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Dramatic Monologue and Political Resistance: A Jamesonian Reading of Mohsin Hamid's The Reluctant Fundamentalist

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ABSTRACT

The present article endeavors to examine Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* so as to attest to the political resistance effected by its formal aspects. The researchers are inclined to survey Hamid's novel in the light of the mind-sets of the illustrious contemporary philosopher and literary critic Fredric Jameson. According to Jameson, it is a falsehood to think that the form of a work of art should be considered to be less important than its content owing to the fact that the formal aspects of art embody resisting possibilities and are prone to galvanize the reader into subversive activity. As an illustration, Fredric Jameson specifies in his *The Political Unconscious* that in comparison with its content, the narrative form of the nineteenth-century literature is a more significant embodiment of the ideology. The question the article poses is that whether the novel's development of dramatic monologue can provide the reader with a unique opportunity for political resistance. In this vein, Hamid employs dramatic monologue to bring to the fore the discourse of an ordinary Muslim who is normally subject to silence and ostracism in the wake of the 9/11 attacks as the corollary of the Bush administration's anti-terror narrative. As a consequence, the formal aspects of the novel can silence the American citizen in order to enable the reader to perceive the world through the eyes of the novel's Third-World speaker. Furthermore, Hamid's manipulation of dramatic monologue enables the reader to enter the Muslim protagonist's mind and display political resistance against the xenophobic and Islamophobic discourses that prevailed in America in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. The formal aspects of the novel make it possible for the novelist to describe how a Muslim immigrant perceives and inveighs against the Bush administration's counter terrorist activities in the turbulent aftermath of al-Qaeda terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Ultimately, Hamid invites the reader in his *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* to re-evaluate the post 9/11 dichotomous Islamophobic discourses which are intended to divide the world between the binary divisions of us and them and represent Muslims as potential terrorists.

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