable technology of power in the management of mass displacement” (Malkki, 1995, p. 498). According to Malkki, these camps facilitate “the spatial concentration of people and facilitates bureaucratic processes” (Malkki, 1995, p. 499) by organizing individuals based on their nationality, managing resettlements, and controlling their movements and surveillance. Such concentration in camps ensures that refugees do not “contaminate” the societal and spatial domains of the mainstream population (Koshy, 2018).

Consequently, refugees, unable to return to their countries, become vulnerable targets subjected to the backlash of native populations concerned with being outnumbered and losing access to economic opportunities and resources.

The fury of those nativists advocating wholesale slaughter was what struck Nadia most, and it struck her because it seemed so familiar, so much like the fury of the militants in her own city. She wondered whether she and Saeed had done anything by moving, whether the faces and buildings had changed but the basic reality of their predicament had not (Hamid, 2017, p. 156).

This situation gives rise to what Hage terms “paranoid nationalism”, a state of national consciousness fueled by fear, where the nation’s security and prosperity are seen as being threatened by those of a different race or religion. In this context, refugees, as the transnational “others”, are often viewed as a potential danger to the state and its “legitimate” citizens. As long as refugees are perceived as not contributing economically, they are regarded as parasitic entities that could eventually displace native populations (Koshy, 2018).

Moreover, the state treats refugees as entities to be disciplined through monitoring and restriction while also serving as tools for demonstrating state power:

In exchange for their labor in cleaning terrain and building infrastructure and assembling dwellings from prefabricated blocks, migrants were promised forty meters and a pipe: a home on forty meters of land and a connection to all the utilities of modernity (Hamid, 2017, pp. 167-168).

They are involved in constructing the very areas where they may be segregated, with these being presented as evidence of the state’s generosity to make them overlook the shortcomings. Additionally, the talents of these newcomers are exploited, offering them chances to assimilate into the new societal framework. Nevertheless, their marginalized status sees little to no improvement, as shown by the reluctance of local workers to coexist with migrants and the sporadic violent attacks against them. Such attacks include “disabled machinery or destroyed dwelling units nearing completion or resulted in the severe beating of some workers who had strayed too far from camp” (Hamid, 2017, p. 175). Acts against these transnational individuals are harshly punished by locals, often with state approval, ensuring the refugees remain without citizenship and continue to face oppression (Koshy, 2018).

In one of the scenes, Nadia and Saeed arrive at an abandoned hotel in London, a sanctuary for migrants, which offers vital insight into the migrant experience. They deeply value the privacy provided by a room, a frequently overlooked comfort highlighting the severe deprivation faced by migrants. The attempt to make this temporary space feel like home through simple acts like placing a photo on a shelf underscores the constant instability in their lives. The lack of basic needs, especially the longing for a shower over food, further illustrates their harsh conditions. This scenario reflects not only the physical hardships but

also the psychological need for dignity and humanity, emphasizing how fundamental needs become luxuries under the strain of migration (Liaqat, 2022).

To make matters worse, migrants, already lacking basic human needs, are also confronted with violence worldwide. This text illustrates the constant threat of physical harm migrants face. The human body is extremely vulnerable, susceptible to fatal harm from “the wrong blow, the wrong gunshot, the wrong flick of a blade, turn of a car, presence of a microorganism in a handshake, a cough” (Hamid, 2017, p. 7). The author lists various threats to a migrant’s physical safety, summarizing the range of assaults migrants worldwide are at risk of. These dangers constantly worry migrants as they move and try to integrate into new communities (Liaqat, 2022).

Navigating Dual Realities in Magical Realism

Magical realist texts frequently navigate two paradoxical worlds. Babo et al. support this concept. They state that these texts make it “a good literary device for those authors whose aims are to trace immigrants’ experience ...” (Babo & Hamad, 2020, p. 385).

Immigrants often find themselves straddling two realms: the homeland they have left behind and the new, foreign country they must navigate. This duality mirrors the essence of magical realism, which weaves reality with fantastical elements. Similarly, fantasy is essential in postcolonial literature, acting as a conduit for exploring themes of identity, power, and the loss of culture. The strategic employment of fantasy elements enables authors to construct alternative realities or amplify certain facets of reality, thus illuminating the distress and circumstances encountered during and after colonial domination. Together, magical realism and fantasy serve as powerful literary tools that allow for a profound examination of the complexities faced by individuals caught between worlds, whether through the lens of immigration or the aftermath of colonialism (Babo & Hamad, 2020).

For instance, in the context of postcolonial horror, supernatural and fantastical elements are often used to represent the horrors of colonialism. These elements can serve as metaphors for real-world atrocities, allowing authors to depict these horrors in a way that might be too graphic or disturbing if described realistically (Ramdas, 2020).

In some cases, fantasy is used to represent the psychological trauma and cultural dislocation caused by colonialism. For example, magical realism, a genre that blends realistic narrative with fantastical elements, is often used in postcolonial literature to depict the fragmented reality experienced by those living in postcolonial societies (Siskind, 2012).

Nevertheless, while fantasy can indeed be used to describe horrific situations, it is not just about depicting the negative aspects of colonialism. It is also a tool for resistance, critique, and reimagining identities and histories in the wake of colonial rule. It is a way for postcolonial authors to reclaim their narratives and articulate their experiences in their own terms (Sorensen, 2014).

The thesis focuses on the fantasy elements of the book and their role. Hamid structures his narrative by establishing associations with non-realistic genres, employing the motif of magical doors as a narrative device offering an escape for those in desperate need of distancing themselves from their immediate surroundings. The substitution of the hardships associated with conventional travel with such fantastical modes of transportation serves to contextualize our perception of the situation within the realms of science-fiction and fantasy scenarios. Concurrently, the unrealistic portrayal of a genuine sociopolitical issue prompts thematic contemplations that transcend mere sympathy for the heightened perils of migration. Instead, it invites the audience to engage critically and positively with the concept of hybridity, a theme Hamid dramatizes in both the formal structure and thematic content of his novel (Jiménez, 2020).

Exploring Magical Realism and Fantasy in *Exit West*

In Hamid's novel, the incorporation of magical doors connecting to fantasy or science fiction relies on their recognition as ordinary elements in these genres. Such portals, serving as pathways to extraordinary realms, are recurring themes in fantasy literature and science fiction narratives. For instance, in a movie such as *Stargate* (1994). Whether grounded in reason and scientific methods or supernatural elements, these portals contribute to the coherence of the narrative in their respective genres. In *Exit West*, Hamid introduces portals leading to a different world, challenging familiar natural laws. Despite this fantastical element, the projected world maintains a connection with our reality, encouraging readers to explore science fiction and fantasy themes more deeply. Additionally, the novel explores the concept of forced migration as a dystopian reality, highlighting the juxtaposition of a fantastical element with the harshness of displacement (Jiménez, 2020).

However, the novel includes more than just magical doors. Even though these doors are the most noticeable magical element, it is worth noting that at the start of chapter three, the text mentions:

Nadia and Saeed were, back then, always in possession of their phones. In their phones were antennas, and these antennas sniffed out an invisible world as if by magic, a world that was all around them, and also nowhere, transporting them to places distant and near, and to places that had never been and would never be (Hamid, 2017, p. 35).

The reference to magic and the possible connection to magic wands is quite apparent, even though it ventures beyond typical science fiction. Additionally, portraying digital networks as an “invisible world” accessible to Saeed and Nadia hints at a remarkably inventive and unconventional concept, aligning with the concept of “novum” in the study of science fiction, as introduced by Darko Suvin. Moreover, this passage reflects on the profound impact of technological advancement as a transformative force in society. It draws a strong contrast between earlier times when gaining access to a telephone line presented formidable challenges and the present situation where Saeed and Nadia, empowered by technology, can establish various connections despite the city’s curfews (Jiménez, 2020).

Furthermore, one of the most notable and significant parts of the story, especially in making science fiction ideas seem real, happens in chapter five. Like in other parts of the book, the storyteller describes how some characters use magical doors to move from their troubled environments to a place they hope is better. This story is about a family that arrives in Dubai. What this part of the story focuses on is quite interesting. The storyteller describes how the four family members come out of a door at the base of a floor (Jiménez, 2020).

On a security camera, the family could be seen blinking in the sterile artificial light [...] though the feed lacked audio input it was of sufficient resolution that lip-reading software could identify their language as Tamil [...] After a brief interlude the family was picked up again by a second camera [...] they were at that moment simultaneously captured on three exterior surveillance feeds [...] they could be seen at multiple angles [...] A small quadcopter drone was hovering fifty meters above them now, too quiet to be heard, and relaying its feed to a central monitoring station [...] the family was also visible in the camera feeds of various tourists’ selfie-taking mobile phones [...] they were intercepted and led away, apparently bewildered, or overawed, for they held hands and did not resist or scatter or run” (Hamid, 2017, pp. 86-88).

In this part of the story, technology plays a key role, but it is not about imagining the future capabilities of gadgets, as seen in the TV show *Black Mirror* (2011–2017). Instead, in this episode, Hamid creates a feeling of being watched and chased. This recalls George Orwell's book *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). Thus, *Exit West* connects with the dystopian settings often found in science fiction. While it is not precisely correct to say that the society in Hamid's story is a dystopia, just mentioning this theme makes the dystopian elements more noticeable. The way Hamid realistically shows what is happening in the world today brings up essential ideas to think about. His portrayal of people being forced to move suggests that the refugee crisis is like a dystopia in real life when seen from this perspective (Jiménez, 2020).

To tie everything together and move the story into the future, a common technique in science fiction, often called “futuristic”, Hamid investigates the political effects of what happens when people cannot stop using the portals. By chapter nine, after Saeed and Nadia had escaped their country and arrived in London, following a short stay in Greece, many people moved around the world and created new communities (Jiménez, 2020).

In the formerly protected greenbelt around London a ring of new cities was being built, cities that would be able to accommodate more people again than London itself. This development was called the London Halo, one of innumerable human halos and satellites and constellations springing up in the country and in the world” (Hamid, 2017, p. 167).

This illustrates the overuse of this kind of technology.

In the second part of his novel, Hamid creates a world that is similar in feeling to the ones shown in movies like Alfonso Cuarón's *Children of Men* (2006) and Neil Blomkamp's *Elysium* (2013). These films are considered science fiction because they show a dystopian future world and deal with social issues from a global political view. Hamid intentionally uses symbols like halos, satellites, and constellations to talk about the growth of immigrant communities. In *Exit West*, the characters realize they are changing the Earth. For many people, adapting to this new world is hard. There are taxes for migrants living in a place for a long time, and new cities have started forming. This is because governments find it impossible to stop the migration flow caused by the doors. Hamid's portrayal of a world with forced migration includes real-life problems and violence that often come with the

presence of immigrants. However, as time goes on and things start to settle, Saeed and Nadia feel that, at least in Britain, life continues reasonably safely for most people (Jiménez, 2020).

Transformational Role of Magical Doors

In the novel, mysterious black doors act as portals that whisk the main characters, Nadia and Saeed, from one nation to another, immersing them in diverse cultures. These magical doors are not just plot devices but serve a deeper metaphorical purpose, reflecting the transformative journey of the characters against the backdrop of global conflict. In a Q&A session on PBS, Hamid explained the reason for choosing magical doors in *Exit West*. For him, the doors symbolize the magic of technology, such as the black rectangle of our smartphones and computer screens, which can transfer us mentally as fast as our bodies. Additionally, Hamid states in the Q&A that “the focus on stories on the rafts, people crossing in rafts, allow us to willfully blind ourselves to the story of why they are coming and what happened when they arrive” (PBS NewsHour, 2018). *Exit West* is a book that portrays the story of immigrants in a unique and magical way. The author uses the concept of magical doors to convey the immense and complex tale of migration, which is often overlooked. Despite the small size of the book, it presents an essential piece of immigrants’ story that should be noticed (Babo & Hamad, 2020).

As Nadia and Saeed navigate the world as refugees, their reactions to their ever-changing environments diverge. Nadia finds exhilaration in the novelty and diversity of their experiences, gradually adapting to and embracing the multicultural landscapes and transient communities they encounter. In contrast, Saeed becomes introspective, seeking comfort in memories of his homeland and yearning for a connection to his cultural roots (Faiz et al., 2023).

Their initial stop in Mykonos, after fleeing their own country, marks a critical moment in their journey. Nadia perceives their “passage” through the magical doors as an experience akin to “both like dying and like being born ...” (Hamid, 2017, p. 98), symbolizing the profound personal transformation that accompanies migration. Their journey is characterized by a duality of death and rebirth as they leave behind their former lives and step into the unknown, where each crossing reshapes their identities. This allegory of resurrection vividly illustrates the profound, often tumultuous changes migration imposes on individuals, highlighting the complex interplay of loss and discovery, death, and renewal that defines their new existence (Faiz et al., 2023).

CHAPTER 3 - MAIN CHARACTERS' TRANSFORMATION

Nadia's Character Transformation

Nadia starts the story by challenging societal norms and expectations. Over time, she becomes a fearless adventurer, eager to discover new horizons. The magical doors in the story highlight these aspects of her character. Thanks to her strong and daring nature, Nadia easily navigates through the uncertain and varied scenarios presented by these doors. She adeptly moves through different places and situations, using the doors as gateways to explore and grow. These doors initiate her quest for freedom and new possibilities, allowing her to reshape her identity beyond the conservative confines of her original world (Faiz et al., 2023).

Nadia joins a migrant group while living in the mansion for exiles in London. The group includes individuals from Nigeria and beyond, representing a blend of different cultures. Here, English serves as their common language, facilitating communication among them. Nadia values being “one among many” in this diverse setting, reflecting the dynamic growth and change she has always pursued (Faiz et al., 2023). Their variant of English came to be as a result of their mixed origin and English proficiency:

[T]hey spoke different variations of English, different Englishes, and so when Nadia gave voice to an idea or opinion among them, she did not need to fear that her views could not be comprehended, for her English was like theirs, one among many (Hamid, 2017, p. 144).

Based on this knowledge, it can be assumed that Nadia uses these magical doors to free herself from her background and that she welcomes the variety of experiences they offer. This demonstrates her ability to adjust to different cultures.

Saeed's Character Transformation

Saeed starts as a disciplined and reflective individual, shaped by his upbringing. However, as he travels through the magical doors, his character evolves. He becomes more adaptable and open to change, recognizing his vulnerabilities. The doors lead him to new cultures, people, and interactions, pushing him to confront his biases and assumptions. These experiences transform Saeed into a more open-minded and empathetic person as he sheds his insecurities and seizes the opportunities that await on the other side of the doors. While working at a refugee camp in London, Saeed and Nadia's relationship undergoes significant changes (Faiz et al., 2023).

Looking more closely, one can see that Saeed's journey through magical doors in *Exit West* marks his transformation. Starting as a disciplined and reflective individual, he becomes more adaptable and empathetic as he experiences new cultures and people. These doors symbolize his growth, showing how he overcomes his biases and becomes open to change, which enhances his ability to connect with the world around him.

Cultural Intelligence of Nadia and Saeed

A thorough analysis of Nadia and Saeed makes us realize that some competencies of Nadia's cultural intelligence are prominently displayed through her adaptability and active participation in different cultural environments. As previously mentioned, Faiz believes in their *Exit West* analysis that Nadia can quickly adjust to new cultural environments. As they argue in their study: "Nadia's bold personality enables her to quickly adapt to the unpredictable world created by the doors" (Faiz et al., 2023, p. 164). Deciding to embrace the unknown by going through magical doors was not just adaptability in the physical sense but also psychological and emotional. She quickly disposes of the confining social norms, goes on to navigate new social landscapes, and adopts strategies that ensure her survival and growth. Here, in her ability to adjust identity and behavior according to situational demand, she shows advanced ability in the field of negotiation through highly complex cultural dynamics.

On the other hand, even though Faiz describes Saeed's transformation in this way: "Saeed develops into a more liberal and compassionate person, letting go of his underlying insecurities and embracing the chances that lay beyond the doors" (Faiz et al., 2023, p. 165), Saeed finds comfort and a sense of belonging by aligning himself with the Nigerian community in the mansion where many migrants have taken residence. This connection to the Nigerian community highlights his need for familiarity and his tendency to seek cultural and emotional support from people with similar backgrounds or experiences.

In this regard, one can notice that Nadia's ability to adapt her behavior and perspective makes her significantly more culturally developed if one considers cultural intelligence crucial for adjusting to new cultural environments. When one compares her predisposition to transform and thrive in different settings with Saeed's more static approach, it is evident that her resilience and superior capability to integrate into various societies are significant displays of her cultural maturity. This evidence can be based on her ability to adapt to the workplace community, whereas Saeed sticks to the Nigerian community.

The Ending of the Book and the Separate Paths of the Main Characters

As the last chapters in *Exit West* wrap up, Saeed and Nadia find themselves on different personal paths after journeying through various magical doors to escape their war-torn country. After arriving in San Francisco and living together for a time, the strains of their experiences and their evolving desires lead them to part ways. Nadia seeks a more independent life, continuing to explore and adapt to new cultures and settings. At the same time, Saeed finds solace in connecting with his Muslim community, which reminds him of his roots and the family he left behind. Their story ends with them living separate lives, reflecting on the transformative impact of their migrations and the poignant realities of love, loss, and identity in the face of profound change.

The breakup of Saeed and Nadia could be illustrated by a statement in Michele Gelfand's book *Tight and Loose Cultures and the Secret Signals That Direct Our Lives*. Gelfand argues that contrasting habits can often lead to tension. As she argues in her book: "Differences can become a source of friction – even irritation – when they collide" (Gelfand, 2019, p. 184). This observation directly relates to Saeed and Nadia's experience in *Exit West*. Their evolving personal differences in response to their new environments and divergent aspirations become significant sources of friction. As these differences grow, they lead to discomfort and, eventually, the recognition that their life paths and needs no longer align, resulting in their separation. This narrative painfully illustrates how personal and cultural differences can strain a relationship, particularly when each individual's coping mechanisms and future visions significantly diverge due to changing circumstances.

Critical Perspectives on the Book

The Guardian review of *Exit West* by Mohsin Hamid acknowledges the book for the author's skillful narrative technique. As they write in the article "The mixture of clarity and restraint in such passages is very impressive and confirms Hamid's reputation as a brilliant ventriloquist who is deeply engaged with the most pressing issues of our time" (Motion, 2017). This statement showcases the author's skillful mastery of narrative technique, blending straightforward storytelling with thoughtful handling of intense subject matter, affirming his literary talent and relevance.

Additionally, *The New York Times* also validates the quality of the author's skillful and evocative use of language. The article states: "Writing in spare, crystalline prose, Hamid conveys the experience of living in a city under siege with sharp, stabbing immediacy"

(Kakutani, 2017). This phrase not only highlights Hamid's skillful and evocative use of language but also his ability to vividly capture and communicate his characters' intense and complex experiences. His prose brings the reader directly into the fierce settings of his story, making the narrative both compelling and profoundly impactful.

On the other hand, novelist and journalist Amitava Kumar highlights a potential issue with the book's narrative style in a *Bookforum* review. She critiques the author: "He adopts a narrative voice that I can only call biblical... Hamid is usually a wonderful stylist, but this is mannered and jarring, and the awkward syntax and style are deployed repeatedly in *Exit West*" (Kumar, 2015). This critique points out a perceived flaw in the narrative style of the book, suggesting that the author's choice of a "biblical" voice and its implementation may detract from the reading experience for some, coming across as unnatural or forced within the context of the novel's modern themes and settings.

The assessments from *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* on Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West* are overwhelmingly positive, highlighting Hamid's mastery of narrative technique and the evocative use of language. Both reviews commend his ability to merge clear, controlled prose with the portrayal of complex themes and intense experiences, establishing him as a poignant storyteller relevant to contemporary issues. This recognition from such reputable sources underscores Hamid's literary prowess and contributes positively to his reputation.

Overall, while most critical reception praises Hamid's skillful storytelling and thematic depth, there is a noted discrepancy in how his stylistic choices are received. This indicates that while his work is largely acclaimed, it may also present challenges for some readers due to stylistic preferences.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, we analyzed Mohsin Hamid's novel *Exit West*, employing an intercultural perspective and examining the fantasy elements embedded in the story. Our focus was mainly on the novel's creative use of magical realism to depict the experiences of refugees. This research explores further how magical realism, through the motif of magical doors, significantly influences the development of the main characters, Saeed and Nadia, providing profound insights into their transformations as they navigate through these portals. The magical doors are not mere plot devices but represent deep symbolic significance, acting as an element of change and as significant elements that facilitate the characters' personal growth and adaptation to new realities and cultures.

While many scholars have examined the facets of magical realism, this study specifically addresses the utilization of magical realism in *Exit West*, highlighting the transformative role of the magical doors within the story. These doors symbolize critical crossroads in Saeed and Nadia's lives, marking moments of significant change and leading to a reevaluation of their identities and approaches. By adopting a qualitative methodology and carefully selecting documents that underscore the relationship between the characters' evolution and the magical doors, this thesis has aimed to uncover the different ways in which Hamid applies magical realism to explore themes of migration, identity, and the human capacity for resilience in the face of displacement.

The findings of this thesis confirm that Hamid's strategic use of magical realism not only captures the experiences of refugees but also provides a compelling exploration of the challenges they face. The magical doors, as symbols of sudden transitions and as agents of change, enrich the narrative by offering a metaphorical lens through which the complexities of migration and adaptation are viewed. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of magical realism as a literary style, underscoring its potential to reflect on reality from a perspective that blends the magical with the normal, thereby offering fresh insights into the global refugee crisis.

In conclusion, this exploration of *Exit West* through the lens of intercultural knowledge and magical realism reveals the novel as a powerful commentary on the global refugee crisis, employing magical realism to examine closely the emotional and psychological landscapes of those caught in the agony of migration. By highlighting the role of magical doors as transformative elements within the narrative, this thesis not only expands the scholarly conversation around magical realism but also calls for a continued engagement

with the themes of displacement and cultural interaction. Through this analysis, *Exit West* emerges as a critical text that encourages a compassionate and different understanding of the migrant experience, challenging us to consider the broader implications of migration in an increasingly interconnected world.

If we studied this topic further, we could observe that even though intercultural intelligence plays a significant role in the novel, Saeed and Nadia's breakup in *Exit West* was more about their differing personalities and personal beliefs than their cultural intelligence. Their individual responses to their new environments reflect their distinct approaches to life and identity. Nadia's desire for independence and exploration contrasts with Saeed's search for community and familiarity, highlighting fundamental differences in their characters and beliefs. These core differences ultimately guide their decisions, leading them on separate paths and to the dissolution of their relationship. This divergence underscores how personal values and life goals can play a critical role in the dynamics of a relationship, especially under the stress of significant life changes like migration.

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SHRNUTÍ

Tato bakalářská práce zkoumá využití magického realismu v románu Mohsina Hamida *Exit West* a jeho důležitou roli při zobrazování migrantské zkušenosti. Příběh sleduje mladý pár Nadiu a Saeeda, kteří prchají z válkou zničeného města a snaží se najít lepší život v Evropě. Cílem této práce je přiblížit a pochopit použití magického realismu v románu a prozkoumat jeho metaforické prostředky, které popisují výzvy a zkušenosti imigrantů při hledání nového domova. Systematická analýza pomocí interkulturních nástrojů zkoumá, jak román využívá magický realismus k pochopení složitosti migrace a adaptace v novém kulturním prostředí. Výsledky zdůrazňují, že *Exit West* není jen román o přesouvání, ale také hluboký komentář ke globální migrační krizi, který podporuje komplexní zkoumání kulturních interakcí a odolného lidského ducha tváří v tvář nepřízni osudu. Doporučení navrhuji prozkoumat magický realismus v literatuře a pokračovat v interkulturní analýze příběhů o migrantech.