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From national allegory to cosmopolitanism: Transformations in contemporary Anglo-Indian and Turkish novels

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Chapter Five

Towards a Cosmopolitan Re-imagination of the World

In *Imagined Communities* (1991), Benedict Anderson delineates the nation as "an imagined political community" to the extent that "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (6). According to Anderson, the two main forms for imagining the nation in the eighteenth century were the novel and the newspaper as "these forms provided the technical means for 're-presenting' the kind of imagined community that is the nation" (25). Drawing on his analysis of José Joaquin Fernandez de Lizardi's *El Periquillo Sarniento* [*The Itching Parrot*], Anderson proposes that the scope of the novel is limited to conceiving a panoramic *tour d'horizon* that is constrained by the boundaries of the nation rather than opening up into an imagination of the world in its contemporaneity (30). Thus, the nation and novelistic narrative are overlapping concepts, mutually informing each other.

Anderson's conception of the relationship between nation and novel has arguably been superseded by a new conception, which holds that in the face of global capitalism the link between the two has weakened, and so Anderson's account does no longer reflect the present situation. The twenty-first century involves interactions of a new order and intensity that are marked by transnational migration and mass-media. Perceived as a process by which the salience of the nation state has gradually given way to international structural formations, globalisation has generated what can be understood as post-national imagined communities. Drawing upon and expanding Anderson's notion of 'imagined community', Arjun Appadurai considers the different ways in which communities are brought into being in this new and complex environment. In particular, Appadurai discusses the altered significance of the

concept of locality in relation to the creation of 'imagined communities' in this globalised world to draw attention to the idea that communities are continually reinvented or re-imagined in the face of new developments (*Modernity at Large* 41-42).

So the changing nature of belonging under the pressure of globalisation has led to the question what it means to be a citizen of the world, and how to underline the importance of diversity. To be a cosmopolitan is usually taken to mean the refusal to be defined by one's local origins and group membership but rather by one's commitment to humanity as a whole. As articulated by the Enlightenment, it implies an impulse to be rootless. What should be noted that the ideals of having no loyalty to any particular community, being capable of renouncing identity, being motivated by universal values and the capacity to be mobile are also a function of belonging to an elite class. As Aihwa Ong rightly observes, this class stratification is intertwined with global systems of production as well as the differences in the power of mobile and non-mobile subjects. According to Ong, ignoring these circumstances "gives the misleading impression that everyone can take equal advantage of mobility and modern communication and that transnationality has been liberatory, in both spatial and political sense, for all peoples" (11). Therefore, to avoid an identification of the cosmopolitan with that of the aspirations of an elite class, it is necessary to approach cosmopolitanism with a critical perspective.

Another concern with respect to the concept of multiple belongings is related to the way globalisation is conceived. Joan Tomlinson defines globalisation as "the rapidly developing and ever-densening network of interconnections and interdependencies that characterize material, social, economic and cultural life in the modern world" (352). In many debates concerning globalisation, the United States of America has been at the centre, setting and consolidating its global sphere of influence. Some prominent cultural and social theorists of the 1990s claimed that globalisation was actually 'Americanisation' (Latouche 1996) or

'McDonaldisation' (Ritzer 1993) in universalist disguise. The issue of America as being always at the horizon of globalisation, as well as that of the frequently heard critique of cosmopolitanism for its tendency to be elitist and western makes it essential to approach cosmopolitanism critically with a focus on the question of whether it hinders a true cosmopolitan outlook or makes possible a new kind of cosmopolitanism. In this regard,two quotations that describe the experiences of the protagonistOmer in Elif Shafak's *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* (2004) are significant:

> Here he was surrounded by hundreds of faces of dazzling variety, and not even one of them looked familiar. None of these individuals had any idea who he was. Not even one single soul. He was a nobody to each and all of them, so pure and immaculate –absolutely nameless, pastless, and thereby, faultless. And because he was a nobody, he could be anybody. (Shafak 82)

> How to make a phone call and not go homicidal when you hear the mechanical lady repeat her mantra: "We-are-sorry-your-call-can-not-be-completed" even when you are 100 percent sure this time you dialed the correct area code, inserted the right coin at the right time… How to operate a photocopy machine that works with some sort of a special card that you keep confusing with other special cards… How to talk to a pharmacist about the itch on your penis… How to steer the intricately blatant machinery of the routine serpentine paths of daily life and manage not to look like an idiot as you crash over and over again? It was daily life that humiliated most, mortified like nothing else. (Shafak 109)

The stark contrast between the liberating potential of cosmopolitanism and the bitter feeling generated by the loss of confidence and of isolation is underlined in the two quotations above. On the one hand, it is believed that in the age of cultural globalisation in which multiple identity reign, national identities no longer have the power to capitalise identities. Identities are assumed no longer to be reducible to the fixities of class and nation, but are fluid and overlapping events through which regional and local attachments are renegotiated and contested. In this sense, cosmopolitanism is read in the desire to be "at home in the world" (Brennan 1997). On the other hand, Omer's position as a privileged cosmopolitan

mingles with his being an isolated migrant who tries to survive daily life in America. The sheer complexity that is informed by this duality is felt at a personal level.

Arjun Mehta, the protagonist of Hari Kunzru's *Transmission* (2005) experiences a similar segregation, albeit more acutely, as becomes clear in the following quote:

> … He had made no money, gained nothing at all since coming to America except a new and harder picture of the world… He knows what lies above him, the sublime mobility of those who travel without ever touching the ground. He has glimpsed what lies below, the other mobility, the forced motion of the shopping-cart pushers, the collectors of cardboard boxes. At least in India the street people can lie down for a while before being moved on. (Kunzru 47)

What Arjun observes in his surrounding reveals the current condition that is imposed by the advanced global capitalism. He carries Omer's isolation further in his realisation of his newly acquired status, that is, the "new" cosmopolitan: he is neither one of those people who are economically and politically empowered (Western), nor those who are disenfranchised and deprived of the mobility that is granted to the elite strata of their nations. The "forced motion" in the passage emphasises that this is a mobility that is not free. Being a consequence of globalisation as it is, this is also a novelty, a new kind of cosmopolitanism from the semi-periphery.

Despite the apparent similarities in their contemplation of the world at large, the characters' reactions to the global differ. As I will analyse in the course of this chapter, the ceaseless homogenisation of the world through globalisation and/or Americanisation makes it necessary to underline the diverse perceptions of the global within the literary domain. By this, I mean an understanding that is not solely based on the ideals of the Enlightenment, but one that is enriched with a critical eye towards current global reality, as well as an appreciation of the local. According to Brennan, the new cosmopolitan literature that has emerged with global capitalism is "plebeian": "the cosmopolite in this fiction is not an elitist or jet-setter alone, but also simply the "people"" (*At Home in the World* 39). Through an

analysis of the similarities and differences between the characters in *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* and *Transmission*, I aim to reveal the limitations and possibilities of analysing cosmopolitanism in relation to globalisation and Americanisation. Furthermore, with their two different geographical origins, the two novels supply the diversity I seek to underline in this analysis.

Also, in this chapter, I aim to account for a new kind of cosmopolitanism from the periphery rather than from western centres. Through a comparative analysis of the two novels, I will deliberate on how today's world of increasing globalisation is envisaged and constituted by the historically situated imaginations of the two distinct geographies. In order to facilitate a comparative analysis between contemporary Anglo-Indian and Turkish novels, I aim at identifying and analysing the divergent ways in which the global is perceived, internalized and responded to from the respective localities.

My analysis of the ways in which globalisation is imagined is connected to the contentious virtue of cosmopolitanism in its precarious association with globalisation. How can we redefine cosmopolitan vision or agency vis-à-vis the homogeneous, economically driven chimera of globalisation? How can the abyss between the world of globalised business, western mobility and political decision-making and the numerous sub-worlds of the disadvantaged be bridged or renegotiated? Answers to these questions may help to uncover the potential of contemporary Anglo-Indian and Turkish novels in imagining the world through a truly cosmopolitan vision.

Cosmopolitanism and globalisation

> Behind the front desk sat a receptionist. Above her a row of clocks, relic of the optimistic 1960s, displayed the time in key world cities. New Delhi seemed to be only two hours ahead of New York, and one behind Tokyo. Automatically Arjun found himself calculating the shrinkage in the world implied by this error, but, lacking even a best estimate for certain of the variables, his thoughts trailed away.

For a moment or two the image hung around ominously in his brain – the globe contracting like a deflating beach ball. (Kunzru 6)

Taken from *Transmission*, this quote depicts a scene in which the protagonist Arjun Mehta is about to have a job interview as an "IT Coolie." He is desperately seeking to fill one of the thousands of positions generated by the computer revolution. In line with the spirit of international cooperation – which later turns out to be a fake one – the corporation's clocks display the time in different parts of the world. The "optimistic 1960s" refers to the period when globalisation became the widespread term for explaining the increasing interdependence of domestic economies in a cross-border economy. With increasing integration between national economies, a single massive global marketplace replaced micro-domestic markets. The observed "shrinkage" due to the time error can be taken to imply, in Anthony Giddens's terms, the "intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa" (*The Consequences* 64). According to Roland Robertson, this compression of a global web of interaction possibly brings about the intensification of a consciousness of the world as a whole (*Globalization: Social Theory* 8). Tomlinson thinks that this situation of connectivity and homogenization is likely to change our perception of the "undeniable, stubbornly enduring physical distance between places and people in the world" (*Globalization and Culture* 1-4). Thus, the idea of the world deflating like a "beach ball" is a threatening image for Arjun Mehta, who is yet to comprehend what it takes to be a part of the globe.

Indeed, what appals Arjun in this image is, in Ulrich Beck's view, "an irreversible fact" existent since the advent of technological breakthroughs. Large numbers of people are exposed to other cultures on a daily basis without crossing borders through communication media (including satellite broadcasting, radio and other forms of communication).

Furthermore, Beck continues, they might encounter immigrants, refugees, or tourists in their own locality. They might also come across cultural artefacts and commercial establishments that bring other cultures, especially American popular culture, into close proximity to their own, a process referred to in contemporary debates as 'McDonaldisation' or 'Americanisation.' In this way, "people have long been joined together between Moscow and Paris, Rio and Tokyo in a relationship of actual interdependence, which they help to intensify by their production and consumption, in the same way that the ensuing risks to civilization penetrate their everyday lives" (Beck 136).

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri refer to this process of connectivity and explain in *Empire* that globalisation "manages hybrid identities, flexible hierarchies, and plural exchanges through modulating networks of command. The distinct national colours of the imperialist map of the world have merged and blended in the imperialist global rainbow" (2000, xxii-xxiii). Indeed, the sovereignty of nation-states has declined with the emergence of a series of decentred and deterritorialising organisations, such as the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, and the IMF. Empire refers to more than just a physical process of globalisation; it is the constitutive principle of the contemporary global order that regulates the physical processes of global exchanges and governance.

Furthermore, as Hardt and Negri maintain, Empire is "a decentred and deterritorialising apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm within its open, expanding frontiers" (xii). In describing Empire without a centre, Hardt and Negri want to emphasise the emergence of a systemic logic. This systemic logic is an abstract machine, which produces centres and margins, subjects and others. Similarly, the position of the United States is seen simply as a privileged one within Empire: "Empire is not American and the U.S. is not the centre" (384). However, if there is no centre in this system, how can we explain the omnipresence of Hollywood, Madonna, Coke, and McDonalds? Why and how

is the global shopping mall not U.S. nationalism? All cultures are deeply integrated into the transnational consumer world, which penetrates into our everyday lives. As Fredric Jameson argues, evolving within this consumerism there are "developing forces that are North American in origin and result from the unchallenged primacy of the USA and thus the American way of life and American mass media culture" (64). His interpretation suggests that the new world culture is dominated by the USA. Thus, it is possible to use the terms Americanization and globalisation interchangeably within the context of culture.

The connectivity that is made possible by globalisation (or Americanisation) has its complications. The world-view of contemporary globalisation bears the burden of the local-global conflict. The consequences of increased mobility are markedly different between the First World of the middle and upper classes in the advanced industrialised countries and the world of the working or middle classes in the mostly peripheral societies that make up the majority of the world's population. Moreover, this situation calls for an awareness of "the tension between cultural homogenisation and cultural heterogenisation," which defines "the central problem of today's global interactions" (Appadurai, *Modernity at Large* 324). In other words, a dynamic relationship between the local and the global remains, and that relationship needs to be examined by paying attention to the contingent, uncertain and multileveled effects of globalisation.

The current structuring of the world raises the question how people are supposed to think of themselves as belonging to a global community –in lieu of a nation – and what it may mean to have a global identity: to think, and act as a "citizen of the world" (Tomlinson 184). However, it is clear that there is no easy causal relation that can be drawn from the complex interplay of discourses that promote, accommodate or challenge the processes that constitute contemporary globalisation. As Appadurai suggests, "global culture" today is not a set of fixed objects that have global relevance and conventionally travel from imperialist

centres to peripheries. Rather, it is a dimension or, more precisely, a series of fluid

dimensions, which may easily remain "complex," "overlapping" and "disjunctive with

respect to one another" (*Modernity at Large* 32). Departing from the circulation of peoples

(migration) and images (media) across borders, Appadurai proposes a "global cultural

economy" that operates through five different trajectories or "scapes": ethnoscapes (flow of

people), mediascapes (of images), technoscapes (of technologies), financescape (of funds),

and ideoscapes (of ideologies) (33).

      Appadurai's characterisation of "global culture" in terms of relatively open cultural

landscapes involves a sense of ambivalence as well as local autonomy in the ways global

cultural exports are received and appropriated in different locations. While Appadurai

considers that access to the global confers agency to the individual because it enables people

to challenge local sovereignties, he adds that the "work of the imagination is neither entirely

emancipatory nor entirely disciplined" (4). Hence, this acquired sense of agency is

surrounded by a wider reality. As he argues, the global cultural scapes "are not objectively

given relations that look the same from every angle of vision, but rather, […] deeply

perspectival constructs, inflected by the historical, linguistic, and political situatedness of

different sorts of actors" (33). The positional and perspectival inflections of global culture

point to its ambivalence. Consequently, one should cultivate a nuanced and critical

perspective with regards to globalisation.

      A consideration of globalisation is necessary to recuperate cosmopolitanism as a way

of seeing and being in today's world. Cosmopolitanism may become little more than an up-

market synonym for globalisation, or alternately serve as a valuable antidote to

globalisation's agglomerative practices of isolation and enclosure. An important question in

this regard is whether the understanding of cosmopolitanism is to be informed by first-world

or third-world perspectives, or by both. From a postcolonial perspective, globalisation signals

the expansion of Western modernity and capitalism. It is perceived to be irreconcilable with the critique of imperialism by postcolonial theorists. In contrast, theorists of globalisation have underlined its newness, its departure from historical modernity's cultural uniformity and the "evolution" towards Enlightenment universals. These competing discourses suggest a possibly informed conception of globalisation that factors in the ambivalent nature of the process.

A productive discussion of cosmopolitanism should take note of both those sides. On the one hand it should acknowledge that "the effects of globalisation are to weaken the cultural coherence of all individual nation-states, including the economically powerful ones" (Tomlinson 175). On the other hand, within the world of the cosmopolitan outlook, "the boundaries separating us from others are no longer blocked and obscured by ontological difference but have become transparent." (Beck, *Cosmopolitan Vision* 8) Beck hails this world as "a glass world" in which "differences, contrasts and boundaries must be fixed and defined in an awareness of the sameness principle of others" (8). This suggests that the cosmopolitan outlook is a reflexive and ambivalent outlook. It entails acknowledgment of differences, beyond the misapprehensions of territoriality and homogenisation. Such a viewpoint is indeed a non-globalist kind of cosmopolitanism, which promotes a locally-resourced political agency saturated with the awareness that the world in the twenty-first century comprises of an all-encompassing network in which whatever we do, or fail to do, is bound to have repercussions and consequences for us all.

Beck's cosmopolitan outlook is a critical undertaking, which seeks to understand the forces shaping the contemporary human condition in relation to the increasing inequality in the world. Human lives are lived at different levels: an elevated sphere for the privileged is upheld by innumerable lower levels, whose apparent solidity depends on their inhabitants' social immobility and economic entrapment. Whereas the privileged have a clear view of the

whole world but can easily avert their gaze, the wretched are doomed to watch, as Tomlinson describes it, as "distant events and powers penetrate [their] local experience" (9), frequently at random and without much prior warning. In this context, neither party can be said to be particularly cosmopolitan: the privileged can see the whole but do not look; the wretched are overtaken by the whole. Therefore, it is important to specify who is going to have a cosmopolitan outlook and how a critically cosmopolitan viewpoint is to be developed.

I seek to uncover the potential in seeing the world with a critical eye. In Walter D. Mignolo's words, I aim to draw a critically cosmopolitanist worldview (in the novels) that negotiates "both human rights and global citizenship without losing the historical dimension in which each is reconceived today in the colonial horizon of modernity" ("The Many Faces" 725). It is important to reveal what can be gained from not seeing the world with a purely global or national vision, or with an elitist and western cosmopolitan foresight.

Within the context of globalisation, multiple attachments denote cultural plurality as well as a sense of commitment to both the local and the global. Such a commitment may foster critically inflected cosmopolitanisms. As Kwame Anthony Appiah explains through his notion of partial cosmopolitanism, a cosmopolitan does not abandon local allegiances in favour of the world or an ideal of objectivity; while certainly not endorsing "the nationalist who abandons all foreigners," he or she doesn't necessarily identify either "with the hard-core cosmopolitan who regards her friends and fellow citizens with icy impartiality" (*Cosmopolitanism: Ethics* xvii). Critical cosmopolitanism is to attempt to open up to the "the world" and assert one's locality as well, and to notice the numerous ways in which these two experiences converge and diverge, inform and contradict one another.

These observations constitute the backbone of my analyses of the novels with a special focus on the characters. They allow me to interrogate whether the novels embody new global subjectivities that have arrived with globalisation, and whether characters in these

novels manage to escape national boundaries and actively contemplate their place in the world at large.

Who is elitist? Who is critically cosmopolitan?

Shafak's novel revolves on the social, cultural and emotional experiences of three international doctoral students who have recently arrived in Boston. The three flatmates, Abed from Morocco, Piyu from Spain and Omer from Turkey, try to make sense of love and life as they plan to finish their doctoral degrees. The novel mainly focuses on the relationship between Omer and Gail, the peculiar, manic-depressive Jewish-American girl who becomes Omer's wife but commits suicide by jumping from the Bosphorus Bridge, "the perfect place of inbetweendom," in her words, as they visit Omer's family in Istanbul. Gale's delayed suicide sets the frame of the book. The readers are told that she almost suffocated on a piece of pepperoni at the age of two, learning from that experience that death is like "falling upwards," a liberating release. She unsuccessfully attempts suicide several times in the book, trying to hang herself in her dorm, lying on the train tracks, and trying to jump from the window of the new apartment she is to share with Omer.

In this section, I trace the possibilities and limitations of cosmopolitanism in the different characters of *The Saint of Incipient Insanities*, comparing and contrasting them with one another as I proceed. I will particularly discuss the issue of representation as a key aspect of the novel that provides a common ground for a discussion of the concept of belonging. As can be seen in Omer's words – "When you are a foreigner, you can't be your humble self anymore. I am my nation, my place of birth. I am everything except me" – representation is part of how one defines his or her identity in the face of others (110). Therefore, it is intertwined with the issue of belonging, which is what cosmopolitanism seeks to discover. In

the course of my analysis, I specifically underline the viewpoints of characters, that is, whether or not they bespeak elitist, western, Americanised inclinations, in order to come up with a critically cosmopolitan worldview that stems from one's own locality with an appreciating but a critical eye towards all of the above.

As Omer sits in one of the bars of Boston, he is "putting the dots of [his] name back to their place" by making huge holes in the napkin with his pen, thinking that

> When you leave your homeland behind, they say, you have to renounce at least one part of you. If that was the case, Ömer knew exactly what he had left behind: his dots!
> Back in Turkey, he used to be ÖMER ÖZSİPAHİLİOĞLU.
> Here in America, he had become OMAR OZSIPAHILIOGLU.
> His dots were excluded for him to be better included. After all, Americans, just like everyone else, relished familiarity—in names they could pronounce, sounds they could resonate, even if they didn't make much sense one way or the other. Yes, few nations could perhaps be as self-assured as an American in reprocessing the names and the surnames of foreigners. (Shafak 5)

According to Pierre Bourdieu, language in general and names in particular play an important part in the classificatory struggles of social life. As he claims, "The categories of perception, the systems of classification, that is, essentially, the words, the names which construct social reality as much as they express it, are the crucial stakes of political struggle" (134). The power of names is linked directly to social agency. Omer's attempt to regain his "dots" can be read as a challenge against the "Americanised" reality he is absorbed in. However, the text also acknowledges the removal of dots as a means for "better" inclusion. In other words, it means appropriating the foreigner with the aim of articulating him or her into the American system.

This contradiction can be seen as a symptom of the simultaneous cultural homogenisation and cultural heterogenisation of our world. Through de-naming and re-naming, one is supposed to gain the opportunity to regenerate his or her identity. However, as there is neither an inside nor an outside to the effects of globalisation, the ability to detach his

persona from national or linguistic boundaries falls flat. The compulsion of representation

becomes manifest in an unexpected event: while having sex with his ex-girlfriend Tracey,

Omer feels shaken by her question about the condom he fetches from his pocket: "Is that a

Turkish condom? Check if there is a slit before putting it on" (Shafak 110). Although he

pretends that he is not offended, his penis is more honest, as the narrator states, "shrinking

rapidly inside the Turkish condom" (110).

While Omer is in pursuit of his "dots," his eccentric, young Jewish-American wife

Gail keeps changing names. This can be regarded as a necessary detachment from her roots,

generating a possible cosmopolitan viewpoint. In her therapy sessions with her psychiatrist,

Gail says

> I guess I envy birds, like many people do. But I envy them in a different way. It's
> not their wings that I'm after. I mean flying can be interesting, but I'm not
> particularly attracted to that. I envy birds because of their names. We've only one
> name, or maybe two. But birds have hundreds of them. Even a single species of fowl
> has so many different names. (Shafak 67)

However, in contrast to Omer's position, Gail's penchant for multiple attachments invokes

Bruce Robbins's insight on "actually existing cosmopolitanisms," which signifies "a reality

of re-attachment, multiple attachment, or attachment at a distance" (in Cheah and Robbins 3).

The idea of "multiple attachments" is hinted at in the passage: diverse geographies host the

same birds and name them differently. Furthermore, the fact that birds do not settle in any of

those places suggests "attachment at a distance". That Gail is especially fascinated by the

idea of re-naming is linked with her inclination to re-inscribe her identity. In the novel,

before she adopts the name Gail, she has also called herself Zarpandit, based on an Assyro-

Babylonian goddess. As I try to demonstrate, Gail's view of non-belonging is purely elitist

and western, overlooking the historical differences that mark the living conditions in the

Third World.

She is a person who does not want to be "anchored in a world that fixes names forever" but who hopes "to fish out new letters to recompose her name and her fate every time she thrusts her spoon into the alphabet soup" (Shafak 58). "The alphabet soup" refers to the childhood game Gail and her mother used to play:

> They played it because sometime in the past God up there in heaven had cooked himself an alphabet soup and let it cool down in a huge bowl near his kitchen window. But then a strong, insolent gale, or a mischievous, rotten angel, or perhaps the devil himself had either incidentally or intentionally (this specific component of the story was subject to change each time it was retold) dropped the bowl to the floor, that is to say to the skies, and all the letters inside the soup were scattered far and wide across the universe, never to be gathered back again. Letters were everywhere, waiting to be noticed and picked up, wishing to be matched to the words they could have written had they remained inside their Bowl of Eden. (Shafak 37)

This passage aptly conveys the naïve and bland version of cosmopolitanism: cosmopolitanism from the West. If the "God" in the quotation is perceived to be a metaphor for globalisation or Americanisation, then the letters coming out of the soup can be understood as the process that shows the dissolving of nations within 'the imperialist global rainbow', which Hardt and Negri have pinpointed in *Empire*. Within the context of globalisation, considering the act of stirring the alphabet soup as promoting a constant re-making of her world (in a positive sense), and projecting an open-ended imagining of a world community thriving on recurrent reassemblage proves to ignore the Western-motivated attempts behind this act of "reassembling".

Her attempts to establish a bond between herself and everything else find expression most explicitly in the variety of chocolate figures she makes. They represent diverse cultures and creatures. Naming her female cat the West and the male cat the Rest is also a tongue-in-cheek attempt to undo binary divisions. The issue of representation reveals that the notion of cosmopolitanism has the drawback that it refers to a class privilege, belonging to members of the elite. Robbins suggests that "beyond the adjectival sense of "belonging to all parts of the

world; not restricted to any one country or its inhabitants," the word "cosmopolitan"

"immediately evokes the image of a privileged person: someone who can claim to be a

"citizen of the world" by virtue of independent means, high-tech tastes, and globe-trotting

mobility" ("Comparative Cosmopolitanisms" 171). The type of cosmopolitanism that Gail

embodies is also privileged. In Allegre's (Piyu's girlfriend) birthday party, in the midst of a

diverse group of people, she suggests that everybody exchange their names saying that

> Only if we stop identifying ourselves so much with the identities given to us, only if
> and when we really accomplish this, can we eliminate all sorts of racism, sexism,
> nationalism, and fundamentalism, and whatever it is that sets barricades among
> humanity; dividing us into different flocks and sub-flocks. (Shafak 145-146)

This idea of non-belonging is a luxury that only few people can enjoy. The Moroccan PhD

student Abed objects with fervour to Gail's remark on moving beyond pre-given identities.

Abed grunts and says:

> Well, it is easy for you to say that ... You are not the one who has to fight against
> discrimination all the time. Have you seen Casablanca the movie? Such a magnetic
> man Humphrey Bogart! But you know what they say in the movie about
> Moroccans? Those walking bedsheets! That is what my grandparents were in the
> eyes of the colonizers. A walking bedsheet! That is what I still am according to
> many! How can I be expected to forget that and change my name? (Shafak 146)

Her relation with the idea of belonging is obsessive: in a way, she fetishizes, absolutises, and

paradoxically essentialises non-belonging. Gail's suggestion to live beyond "flocks" is

something "easy to say". In contrast to her problematic obsession with non-belonging,

Abed's version of world citizenship is based on real-life experience. His critique is directed

towards cosmopolitanism as elitist: only certain people can "afford" to be so, usually because

they are economically and politically empowered. Also, Gail's worshipping of non-belonging

and her knack for thriving on multiplicity contrast with Abed's refusal to isolate himself from

his specific locality. He resents Gail's attitude because his experience has rendered him

responsive towards cultural inequality. By mentioning the historically embedded circumstances that shape his perception of multiple attachments, Abed not only underlines his rootedness, but also criticizes the privileged westerner's supposedly "superior" position. The weight of colonial history still haunts the contemporary outlook.

The passage also implies that the context of Abed's allegedly global perception is marked by enduring problems of representation. Abed's feeling of uneasiness in relation to Gail's remarks stems from the burden of having to represent his nation. This obligation engenders a feeling of disturbance: the false impression of "a walking bed sheet" in the eyes of Americans must be corrected by his own appearance and behaviour. However, elsewhere in the novel he makes explicit that the same problem of representation makes him cast a judgmental look onto other Moroccans in America. When three Muslim girls wearing headscarves enter the chic café he sits in, he can't help observing the relationship one girl has with her child. As the baby slides down from his mother's lap and starts to crawl on the floor, he cannot account for the tension he feels until the Muslim girls leave the café. As he attempts to "see how they were seen in the eyes of Americans," his own stare dwindles "to a judgmental gaze toward the girls, especially toward the mother, getting furious at her for letting the baby crawl like that on the dirty floor" (Shafak 110). The same representational issues drive the shame he feels.

The problem of representation assumes a different significance in Piyu's situation. As the narrator mentions, "With Latinos it is neither this nor that. They are part of this country, but the less integrated in a way" (111). The narrator hints at the ongoing significance of ethnic binarism for American Latinos as well. For instance, Piyu admits that he feels "incredibly aloof to the Hispanic communities [in America] especially to the Tex-Mex and their ways" (111). He also cannot help but maintain his judgmental gaze towards his own Spanish culture. Especially in his relationship with Allegre, he feels distant from her "big"

Spanish family. Piyu's experience with regards to the concept of belonging suggests that there are not only shared commonalities but also different practices between the cosmopolitan citizens of the world.

Different from Piyu as a Latin American, Omer's links with his nation is rather problematic because locally specific circumstances as well as class issues mark it. When Omer lands in America, the simultaneous feeling of belonging and non-belonging strikes him. Unlike "in other parts of the world, to be a newcomer meant you had now arrived at a new place where you didn't know the ways and hows," he says that "in coming to America for the first time" he feels that America is not "that new" since he senses that he already knows most there is to know about this country" (Shafak 73). He is "an avid fan of Seinfeld, a devoted Sandman reader, addicted to the Simpsons" (Shafak 74). The feeling is rendered possible by the escalation of global-spatial proximity, which I have before referred to as "Americanisation" at the centre of globalisation. This feeling of connection can also be regarded as the privileged perception of the cosmopolitan elite. Well-raised thanks to his upper-class family, Omer is labelled as a "foreigner" even in his native Turkey because of his modern family. When he travels with Gail to Istanbul to introduce her to his parents, Gail observes that the bellboy of the hotel in which they stay takes Omer to be a tourist. The narrator claims that

> Somehow Gail's presence was sufficient to render them both Americans. And yet, Gail also sensed that behind this jumble of appearances wherein all unfamiliar ways and faces were deemed to be equally "foreign," there lay more of a structural riddle, some sort of a duality that divided Turkish people into two camps. On the one hand, there were the more educated, the more affluent, and far more sophisticated who were irrefutably Western and modern; and then there was a second group of people, greater in numbers, less in power, less Western in appearance. The discrepancy in between could transfer the members of the former bunch into "tourists" in the eyes of the latter group. A Turk could easily look like a foreigner to another Turk. (Shafak 330)

The passage explains that the discussions of Turkish modernisation versus traditional ways of life are actually class-based. Omer's class informs his oscillation between a "foreigner" in Turkey and as "a stranger-in-a-strange-land" in America. The novel records the seemingly transparent moments that capture the disparity between the modern, sophisticated Turk that is a tourist, and the traditional, less educated local Turk. Behind the idea of "the citizen of the world," issues of economic inequality endure, the message that Shafak incorporates in the narrative.

In contrast to Omer's explicit discomfort with the idea of national belonging, Abed seems certain that he will go back to Morocco, marry Safiya and live happily ever-after. Unlike Omer's modern, secular and sophisticated parents, Abed's father has passed away. He only has an undereducated mother, Zahra, who "with all her heart wants [him] to have a PhD in a branch she can't even pronounce" (Shafak 173). The contrast between the two migrants, Omer and Abed, is exacerbated by the import of religious issues. When Zahra decides to sacrifice a ram in order to save Abed from the jinni (because she believes they disturb Abed and turn his dreams into nightmares), Abed asks help from Omer in finding a butcher for slaughtering the animal. In desperation, he says, "Omar, my brother. You should help me. No matter what, you are a Muslim, right? At least you come from a Muslim country. You are the only person in this house who can help me" (Shafak 198). Omer helps Abed, but because he is against the slaughtering of animals, he lies when he tells them that the meat that is on the table is actually from the sacrificed ram. In truth, he has bought it from a butcher. After all, he is "a born Muslim who wanted to have nothing to do with Islam or with any other religion whatsoever" (Shafak 14). As I have mentioned above, this diversity is what new cosmopolitan writing is aiming at: including non-elitist and anti-globalist cosmopolites who are in Brennan's view, '"they" to the cosmopolitan "we" in the arena of literature' (39). Furthermore, the point of the difference between the two third-world characters is that we

must assume the presence as well as the coexistence of divergent cosmopolitanisms, which should be historically and geographically situated with regards to globalisation.

The novel also includes other minor characters representing the globalised twenty-first century citizens of our world. Debra Ellen Thompson is a zealous feminist and a "resident lesbian" who is determined to "play a game of squash with patriarchy" (Shafak 46, 53). She falls in love with Gail before Gail marries Ömer. Gail's stance towards life and sex in general is different from Debra's. For Debra, it is about choosing whereas "to choose between heterosexuality or homosexuality made no sense to [Gail]" (Shafak 54). Another minor character is Allegre whose love for cooking contradicts her anorexia. She has a passion for culinary art and likens food to both "a business-class traveller, always in the front rows, more privileged and better cared for than other passengers," and to a "lonesome traveller, never at ease among multitudes" (54). Food is represented as the elitist cosmopolitan, the business-class traveller sampling different kinds of bland airplane foods (Shafak 113).

The inevitable interdependence caused by globalisation accords with the feeling of loneliness cosmopolitanism brings about. The characters deliberately refuse to question why they are in their particular predicaments. Indeed, "why" is a question that escapes the novel: "An ersatz query was 'why'" (Shafak 13). For instance, troubled by the discovery of his wife's past lesbian relationship, Ömer "decided not to think about it anymore" (Shafak 23). Gail is unable to identify what bothers her even right before she commits suicide. After seeing the image of the ghostlike girl, she realises her diminishing will to live is "like blood oozing from a wound inside, except that there was no apparent reason why" (Shafak 346). As a result of this general inability to pinpoint reasons, causes and their consequences, the characters can never quite define their problems, let alone solve them. This results in a further sharpening of individual boundaries: the characters never have sincere talks or share their secrets. Even in day-to-day interactions, they cherish their comfort zones in which they

contact one another without causing any disturbance. They always keep other characters at bay, sharing only parts of themselves, which will not alienate others. Similar to Allegre's recognition of food as "'the lonesome traveller,' the cosmopolitan is also solitary.

As I have tried to demonstrate, making the term cosmopolitanism work in the context of globalisation is necessary for the reason that there are diverse aspects to be considered along the way: moving beyond elitism and paying attention to class differences. *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* can be read as a commentary on these issues. In relation to the Americanised version of globalisation, the novel presents the reader with two different views on belonging with the help of the characters. As the comparisons I have discussed so far demonstrate, Gail is the "saint" of "incipient insanities," who, despite her efforts, cannot escape beyond the snobbish, globalist and the U.S. centred version of cosmopolitanism. The potential of locally inflected cosmopolitanism rests with the characters Omer and Abed who are both sensitive towards autonomy and contestatory values without appealing to the Enlightenment universals that ignore class realities.

Critical cosmopolitanism: Arjun versus Guy

In comparison with *The Saint Incipient Insanities*, Hari Kunzru's *Transmission* focuses on class issues and on how the characters envision place within the context of globalisation. *Transmission* revolves around Arjun Mehta, a software engineer in New Delhi. He has just received his Bachelor of Science at North Okhla Institute of Technology, aspiring to live a good life in the US. Unaware of the hidden agenda of *Databodies*, a firm that subcontracts short-term positions with US companies, he accepts their job offer and gives in to the allure of the American dream. As is the case with the characters in *The Saint of Incipient Insanities*, the limitation of America is again at the epicentre of globalisation and cosmopolitanism. As

his dream of living the good life turns to his exploitation as a programmer working in the US on a non-resident visa, he starts to experience the dark side of capitalist globalisation, not the utopia of communication and freedom across borders. He has just begun to adjust to his new life when his employer *Virugenix*, the Silicon-Valley firm, fires him. He retaliates by doing something unexpected: he creates and unleashes a computer virus. As the code paralyses and wreaks havoc on computer systems worldwide, the only thing visible on screens everywhere is a simulation of Leela Zahir, a Bollywood heroine, dancing suggestively.

In this section, I try to locate the possibilities and limitations of cosmopolitanism in the main characters of *Transmission*, comparing and contrasting the characters as well as their class positions. In this book, connectivity shifts from experience to virtual on-screen interaction, mediated by computer games, mainstream media, and the Internet. Kunzru specifies he wanted to capture "the loss of a particular sense of place in a globalised world" (Aldama 14). In other words, how does a person define his place, his origins in the face of global capitalism? Life itself has become marginalised and has started to imitate virtuality. As the narrator puts it, what he calls the "Virtual World Syndrome" (Kunzru 289) is the outcome of globalisation, infiltrating almost every chapter with themes like marketability, the hustle and bustle of public relations, the cult of celebrity, and the ceaseless rush for advertising space and other commercial ventures.

In tandem with the critical stance of *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* towards the issue of class position in relation to the intersection of globalisation and cosmopolitanism, *Transmission*, albeit with its differently situated characters, is attentive to the matter of being a supposed world citizen and its relation to class. It does so through the comparisons and contrasts between two kinds of class mobility, that of Arjun Mehta and Guy Swift, who runs an international advertising and PR agency in the City of London. This contrast is particularly

reflected in the early pages of the novel when Arjun Mehta, having been accepted by

Databodies, is on his way home to give his family the good news:

> Amrika! Becoming his dreams! More than any other memory of the meeting, even that of Sunny's sunglasses, this phrase stuck in his mind. His current favourite daydream was set in a mall, a cavern of bright glass through which a near-future version of himself was travelling at speed up a broad escalator. Dressed in a button-down shirt and a baseball cap with the logo of a major software corporation embroidered on the peak, Future-Arjun was holding hands with a young woman who looked not unlike Kajol...
>
> As the bus trundled over the Yamuna Bridge, past the huge shoreline slum seeping its refuse into the river, he ran several variations of this basic fantasy, tweaking details of dress and location, identity of companion and soundtrack. The roar of public carriers receded into the background. Lost in his inner retail space, he stared blankly out of the window, his eyes barely registering the low roofs of patchworked thatch and blue polythene by the road side, the ragged children, standing under the tangle of illegally strung power-lines. High in the sky overhead was the vapour trail of a jet, a commercial flight crossing Indian airspace en route to Singapore. In its first-class compartment sat another traveller, rather more comfortably than Arjun, who was squashed against the damp shoulder of a man in a polyester shirt. Did Guy sense some occult connection with the boy on the bus 30,000 feet below? Did he perhaps feel a tug, a premonition, the kind of unexplained phenomenon which has as its correlative a shiver or a raising of the hairs on neck or arms? No. Nothing. He was playing Tetris on the armrest games console.
> He had just beaten his high score. (Kunzru 11)

Socio-economic stratification is lent a literal, spatial dimension as Guy flies, unheeding,

thousands of feet above Arjun, emphasising the irreconcilably separate spheres they inhabit.

It also foretells the failed dreams of Arjun, whose future vision is thoroughly globalised as

well as estranged from the poverty that he shows nothing but indifference. In his globalised

dreams, there is no longer room for that sort of place. Similarly, Guy's understanding of the

world is displayed: in this busy, jet-setting lifestyle, he is indifferent to everything outside.

The passage contrasts two different kinds of class mobility but also complicates the class

divisions of the rich and the poor by creating a third space occupied by migrant professionals

with a solidly middle-class background, as post-colony Indians who are neither like Roy's

novel character Velutha nor Desai's Biju (similar to Omer in Shafak's text). The passage also

hints at the all-encompassing presence of globalisation with its promise of big shopping malls and broad escalators as symbols of superiority, insinuating that nobody on this planet – including Arjun– remains immune to its appeal.

Indeed, in Simon Gikandi's words, "neither seeking cultural hybridity nor ontological difference" (630-31), Arjun wants to embrace globalisation in the form of Americanisation: he feels he is meant to realise his potential in the USA. This achievement is rooted in economic success rather than by a self-realisation informed by different cultural positions (such as being Indian, and a world citizen). The way he identifies himself with globality is invested with material rather than ethical concerns. Arjun quickly realises that living the dream of being an "American" citizen is far from real. Once there, he finds out that the job he was promised does not exist and that he has to interview by phone with potential clients who may or may not want to hire him as a software programmer. The Indian-American partner of Databodies informs him that until he "successfully [has] secured a post, Databodies would pay him a grand total of $500, half of which would be taken back as rent for the house share" (Kunzru 40). His hopes of succeeding professionally in the US are shattered by the vicious circle of economic commodification that relegates him to the status of a second-class citizen.

Arjun and Shafak's protagonist Omer share the class privilege granted by neo-liberalism's myth of unlimited self-fulfilment through economic success: they both enjoy a middle-class background in their home countries. They both choose to "feel at home in America." Yet certain contrasts are evident in their versions of cosmopolitanism. The stance Omer and Abed assume with regards to the issue of belonging and cosmopolitanism within the context of globalisation is critical, but it remains on the level of observation. In contrast, Arjun's act of unleashing the virus is a step further: it involves agency. Although it is a fictional act of intervention with the global capitalist order, it is endowed with a locally inflected cosmopolitan vision and it has agency. Furthermore, the fact that Omer and Arjun

represent two different third-world countries that have distinct backgrounds with regards to modernity. Omer's middle-class position is a consequence of Turkish modernisation that meant a clear break with the Ottoman past. That is why he has problems with the idea of Islam defining a person's identity. Furthermore, he wants to surpass the idea of nations, borders, although the gaze of the Westerner consistently warns him of his third-world status. Arjun's situatedness is different in the sense that it informed by the modernisation of a country that has already internalised the reality of imperialism as the disadvantaged side and experienced modernisation with an emphasis on its intrinsic diversity. For this reason Arjun's future plans are heavily vested with "shopping malls" and "broad escalators".

However, Arjun's act of rebellion of unleashing a computer virus shows his effort in trying to find a way out of the cycle of economic exploitation. Contrary to his will to become a citizen of the world, he is –in the eyes of global capital– one of the Indians never exceeding the status of 'IT coolies.' Naming the virus as Leela (out of his love for her) reveals what I wish to describe as his cosmopolitan rootedness. While Arjun is irremediably globalised, his Indianness returns through the corporeality of Leela, his one and only true love. As the virus upsets the world of globalised commerce by rendering all systems inoperative, the world receives a wakeup call alerting it to a third-world presence, which will no longer stay imprisoned in the margins. Arjun's position thus oscillates between two opposing responses towards globalization: on the one hand, he has internalized what Joan Tomlinson calls "the ethos and values of corporate capitalism and consumerism," enforcing "a cultural totality –a "way of life" and a "developmental path" for developing nations to follow (*Globalization* 82). On the other hand, his worldview endorses a transgressive action as well as self-formation based on the belief that one can contribute to world culture substantially by drawing on the specificity of one's origin.

In contrast to Arjun's stance, Guy Swift, the other protagonist of *Transmission*, is unable to conceive of the world as mutually permeable or inextricably interdependent. As a "thirty-three years old, UK citizen, paper millionaire and a proud holder of platinum status on three different frequent-flyer programmes" (Kunzru 12), he believes in a future based on public relations. Allegre's depiction of food as linked to business-class traveller resonates with Guy's character: the superior cosmopolitan. The price he pays for his over-identification with globalisation is felt at a very personal level: 'Guy Swift's personal relationship to the future . . . he felt it was physically connected to him, as if through some unexplained mechanism futurity was feeding back into his body: an alien fibrillation, a flutter of potential' (Kunzru 21). His company name, *Tomorrow*, acts as a blanket statement of his own life motto that is in line with the elitist cosmopolitanism that is challenged by Arjun's position. Tomorrow is about "convincing people to channel their emotions, relationships and sense of self through the purchase of products and services" (Kunzru 122). Contrary to the vivacity and devastating impact of Arjun's virus, which is endowed with a counteractive possibility towards the unequal power relationships in the West, the business run by Guy Swift seems to be affirming the agenda of global capitalist order, embracing the difference of individuals to the extent that they are profitable sources.

Guy's work for PEBA (Common European Border Authority) signifies the national-imperialist outlook to which he subscribes. He characterizes it as "Club Europe-the world's VIP room" (Kunzru 257). The PEBA project is about "offer[ing] the opportunity to brand the entire combined European customs and immigration regime. Logos, uniforms, the presentation of a whole continent's border police" (Kunzru 229). Guy's work highlights two things. Firstly, it underlines the increasingly transparent quality of contemporary European Union politics as functioning through exclusion. It draws attention to fact that Europe is oblivious to the cosmopolitan ideals that underscore the mutual embededness and

interdependency of diverse cultures. Secondly, it emphasises that Europe becomes another

business opportunity for Guy's personal super-globalist politics, informed not by attempts to

transform and redesign the global body politic, but by refitting it with glamorous attire.

Contrasts are also evident in the relationships of the two protagonists with their

lovers. Arjun's virus is called the "Leela virus," named after the Bollywood superstar Leela

Zahir. Before getting introduced to Leela Zahir in the flesh, readers are first acquainted with

the image of her "dancing in jerky quicktime in a pop-up window" (Kunzru 3). This

appearance is an allusion to the "Virtual World Syndrome," which values representation

above everything else. The readers later get to know Leela Zahir in person while shooting her

latest movie in England shortly after Arjun's release of the virus or, more precisely, right

after it becomes a Frankensteinian monster outreaching the grasp of its creator:

> Experts have estimated her damage to global business at almost 50 billion dollars, mostly in human and machine downtime, but financial calculation doesn't capture the chaos of those days. During Leela's brief period of misrule, normality was completely overturned. Lines of idle brokers chewed their nails in front of frozen screens. Network nodes winked out of existence like so many extinguished stars. For a few weeks she danced her way around the world, and disaster, like an overweight suburbanite in front of a workout video, followed every step. (Kunzru 4)

The Leela virus veers out of control although it has advantages for Leela's career: it promotes

Bollywood cinema and Leela's celebrity. More important is what the virus symbolizes in the

eyes of the West and how it may contribute to a critically cosmopolitan vision. Here is a

snapshot of a cataclysmically "average" day in the "third world" of the 21st century the day

before Leela hits the computer systems of the "First World":

> Around the world, Thursday the twelfth of June was a quiet day. Bombs went off in Jakarta, Jenin and Tashkent. An old single-hulled sank off Manila, releasing its load of crude oil into the South China Sea. In Malawi a man was diagnosed with a previously unknown retroviral infection. At London's Heathrow Airport, two Ghanean boys were found frozen to death in the undercarriage of a Boeing 747. (Kunzru 127)

A series of routinely devastating events in the "third world" lack the power to cause the barest disturbance of a "quiet day" in the "first world." Thus, the quotation offers a brief outline of 21st century life for the world's disadvantaged populations and tackles the inequalities of "world" citizenship. In the midst of this disparity, the novel asserts, "Leela was in the system like a quintessence, a breath" (Kunzru 157). The virus has the power to import the Third World into the First World, to bring it home and to impose its own brand of cosmopolitan citizenship on those who have been completely indifferent to its concerns. With these implications, the virus assumes the potential of cosmopolitan subalternity. In other words, postcolonial nationalism remains essential to the struggle against global capitalism. In contrast to the cosmopolitan potential of the relationship between Arjun and Leela, Guy's relationship to his girlfriend Gabriella Caro seems a failed romance:

> Guy was sitting next to Gabriella in a booth at Sake-Souk, a newly opened Mayfair restaurant. Whenever a waiter came by, he was witty and she dispensed one of her vivid smiles, but as soon as they felt they were not being observed they lapsed into uneasy silence, chewing their way through the chef's Japanese-Lebanese fusion food as if oblivious to its trendsetting collisions of taste and presentation. (Kunzru 71)

Enjoying the privilege of eating in a high quality restaurant, the relationship between them is portrayed as a mere convenience. Guy is committed to the world of commerce. In one of his client meetings, he argues, "Humans are social... We need relationships. A brand is the perfect way to come together... the more we love [the brand], the more powerful it gets" (Kunzru 21). There is little difference between loving a brand and loving a person. High on drink and drugs, one night Guy has a sexual encounter with an Eastern prostitute named Irina and wakes up hours later to find that his wallet and identity papers have been stolen. Gabriella, too, sleeps with a Bollywood star towards the end of the novel.

As his passport is stolen, Guy is confused with an illegal migrant from Albania, finding himself at the other end of PEBA's aggressive immigration laws as he is rapidly

deported. After he returns to England, he becomes a different man, choosing to live in rural England and running a pottery. When journalists catch up with him in his hut, he says that he is recovering from "geopathic stress" and "subscribes to the theory that London (and to a lesser extent other cities) causes an immense distortion which inflicts physical and psychological suffering on the people forced to live inside it" (Kunzru 277). Arjun, meanwhile, is searched by the US police authorities as a wanted man and avoids being tracked down by vanishing into thin air, the details of which remain unexplained.

Towards the final pages of *Transmission*, the novel implies that Leela, who has run away from her celebrity life style, joins Arjun. The readers get a glimpse of Leela "begging in the streets of Jakarta, and talking on the phone in the back of New York cabs," and of Arjun "spotted one day at an anti-globalisation demo in Paris and the next coming onto the pitch in a hockey match in Gujarat" (Kunzru 297). They are conscious of their presence in this world, and yet they are able to live "de-globalised" lives, which Roland Robertson deems as "attempts to undo the compression of the world" (10). While they are able to retain their elusiveness, Arjun and Leela can still take in humanity in its entirety.

As I have tried to argue, the term cosmopolitanism needs to be reimagined within the context of globalisation, with a focus on the role played by Americanisation. *Transmission* precisely addresses the two opposing tendencies in the debate on cosmopolitanism: one that defines cosmopolitanism with it implications of rootlessness and privilege; the other one accusing the former as US-centred, complicit with capitalism and insensitive to indigenous issues. The novel explicates the potentials of a vision of cosmopolitanism that is from the Third World. It does so through the comparison of its two main characters Guy and Arjun as well as in their personal relationships.

Conclusion

In this final chapter, I have aimed to unravel the potential of Anglo-Indian and Turkish contemporary novels for imagining the world with a critically invested cosmopolitan vision by way of a comparative analysis of Elif Shafak's *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* and Hari Kunzru's *Transmission*. Without overlooking the pervasive reality of globalisation, I have focused on revealing the inequalities it engenders via the characters of the novels. I have specifically drawn attention to the potential of cosmopolitan vision. Because it is generally considered as a class privilege, cosmopolitanism should be analysed with a critical eye. This criticism supports the view involving being in this world while asserting one's locality at the same time. Only then can the class inequalities as well as the Western-oriented façade of globalisation be unravelled. *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* demonstrates both the first-world and third-world cosmopolitanisms, hinting at the liberatory potential of the latter, while emphasising its diversity. Abed and Omer are the two vernacularly inflected characters, who, despite their common points, are still distinct, considering their historically situated cosmopolitan visions. Likewise, *Transmission* reworks the two conflicting views on cosmopolitanism with its two main characters, Guy and Arjun. Recording Guy's self-identification with the global order, the novel shows with Arjun the repercussions of this dangerous desire to fully embrace globalisation: class inequality and isolation. The virus Arjun creates assumes a transgressive role, underlying the potential in the semi-peripheral vision of cosmopolitanism. Compared to Omer's vision, Arjun's conception of multiple belongings shows both similarities and differences. They both have middle-class backgrounds that shape their worldviews. Both Arjun and Omer have a critical stance towards the elitism inherent in cosmopolitanism. However, they also differ in the way they form their conceptions of cosmopolitan belongings: Omer's understanding to represent

himself other than his nation is in contrast with Arjun's virus which is more radical and innovative as moves beyond personal reflection. The way he internalises globalisation is as powerful as the way he responds to its ramifications. In the light of these observations, it is evident that the two novels represent new global subjectivities in their particularly third-world characters who manage to live in today's global order while preserving their own cultural values, thereby imagine the world anew.