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". . . But People Like Us Always Be Outsiders": Cultural Identity, Hybridity, and the Role of Belonging in Elif Shafak's *Honour*

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Introduction

> The question 'where are you from?' has always mattered to me, and felt deeply personal, albeit equally complicated. For a long time, it was the one question I dreaded being asked. 'I am from multiple places,' I wanted to be able to say in return. 'I come from many cities and cultures, plural and diverse, but I am also from the ruins and remnants of these, from the memories and forgettings, from the stories and silences.' . . . 'Yes, but where are you really from?' they would insist . . . You could only fit one word in that box, no more. In an age of speed, simplicity and fleeting glimpses, few people had either the time or the patience for long answers. So I would simply say 'Turkey', and they would nod, satisfied. (Shafak, *Age of Division* 20-22)

Elif Shafak describes in this passage from her manifesto, *How to Stay Sane in an Age of Division* (2020), that the ideas of belonging and home can be fraught concepts that embody more than who we are, our country of origin and more generally, our place in the world. Shafak's feelings surrounding her identity and sense of belonging are shaped by hybridity and multiplicity. She does not feel she belongs to only one place or one culture but to "multiple places . . . cities and cultures" (20-22). Her cultural history, roots, and first-hand experiences contribute to these feelings. However, her experiences are also shaped by confusion and misunderstanding.

Shafak feels a connection to her cultural roots and ancestral history, which forms a significant part of her identity. She clarifies that she is "also from the ruins and remnants of these, from the memories and forgettings, from the stories and silences" (20-22). This epigraph highlights that while her experiences of having lived in multiple cities and places matter, her identity also consists of this connection to her roots. The stories that

have been forgotten and were not able to be told, and the people who have been silenced, are a part of her sense of self. She clearly positions herself as a hybrid individual whose feelings of belonging are not bound to one physical location but appear much more complex than that. Therefore, she gives other people who feel similar about the topics of home and belonging a voice through her writing.

Given the context of the ostracization and mistreatment of migrants, the depiction of migrant experiences in the UK, as presented in novels, films, television shows, and plays, becomes essential. They give us an insight into the lives and struggles of people with diverse heritages. This can be seen through the burgeoning genre of inter- and transcultural pieces of contemporary literature and novels dealing with the experiences of migrants, including experiences of unbelonging, discrimination, and identity struggles. By looking at *Honour* (2012), this paper pays attention to how fictional literature depicts society and minorities' experiences, particularly their struggles and conflicts. The role of representation and lack thereof, as well as identity conflicts and struggles with their hybridity, are in the foreground of their lives and experiences in their diasporic environment.

Some characters in *Honour* construct and negotiate their cultural identities in different ways and thus offer multiple ways of addressing identities. Evidently, *Honour* is not only relevant because it shows how identities can be viewed and constructed differently and how developing a sense of home and belonging can be rather complex for migrants, but it also shows that the experiences of individuals are valid and needed to deconstruct the stereotyping migrants and other people deemed strangers experience.

Identities, the Third Space and Representation

Questions of Cultural Identities

Questions and concerns surrounding the topic of identities frequently emerge from debates and discourses surrounding cultural diversity (Hall, "Introduction" 1). There is little agreement on the causes of the rise in the importance of identities and the lasting effects this rise of interest and

importance has. However, what becomes clear from these questions and debates is that identities are relevant, and thus it is essential to realise and recognise what identities are, how they form and how they can be transformed (Alcoff 2).

Stuart Hall mentions two distinct ways of looking at cultural identities, the first focusing on the idea of a stable and fixed cultural identity based on shared ancestry and history. This leads to feelings of "oneness" and belonging (Hall, "Introduction" 4) and a "shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self', hiding inside the many other, more superficial, or artificially imposed 'selves', which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common" (Hall, "Cultural Identity" 223). This first way of looking at cultural identities emphasises common historical experiences and shared ancestry and provides a stable frame for the individual's cultural identity (223). Secondly, cultural identities can focus on similarities and differences among people concerning the questions of "what we really are" and "what we have become" (225). Finally, he clarifies that one cannot speak of one collective experience regarding all cultures and formations of cultural identities but instead speaks of different individual experiences. According to this approach, cultural identities are not fixed but changeable and transformable, and not something secure and stable that contains a oneness inside. However, they are ". . . the different ways we are positioned by and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past" (225). Therefore, as Shafak also points out in her epigraph, individuals positioning themselves and being positioned in relation to specific historical narratives impacts how identities are formed.

Hall makes it clear that identities emerge in connection to power and have a relation to exclusion and difference ("Introduction" 4). In this context, Hall explains that this is the reason they are not a naturally existing unity, which is all about "sameness" and "oneness" (4). Identities are constructed through difference; thus, it is essential to note that through what is deemed different, what is deemed on the outside, and what is there in relation to the Other, one's identity can be constructed (4).

The Hybrid Third Space

When discussing the multiplicity of identities and the possibility of hybrid identities, it is crucial to look at hybridity. Homi K. Bhabha is a postcolonial writer most well-known for his writings on hybridity, mimicry, and his concept of the Third Space. Bhabha argues that there is no such thing as purity in culture and that cultural hybridities emerge through historical transformation (Bhabha, *Location* 54). Furthermore, similar to Hall, Bhabha argues that "cultures are never unitary in themselves" ("Cultural Diversity" 207), clarifying that no culture is homogeneous but rather always has to be viewed in connection to other cultures. Nevertheless, he also clarifies that cultures are not solely defined by the relation of the self and Other; much must be unpacked to understand cultures and our views on them, such as hybridity (207).

Throughout *Location of Culture* (1994), Homi Bhabha defines hybridity and emphasises the necessity to look at history to realise the meanings of hybridity (3). Trying to explain hybridity appears more complex than one might think. Bhabha uses the term to talk about individuals and cultures who have had contact with other people, "the colonialist Self or the colonised Other" (*Location* 64), thus influencing each other, existing in an in-between and creating hybridity. Bhabha defines hybrid individuals as having "a hybridity, a difference 'within,' a subject that inhabits the rim of an 'in-between' reality" (19). Hybridity can activate a position in-between, a position "that may be asymmetrical, disjunctive and contradictory" (Bhabha, "Foreword" xii). This reveals that hybridity opens a space that might show an ambivalent or different position, giving space to a plurality of voices. This space Bhabha defines as the Third Space (xii-xiii).

Furthermore, Bhabha clarifies that the interpretation and communication between two parties, between the self and the Other, does not just happen but should happen through the Third Space ("Cultural Diversity" 208). Negotiation is significant here, as "we are always negotiating in any situation of political opposition or antagonism" (Rutherford 216). Thus, the Third Space can "make . . . the structure of meaning and reference an ambivalent process" (Bhabha, "Cultural Diversity" 208) and therefore can also disrupt narratives of the Western world about the Other.

In the context of Bhabha's Third Space, an imaginary space, it is also important to talk about real spaces and locations that can connect to our cultural backgrounds and identities. Edward Soja and his notions on places and spaces come to mind in this case. Soja defines the Thirdspace (spelt as one word) as "a tentative and flexible term that attempts to capture what is a constantly shifting and changing milieu of ideas, events, appearances, and meanings" (2). He describes space and spatiality not solely as real locations but mentions imagined places, unique and historical imaginations, and their social and cultural implications (15). While talking about a different kind of Thirdspace, Soja mentions that the reason for such a creation of this notion is to "encourage . . . to think differently about the meanings and significance of space and those related concepts that composed and compromise the inherent spatiality of human life: place, location, locality, landscape, environment, home, city, region, territory and geography" (1). He explores the real and imagined worlds of Thirdspace, making his notion distinguishable and distinctive from Bhabha's notion (3). According to him, the Thirdspace is "the space where all places are, capable of being seen from every angle, each standing clear; but also a secret and conjectured object, filled with illusions and allusions" (56). This underscores, similar to Bhabha's Third Space of enunciation that Thirdspaces address the experiences of Othering and being the subaltern. Furthermore, these spaces can be used for self-representation and work against the notions of stereotypes and Othering evident in society (Wieselberg, n.p.).

Representation and a Sense of Belonging

The restoration of a sense of self that is not connected to how one is defined as the Other can happen through representation and self-representation (Craig-Norten et al. 55). However, the notions of the self, the Other, and representation are intricately connected. As Stuart Hall described in his work *Representation* (1997), how we represent places and people and how we do that while distinguishing these people and places from ourselves is relevant. This gives us a sense of assurance and safety (225). Furthermore, Hall mentions that "identities are . . . constituted within, not outside representation" ("Introduction" 4), clarifying that individuals can find themselves and make sense of their place in the world within the

representation. Likewise, Bhabha deems this as "the right to narrate" and defines this as "the fundamental human interest in freedom itself, the right to be heard, to be recognised and represented" ("Right to Narrate" n.p.). This also demonstrates how self-representation is significant for the voices of the Other and the voiceless to be heard; the agency of these marginalised groups is significant.

When talking about cultural identities and the right of BIPoC (Black, Indigenous and People of Colour) to position themselves, the topics of home and where we belong are related and become of interest in the post-colonial world. How individuals of diverse heritage dream of their home, conceptualise and experience it thus becomes relevant (Ralph and Staeheli 518). Feeling at home and belonging can be experienced through different things, such as specific places, locations, and objects. As the phrase "sense of belonging" alludes to, different senses can bring us a feeling of belonging and home, so, for instance, specific sounds, smells, or sensations can evoke such feelings in individuals (Allen 3). Therefore, home and belonging entail many things, appear complex, and must be viewed as such. They can be identified as personal and public, as political in some cases and transcending physical borders and locations. The site of home can be both a physical location but also an imagined and metaphorical feeling, a sense of ease and belonging one feels (Franz and Silva 15).

There is also a social aspect regarding the topic of belonging, as whether we are included or often excluded, in essence, leads us to feel like we belong or like we do not. Therefore, the way others represent us, how others define us, and how others define our home, where we belong, is relevant in context with one's own cultural identity and sense of home and belonging. It is not solely about whether we fit in but whether people make us feel like we fit in and belong (Ralph and Staeheli 523; Allen 3). In this context, it becomes evident that a sense of home and belonging, while being self-defined and dependent on the individual's feelings and experiences, is also other-defined and can depend on our representation and perception by others (Ralph and Staeheli 523).

Iskender's and Esma's Hybrid Identities, Conflicts, and Feelings of Belonging

". . . but people like us would always be outsiders": Iskender's Trials and Tribulations

Honour's protagonist Iskender Toprak is a second-generation individual who occupies what Bhabha defines as the Third Space and is shaped by hybridity due to his cultural background and upbringing in England. His in-betweenness, in particular, becomes evident in his teenage years in England, which is at the forefront of the novel. These arguably pivotal years in Iskender's life are much more complex and shaped by an identity conflict and general conflict with himself and his surroundings. He does not necessarily recognise this as a possibility nor realise that his identity can be hybrid. Influenced by his parental figures, and lack thereof in the case of his father's abandonment, his experiences of being the Other and struggles of being in-between two cultures enhance his identity struggles and lead him to question his place of belonging. These feelings of unbelonging lead him to search for belonging elsewhere. Rather than gaining a sense of belonging, he does the opposite through violent actions.

Shafak presents Iskender's inability to feel at home in England and his feelings of abandonment throughout the novel. It seems like Iskender is in conflict with who he is throughout his life. Like his mother's name, Pembe's name, his name implies his hybridity and existence in the Third Space. "Askander in Kurdish and Iskender in Turkish" and "Alex-. . . this was the name he would be known by" (Shafak, *Honour* 25) in London indicate the hybridity his life is shaped by as a Turkish-Kurdish boy living in England. However, Iskender's identity struggles start early on in his life; one could even argue at the time of his birth. His mother, Pembe, fears for his well-being and becomes superstitious, giving her a sense of safety; thus, "the boy spent his first year on earth without a name, like an envelope with no address" (21). Pembe's fear of naming her child leads to Iskender not having a name for the first five years of his life. This is interesting to note because names arguably are the first identity markers of human beings. Therefore, in Iskender's case, he has nothing to identify.

Therefore, one could argue that Iskender lacks a sense of self during the first five years of his life.

Moreover, Pembe's term of endearment she uses for her son, "Sultanım" (my sultan), makes this a complicated matter as well (30). Through not having a name and only being able to identify with "my sultan," Iskender is put on a pedestal by his mother. So, he starts identifying with being a "sultan." Tatiana Golban even argues that "Pembe construct[s] the identity for her son" by calling him sultan (105). Sultan implies a powerful position that cannot be implied by other terms of endearment, particularly when we regard terms of endearment for girls. In Iskender's case, it distinguishes him from his mother and his sister.

This term of endearment also highlights that Pembe raises Iskender in a specific way as a boy. This becomes particularly evident when we look at one of Iskender's earliest memories, the day of his circumcision. It is mentioned that he does not understand why "he would become a man with one cut of a knife" (Shafak, *Honour* 27). Iskender does not want to get circumcised, fears this procedure and hides in a tree. At this moment, he wonders, "what would people say when they learned that he had died not because of illness or accident like everyone else seemed to do, but because of cowardice?" (28). He fears the reaction of the people around him and what they would say about him. This pinpoints one thing Iskender has been taught; as a man, he is not supposed to be a coward.

Furthermore, the gender roles and specific expectations Iskender grows up with influence his behaviour and shape his identity, as a boy in Turkey and as a young man in England. On the day of his circumcision, he cannot "fathom why he was told not to cry, though it was clear he would be hurt – while his mother could weep to her heart's content, though absolutely nothing was happening to her" (27). This moment in Iskender's life reveals how the gender roles he grows up with impact his way of thinking. As a boy, he should not cry, even when hurt, while his mother is free to cry. His circumcision marks a pivotal moment in Iskender's life, and his mixed feelings towards his mother appear in the foreground from this moment onwards. He starts questioning his mother's trust and love for

him after these events, which is described in *Honour* as "his first lesson in the complexity of love" (31). This is not only his first lesson in love and trust, but this foreshadows the distrust he feels towards his mother at the end of the novel, which leads to his own demise.

Everything he learns about how a man and a woman should behave is connected to the Kurdish and Turkish culture he grew up with and are factors contributing to Iskender's identity formation process. This is only further enhanced once the family moved to London, a completely new and unknown place to Iskender. In combination with an absent father, Iskender's life in London is shaped by feelings of Otherness, which complicates his search for his sense of self in the world. Furthermore, through his cultural upbringing, including the ideas of femininity and masculinity he grows up with, Iskender is burdened to act in a certain way as a man. This also becomes evident later in the novel after his father abandons his family. In particular, after learning about his mother's affair, Iskender feels overwhelmed and pressured to take action. The following passage describes his feelings:

> 'You don't seem well, my sultan.' Don't call me that, I wanted to say. Don't call me anything . . . I went straight to my room, slammed the door, and put a chair in front of it so that no one could get in. I climbed up on the bed, pulled the sheets over my head and concentrated on breathing . . . Inhale. Exhale. Inhale. (51)

By mentioning that he does not want to be called sultan, he directly shows how much of a burden it has been throughout his life to be the sultan and to grow up with these gender roles and expectations. He is the "sultan" and is thus in a powerful position, however he is supposed to be unemotional and show no weaknesses, according to his upbringing. These gender roles and expectations, mainly shown through contrasting Iskender with his younger sister Esma and his mother Pembe, can be described as patriarchal ideas and oppressing ideas to the women in his life as well as himself. For instance, in this passage, he hyperventilates, showing us the immense pressure, he feels. He feels "compelled to save the family's honor" but is overwhelmed by this task and responsibility (Mustafa and Ahmed 262).

Even though overwhelmed, Iskender tries to save his family's honour and thus implements specific rules for his mother and sister. For example, when Esma joins his friends and the Orator at Aladdin's Cave, she is told to stay silent and that "this stuff isn't for girls!" (Shafak, *Honour* 214). As a result, Esma does not say anything during their talk, and when she makes a noise, she is told to "behave" by her brother (216). This reveals the authority Iskender, even though only a year older than Esma, has over her, but it also reveals that Iskender has specific images in mind of what girls can and cannot do. However, the double standard he applies plays a more critical role when he wants to punish his mother for her affair because Iskender views it as a sin and unhonourable. At the same time, he impregnates his girlfriend at the age of sixteen. The same rules and regulations he implements concerning women's bodies and sexualities are neither applied to his English girlfriend nor his own life, making this double standard and hypocritical behaviour clear. This becomes evident after he learns about his mother's meetups with Elias and forbids her from leaving their home, emphasising how he views himself as more powerful. Through his actions, he is "enforce[ing] his conservative and patriarchal ideology regarding women's body and sexuality" (Seblini 4) on his mother and sister. In essence, Iskender takes away his mother's agency and voice entirely.

Iskender's group of friends and involvement with the Orator give him a sense of being understood and belonging somewhere. His frequent talks with the Orator contribute to Iskender's sense of belonging; the Orator even recognising that Iskender needs this by mentioning that he "need[s] to belong somewhere" and he "need[s] a purpose in life, a new direction" (Shafak, *Honour* 253). Aladdin's Cave, in this case, appears to be a physical Thirdspace that contributes to his temporary sense of belonging. It offers a space for discussions, as it is mentioned that "everyday there was talk about another incident somewhere" and that "men were intimidated on these streets, women called names, children spat at" (212). This shows that a physical Thirdspace makes it possible for them to discuss issues of racism and attacks such as those mentioned above. Iskender tries to gain a sense of belonging in England through this group that he forms in Aladdin's Cave; however, this sense of belonging is of a temporary nature. Once he is outside of this space, he finds himself the

outcast. Iskender recognises it by mentioning that ". . . people like us would always be outsiders" and "only passersby" (50). His actions towards his family members, the rules and regulations he implements for his sister and his mother, as well as his attempt to hurt his mother, which leads to the death of her twin sister, are all signs of his estrangement from his family as well as his feelings of unbelonging in England. Iskender, in this case, not only stands for the patriarchal ideology and the consequences of such ideas for the women in his life, but Iskender himself is the victim of this oppressive ideology.

Esma's Journey of Belonging

Esma Toprak is also a second-generation migrant whose life, like her brother Iskender, is shaped by hybridity and identity struggles. She struggles with her sense of self in London as a woman of colour and finds herself on a journey to discover who she is throughout the novel's narrative. She struggles with being perceived as different and as the Other. This is mainly due to her physical differences, which are a focal point in her journey of finding a place to belong. However, even though Esma struggles with feeling vastly different from her family and the students in her dominantly white English school, she finds belonging in England. She questions her upbringing while balancing her cultural roots and the outside influences. This is why she is able to feel at home in London.

Throughout the novel, Esma can be described as trying to break free from her cultural upbringing and the norms of her culture. In particular, freeing herself from the gender roles and expectations she grew up with is significant for Esma, as seen through her interactions with her older brother Iskender and how she tries to get her mother, Pembe, to understand her perspective as well. She is described by her brother as "a frail girl, but she always expressed herself with giant ideas: equal opportunity, social justice, women's rights" (49). She wants to be viewed as equal and sometimes feels like her cultural upbringing restricts her. As a result, she struggles with finding her place in England and finds it difficult to find her place in her family as she feels vastly different from them.

Esma's upbringing and her feelings towards it are shaped by gender roles and the patriarchal ideology presented in *Honour*. This becomes clear when she wonders throughout the novel, "for the umpteenth time what I would look like had I been born a boy instead" (180). From Pembe's childhood and Esma's upbringing, it becomes clear that gender roles play a significant part in the Kurdish and Turkish culture depicted in *Honour*. Thus, it is not surprising that this is an essential aspect of Esma's growing up and one of the reasons why she feels disconnected from her family. Her feelings of not fitting in are connected mainly to her status as a woman, which becomes prominent when Esma draws a beard on her face and views her body in the mirror in the bathroom. She disguises herself as a man and inspects her body, recognising the differences between herself and her family.

Esma's relationship with her mother and her struggles at school are influenced by her hitting puberty, which also leads her to feel lost and alienated both at home and at school. She describes her relationship with her mother changing "the moment my breast started to bud and I had my first period" (184). Similarly, to her mother's childhood and relationship with her mother, Esma's relationship with Pembe suffers due to her being a woman and the expectations put on her. There is also a disconnection between Pembe and Esma because she disagrees with how her mother raises her son differently. Esma asks her mother, "Why do you give such privileges to him just because he's a boy?" (278), showing her awareness of how she is raised differently. This leads Esma to feel alienated and misunderstood at home, and in regard to her relationship with her mother, as they are not on the same page regarding the role of women in society and at home.

The question of representation and how a lack of representation leads Esma to further feel alienated and leads her to question herself in relation to her classmates, is raised throughout the novel and impacts Esma's development significantly. She wonders whether she would have felt more integrated at her school if she had been at a more culturally diverse school. She asks, "would things have been otherwise had I attended the local school with other neighbourhood children? If the names of my classmates had been Aisha, Farah, or Zeineb, instead of Tracey, Debbie or Clare,

would I have fitted in more easily?" (183). Esma appears to attend a majority white British school, leading her to stand out more and not feel represented. It can be argued that the lack of representation of BIPoC, namely the lack of BIPoC students and staff at her school, leads Esma feel she does not belong there. If she had peers or teachers with diverse backgrounds, Esma could feel more represented and that she has a place at this school.

In Esma's case, her physicality is also something that distinguishes her from her brothers and her male classmates. Esma describes her breasts as "pointy, with thin, blue veins, which I found repulsive" and as "two burdens to carry as if I didn't have enough already" (180). Esma's use of language when talking about her body indicates her negative feelings towards herself and the changes she goes through. She does not want these burdens, as this distinguishes her further from boys her age and magnifies the inequality she experiences and feels. Esma feels like the Other because of her cultural background, name, and womanhood. She does not want to feel different from the men around her. This is remarkable, as her upbringing at home leads her to this conclusion. In her cultural upbringing, she has been taught that women are in an inferior position, must be silent, and have specific expectations they must fulfil. Esma fears being a woman because she fears being silenced and not being free.

However, we experience an Esma who is keen on changing that and attempts to get her own and her mother's agency back, yearning for emancipation and freedom (Seblini 6), as it becomes clear from her actions as an adult. Esma negotiates her identity in this in-between and inferior position she occupies through the re-historicization of her culture and upbringing. For instance, she is presented as the narrator at the beginning of the novel, who tells the story of her family stretching back three generations and tries to come to terms with the terrible murder her brother has committed.

> My mother died twice. I promised myself I would not let her story be forgotten, but I could never find the time or the will or the courage to write about it . . . But I had to tell the story, even if only to one person. I had to send it into some corner of the

> universe where it would float freely, away from us. I owed it to Mum, this freedom. (Shafak, *Honour* 1)

While Pembe cannot tell her own story and is silenced, Esma chooses to tell Pembe's life story and thus makes her voice heard. According to Nour Seblini, "this reflects that abusive violence against women cannot be healed unless the silenced feminine voices are given the opportunity to speak about their lives in their own words" (3). Moreover, it can be argued that this is Esma's way of representing her mother and other ostracised women who have become victims of patriarchal ideologies and are left voiceless. By taking her mother's and her agency and voices back, Esma contributes to her feelings of belonging in England as we encounter her in the future, living happily in England and finding comfort in her home.

In addition to that, her feelings towards her neighbourhood and neighbours in London also contribute to Esma's ability to deal with her hybridity and identity, as they contribute to her feeling at home in England. For Esma, once upon a time, Istanbul was her home; however, now she has conflicted feelings towards it (Shafak, *Honour* 74). Through her relocation to London as a child, she has started considering London and the neighbourhood she grew up in as her home. As a result, Esma is able to form a sense of belonging in London. She describes Lavender Grove as: "Afro hair salons, the Jamaican café, the Jewish baker's, the Algerian boy behind his fruit stall who pronounced my name in a funny way and always had a little present for me . . . All creeds and colours" (73). Her neighbourhood is a Third Space and shaped by hybridity, just like she is. Esma is accustomed to a diasporic community and thus is able to make a world and a sense of belonging around her in London (Pourgharib et al. 54). Therefore, it is not a surprise when we get to know that Esma has stayed in London and has been able to feel at home there when we encounter her later in the novel. Even while struggling with her identity and place in the world, her fondness for her neighbourhood and the diversity she encounters daily contribute to her sense of home. Her neighbourhood's openness allows her to feel she belongs while not disregarding her cultural roots and ancestry.

Conclusions

It is unmistakable that *Honour* is a relevant novel regarding the discussion of identities, hybridity, and the lack of representation of marginalised individuals and the BIPoC experience and its consequences. By analysing the second-generation characters' individual experiences in England and their upbringing, this essay has shown how Esma's and Iskender's roots, cultural history, and individual experiences contribute to their identity formation process and impact their feelings of belonging or not belonging in the space they occupy. I have argued that the feelings of belonging are impacted by the characters' social standing, personal history and upbringing, and views on their cultural identities. Therefore, it can be articulated that through the depiction of characters like Iskender and Esma, Shafak is able to show how these individuals struggle with their identities, hybridity, and experiences they make in England. This novel is not only able to represent various experiences of migrants through the depictions of diverse characters, but it is also able to give the Othered voices a platform to be heard. We can discern from *Honour* that such a representation of the diverse experiences of BIPoC and migrants is needed. Elif Shafak, through the representation of such characters, opens a Third Space in her pieces of literature and shows through novels like *Honour* why the fight for representation and self-representation is so significant.

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