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**IMIGRACE V DÍLECH T. C. BOYLA, J. KINCAIDOVÉ A
M. HAMIDA**
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**IMMIGRATION IN THE WORK OF T. C. BOYLE, J.
KINCAID, AND M. HAMID**
BACHELOR THESIS

Filip Janáč

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ABSTRACT

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This bachelor thesis deals with the topic of immigration in the books *The Tortilla Curtain*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, and *Lucy*. The aim was to compare all of these three books in terms of migration, integration, and the response towards the immigrants. The thesis includes five chapters. In the first chapter, I briefly write about the authors and the main books to give the reader essential information about them. The second chapter is about the reasons for migrating to a different country. The third chapter is about immigrant's relationship to the English language and the problem of the language barrier. In the last two chapters, I deal with immigrant's problems in a foreign country, and the treatment towards them by Americans.

Keywords: immigration, emigration, undocumented migrant, social integration, prejudice, xenophobia, the American Dream

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INTRODUCTION

Migration is a topic that appears in the news almost every day, and it affects all of our lives, directly or indirectly. People may have different opinions about immigration, but it is something that needs to be spoken about in order to eliminate the prejudice and xenophobia towards the migrants. The life of my family was also influenced by immigration, even before I was born when my grandmother emigrated from Greece to the Czech republic because of the civil war in 1946. It is also a reason why I chose this topic.

The United States was built, in part, by immigrants and according to the American Immigration Council, more than 14 percent of the nation's residents are foreign-born. On one side, documented immigrants with green cards or visas, who are in the country legally, and are authorized in the government immigration systems. On the other hand, undocumented immigrants, mainly from countries of South America. Although America has a very strict immigration policy, illegal immigration is a big problem in the US, which leveled a little bit off after the economic crisis in 2008, when many illegal immigrants left the country and returned back home.

For this bachelor thesis, I picked three books about immigrant protagonists. All of those characters are from a different country, ethnicity, and age. Although their nationalities differ, their host country is the same – the United States. In the beginning, there is a brief introduction to the authors and the books themselves. I included this chapter because the reader has to know some essential information about the book plot in order to understand the analysis in the next chapters.

In the following chapter in my bachelor thesis, I start with the important question of why people migrate. People tend to migrate for many various reasons, such as the socioeconomic crisis in their country, higher quality of living conditions, and better education. I analyze and examine the three main books in order to find out, why the immigrants left their homeland and started to live in the United States.

The third chapter of the thesis is about the immigrants' relationship to the English language. The language barrier is a difficult obstacle to overcome, especially in a foreign country. I analyze the protagonists' language skills in order to understand, how they managed to integrate into the American community.

The last two chapters are about their problems in a foreign country, and the treatment towards them caused by the Americans. I describe and analyze the behavior of the people they encounter in order to find out, how the immigrant status affects social integration.

1 AUTHOR & BOOK INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will briefly introduce the authors of the books I have chosen for the undergraduate thesis. The focus of this chapter is to inform the reader and to provide essential information about the books needed for better orientation in the whole thesis. All of these books are connected through the topic of immigration into the United States.

1.1 T. C. BOYLE – THE TORTILLA CURTAIN

Thomas Coraghessan Boyle, originally Thomas John Boyle, is an American novelist, and author of twenty-eight books. He got his Ph.D. degree from the University of Iowa, and he is a Distinguished Professor of English at the University of Southern California. (“About the Author,” n.d.) His short fiction appeared many times in American magazines, such as *The New Yorker*, *Harper’s*, *The Paris Review*, and even in *Playboy*. After writing one of his most controversial novels, *The Tortilla Curtain*, he took a deal of abuse and was even called "human garbage" on a radio show.

The Tortilla Curtain was published in 1995. Its major themes are illegal immigration, a clash between social classes, xenophobia, and chasing the American Dream. The epigraph of this book is John Steinbeck’s quotation from Chapter 18 of *The Grapes of Wrath*: “They ain’t human. A human being wouldn’t live like they do. A human being couldn’t stand it to be so dirty and miserable.” (Boyle, 1996, Epigraph) This quote fits into the whole concept of the book, as the view of the immigrants in the book is similar. *The Tortilla Curtain* also contains many words in Spanish, which makes it very interesting and authentic. On the other hand, people without any Spanish knowledge might find it difficult and unnecessary, as they have to translate the words.

The plot is about two families – on one side, illegal immigrants, Cándido and América, struggling to survive in Topanga Canyon. On the other side, Delaney and Kyra Mossbacher, a middle-class family living in a private community of Arroyo Blanco, near Los Angeles. The undocumented immigrants came to the US to chase a better life. The paths of these two families unexpectedly cross, when Delaney hits Cándido with his car. The novel switches between these four characters’ perspective, showing how the hatred, anger, and fear affect each of the characters.

1.2 MOHSIN HAMID – THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST

Mohsin Hamid is a Pakistani writer, born in Lahore. He has spent about half his life there and the rest in California, London, and New York. (“About Mohsin Hamid,” n.d.) Mohsin Hamid graduated at Princeton University and now regularly writes for *The New York Times*, the *New York Review of Books*, and *The Guardian*. He has been shortlisted two times for the Man Booker Prize (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Exit West*). (“Awards & recognitions,” n.d.)

The Reluctant Fundamentalist was firstly published in 2007 and was translated to more than 25 languages. (“Mohsin Hamid,” n.d.) Its major topics are racism, prejudice, the American Dream, and personal connection. The breaking point of the novel is the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers in New York, although it is not correct to say that the book is about 9/11. There is also a movie *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* based on the novel, which had a premiere in 2012. (IMDb.com, 2013)

The story starts before the event of 9th September 2001 and continues after. It is a monologue of a Pakistani man, Changez, who tells his story to a stranger he meets on the streets of Lahore. Changez tells him about his life in America – studying at Princeton University while working shifts to take care of himself and his family, getting a good job for Underwood Samson, and his private life. Once during his business trip abroad, the World Trade Center towers collapsed and he is not able to return back to New York. After the attack, everything changes for Changez. He begins to notice the increasing prejudice and racism in New York and his workplace. He does not feel like an American, nor like Pakistani.

1.3 JAMAICA KINCAID – LUCY

Jamaica Kincaid, originally Elaine Potter Richardson, was born in Antigua, Caribbean. She spent her childhood in Antigua and left to the US at the age of 16. She started submitting her articles and essays to *The New Yorker* in the 1970s. Her writing often documented Caribbean culture. (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2020)

The book was firstly published in 1990. *Lucy* has an autobiographical basis like most of Kincaid’s writings and can be placed in the Caribbean’s postcolonial literary movement.

The main theme of this novel is the mother-daughter relationship, which is probably the reason for leaving her home.

Lucy is a teenager from the West Indies, who comes to the US to work as an au pair for a middle-class family with four daughters and to study a nursing school. After arriving, she starts to experience new things like a refrigerator or seeing snow for the first time. She has no contact with her family because she has not opened any letters from her mother and is trying to unbind from her and to live independently. But as soon as she finds out her father died, she reads all of them and sends all savings home. Lucy goes through depression and after some time she quits her job as an au pair and starts working as a secretary for a photographer, truly living on her own.

2 REASONS FOR IMMIGRATION

Every year, millions of people decide to leave their native country in order to emigrate to a foreign country. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, more than 24 million immigrants, both documented and undocumented, from all around the world came to the US in 2017. In 2015, immigrants from Mexico took second place in migrating to the US and the lowest number of immigrants came from the Middle East. (Maria Pimienti, 2019)

People migrate because of many different reasons. Some immigrants choose to leave their country with the intention of seeking higher wages, educational opportunities, and higher living standards. The next reasons people usually migrate are the political situation, reunion with their family, or natural disasters.

According to Woldeab (2019), there are four most common types of migration categorized by the International Organization for Migration. Labor migration is going to a foreign country for employment. The second type, forced migration or displacement, can be defined as an unwilling migration of people in order to flee their home due to a danger of natural or human-made disasters, and military conflict or violence. Human trafficking and modern slavery is the third common type of migration. It is a transport of people across the border for the purpose of sexual use and forced employment. The last type of migration is environmental migration. People are forced to leave their home region due to long-term, or sudden environmental changes, such as drought, sea-level rise, and lack of water.

Many aliens are also moving to the US because it is known as the Land of Opportunity. *The American Dream* is a concept that is well-known all around the world. In the Cambridge Dictionary, it is defined as “the belief that everyone in the US has the chance to be successful and happy if they work hard”. (“the American Dream,” n.d.) In other words, it does not matter if you were born into a rich or poor family, what really matters is how much you want to succeed. The term is known almost for a century now, but its roots can be found even in the Declaration of Independence, which states that everybody is born equal with “certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.” (National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.) In a society built on these principles, everyone can live life to its fullest as they want. The US also grew as a nation of immigrants, where being an American citizen did not require American parents.

2.1 THE TORTILLA CURTAIN

When it comes to Mexican immigrants, the main reason why they want to cross the border to the US is the perspective of better living conditions in general. According to NCLS research in 2015, Mexico takes second place in immigration to the US with more than 11.5 million people going north. In 2016, approximately 6.3 million undocumented immigrants from Mexico were estimated to reside in the US, which is the greatest number of all countries. The “generalized increase in violence in Mexico is given as a reason for canceling the idea of a permanent return,” (Alarcón et al., 2016, p. 159) which means that the number of immigrants in the US will not be lower.

The American Dream in the book is represented by the Mossbacher family. Their upper-middle-class life in Los Angeles, in the closed community of Arroyo Blanco, expresses the desires of Mexican immigrants coming north. The wall around the community can also serve as the obstacles between the American Dream and struggling immigrants.

As I have mentioned above, the immigrants fleeing from Mexico cross the northern borders for a better life. Some of them can manage it, some of them are caught by *La Migra*. The Mexican couple, Cándido and América, crossed the border for the same reason as any other of their comrade. They believed in the American Dream.

The first mention of the American Dream is after the accident when Delaney hits Cándido with his car and injures him. Cándido is unable to look for work because of his injuries and his wife wants to take fate into her own hands and go to find a job at the labor exchange. Despite Cándido’s injury, he claims he can take care of his wife by himself. But the reality is different. América forbids his effort to go to the exchange himself and orders him to rest at least one more day.

“I want one of those houses,” she said. “A clean white one made out of lumber that smells like the mountains, with a gas range and a refrigerator, and maybe a little yard so you can plant a garden and make a place for the chickens. That's what you promised me, didn't you?” (Boyle, 1996, pp. 28, 29)

It is the first mention of their expectations from a different life. A life out of Tepoztlán. All people in Mexico and the Indian countries to the south want it. They want at least four walls and a roof, no palaces. The passage continues with Cándido thinking about all the

things he promised to her – vacuum cleaner, washing machine, and all the glitter of the North. América then leaves straight to the fortune. This passage perfectly describes the dedication of the couple to have a better life. It is unbelievable how people are willing to risk their lives by crossing the borders, leaving their lives behind, and trying to reach things, which are common for us.

A step forward fulfilling their dreams, thus the reason leaving Mexico is renting an apartment. The Mexican couple manages to save enough money for cheap living. As they go, América desires about better life come more clear: “All she wanted was to belong in one of those houses, any of them, even for a night.” (Boyle, 1996, p. 233) She wants to feel safe, to have a private spot for themselves – to feel home. Unfortunately, they get robbed and have to dig through the trash can to have at least something to eat, falling to their lowest they have ever been. Yet at their lowest, Cándido still believes in a better life for him, his wife and coming child and he would do anything to give them the opportunity for it. On the other hand, América starts to question their actions and thinks about going back to her family. It escalates to the point when she blames him for making her leave Mexico: “It was all his fault, everything.” (Boyle, 1996, p. 272)

To sum it all up, the Hispanic immigrants, not only the Mexican couple, leave their homelands mainly as a result of their faith in the American Dream. They believe that hard work and a little bit of luck can assure higher living standards in the new country. Sadly, it is in most cases just the opposite.

2.2 THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST

One of the common reasons for immigration is education. Many people from all around the world travel to the US to study at the most prestigious universities and colleges. It is also the reason why Changez left Lahore. Thanks to his scholarship, he is able to attend one of the most respected universities in the US, Princeton University in New Jersey. For a young man from Pakistan, it may be the biggest opportunity that can happen to him, so he takes the chance. Although he has to help his family in Lahore by working multiple jobs, he gets excellent grades and graduates there, which helps him to accomplish the American Dream. His journey to fulfill the Dream continues after graduating the Princeton. His reasons to stay in the US are no longer educational, but economical. Changez applies for a job by a

firm called Underwood Samson. This company can be considered as Changez's version of the American Dream. In order to be rewarded, he has to work hard, which is not a problem for him and he becomes one of the best analysts of the firm and is able to take care of himself, as well as his family. "Your performance is what counts, as far as I'm concerned, and you're the best analyst in your class by a long way." (Hamid, 2018, p. 156) At this point, Changez is on a good way to make the Dream come true because of the hard work he has done.

To sum up, Changez left Pakistan in order to obtain a better education than he would have got in Lahore and stayed abroad probably for better financial remuneration.

2.3 LUCY

As mentioned above, people tend to migrate in order to reunion with their families. In the case of Jamaica Kincaid's Lucy, it is the complete opposite. It might be said, that Lucy goes to America to become independent of her mother or to become less influenced by her and to escape from her past.

Lucy visits nursery school at night in the US. Her mother spurred her to do so. She wanted her to be a nurse because of one friend of hers. "Oh, I can just see you in your nurse's uniform. I shall be very proud of you." (Kincaid, 2007, p. 93) Sadly, it is not written if her mother commanded her to study in America, or if it was only Lucy's decision to leave her home. It is clear, she visits the nursing school to make her mother satisfied, and not on her own will. She then drops out of the school, which only confirms it was her mother's desire.

Their relationship is not easy – Lucy resents her mother's letters because of hatred she feels towards her. (Kincaid, 2007, p. 20) Thanks to the letters, we know how her mother ruins Lucy's experiences into fear and therefore she hates her mother depressing existence in her life. For example, Lucy's first ride on the underground train, when her mother tells her that on that very same train, there was a homicide of an immigrant girl. Her mother always expects the worst and wants to force these pessimistic thoughts to Lucy. "I had come to feel that my mother's love for me was designed solely to make me into an echo of her." (Kincaid, 2007, p. 36) Lucy wants to escape her mother's grip, to be free, and to form her own character. She even says that she rather be dead than an echo of someone.

As can be seen, Lucy did not leave Antigua in order to fulfill her dream – to be independent. She left the Caribbean to escape the negative influence of her mother and become who she really is.

3 RELATIONSHIP TO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

English is one of the most spoken languages in the world with more than 350 million native speakers. It has many varieties, dialects, and accents. According to Joppke (1999), the language is constantly refurbished by new arrivals. (p. 150) The language, in general, is compulsory for any kind of communication. Mastery of the language of the receiving society is one of the fundamental aspects of immigrants' process of integration. (Alarcón et al., 2016) If people do not speak the country's language they are in, it may create a barrier. A language barrier can be a crucial problem for immigrants, especially those who are poorly educated and older. Lack of language knowledge can create many misinterpretations, and misunderstandings between the receiver and the speaker, which can be in some situations very enormous.

The language barrier is one of the biggest problems for migrants when coming to a new country. Not knowing a language would cause problems at the borders, finding a job, and even establishing new relationships with people living in the country. According to Volkan (2017), learning a new language is a major problem, especially for adult immigrants. (p. 7) Many immigrants are taking English classes but it is difficult to find time to learn between jobs and taking care of their children.

In this chapter, I would like to focus on the relationship between immigrants in the book, and the language in the US, English.

3.1 THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST & LUCY

None of these characters in the books suffered from a language barrier, which made their lives easier. It was also crucial for their studies and work.

Changez, the main character of the book by Mohsin Hamid comes from Pakistan, where is a variety of languages spoken. The official languages of Pakistan are Urdu and English. Changez even gets a scholarship on a very prestigious university, Princeton, and graduates there as one of the best students of the class, which allows him to work for Underwood Samson.

Lucy comes from Antigua and Barbuda, which is a state in the Caribbean with the official language of English. There must, of course, be some differences between the American

English and the Caribbean, but the facts that she never complains in the book, and she visits the nursery school, show us that she has no problems in the area of language.

The fact, that the main characters of those books spoke English even before they came to North America helped them to integrate into American society and caused fewer problems than in *The Tortilla Curtain*.

3.2 THE TORTILLA CURTAIN

Throughout the book, there are many words in Spanish to set out the atmosphere, which might be sometimes a little bit confusing, if you cannot speak Spanish. It is a great way to show, how much the language actually matters, and how difficult it must be if you do not understand.

Hispanic migrants often fight with the language, even with English. It might be caused by their low level of education or unwillingness to learn a second language. Undocumented immigrants often suffer from the language barrier because they do not have to pass any exams or forms, which allow them to apply for a visa or even citizenship. The fact, they are not able to communicate with people in a foreign country creates a wide spectrum of obstacles, which are undoubtedly difficult to pass. As a result of the barrier, many of the migrants might end up unemployed, broke, and homeless.

The main Mexican characters of the story, Cándido, and América, do not speak English. They know some of the words but it is insufficient to communicate and have a good life in the US. The first moment the reader gets to know about Cándido's inability to speak English is in the very first passage when he gets hit with a car. Delaney tries to speak in English and even in French but none of those languages is known to Cándido. When asked, if he needs a doctor, he answers "No quiero un matasanos, no lo necesito," (Boyle, 1996, p. 8) which basically means that he wants no quack because he does not need him. Unfortunately, this answer was not what Delaney expected and because he knows no Spanish, he keeps asking in English. The first word in English Cándido is able to say is *Monee*, which is not correct but finally, Delaney understands, what the poor Mexican wants as retribution for the hit.

The biggest problem for this Mexican couple is to find a job. And the language barrier does not help either. They struggle to get a job at labor exchange, where many immigrants

come to look for work. One day, América is almost cut out of a job because of English speaking woman, Mary. When a fat, rich-looking man comes to the exchange, looking for workers, he wants to take América to work for him. But there is a problem that América does not know English. “She doesn’t speak any English – what do you want with her?” (Boyle, 1996, p. 84) It almost looks like that when América is finally given a chance, she might lose it because of the language barrier, and because of Mary. Nevertheless, thanks to the leader of the labor exchange and the rule ‘first come, first served’, she gets the job. That situation shows, how important English is, especially for undocumented immigrants looking for a job.

América gets the same job even the day after. Cleaning statue Buddhas. Soon, she realizes her hands and nostrils are burning because of the chemicals she uses. On top of that, her employer forgot to give her gloves. After her hands started burning, she goes to ask for a pair of gloves. “Guantes. Please. Para las manos.” (Boyle, 1996, p. 134) Again, we can see that the communication from the immigrant’s side is not good and the employer has a rough time understanding, what she wants. Fortunately, thanks to non-verbal communication, she is able to show him, what she needs.

Two American teenagers leave sign painted on the rock after destroying América’s and Cándido’s campsite in Topanga Canyon. It says *BEANERS DIE*. Although Cándido does not know what the words mean, he cannot miss the idea, what it is supposed to mean.

As stated above, learning a foreign language as an adult is a major problem for immigrants. Most of the struggles of the Mexican couple are caused by the language barrier, which prevents them from communicating with Americans. It also blocks the integration to the host’s country culture and traditions.

4 PROBLEMS IN FOREIGN COUNTRY

Migration is not completely risk-free because immigrants have to face various problems after migrating to a different country. As I have written in the previous chapter, learning a new language is one of the problems. With the language comes a cultural barrier. Cultural barriers transcend every situation of an immigrant's life. Because of the differences in cultures, many people are not able to understand each other's traditions and customs.

Securing work is also one of the obstacles in an immigrant's life. Most of the immigrants are happy to take whatever job is available and slowly try to reach their dreams, but finding a job as a non-native is incredibly difficult. Additionally, refugees and immigrants are often victims of discrimination in the workplace by other employees, but also employers.

Acquiring housing is also an important part of living in a foreign country. With low-paying jobs, which immigrants often have, it is really difficult to afford a living. Because of that, many immigrant families and friends tend to live together, which may create a stressful and noisy environment that is bad for resting and educating.

Another problem for immigrants, especially the undocumented, is accessing services. Undocumented immigrants are afraid of being deported and they avoid for example seeing a doctor. Those, who are in the country legally have often problems with the language barrier, which may cause misunderstanding with law enforcement professionals and even doctors might misdiagnose sick patients for the same reason.

Immigrants and refugees also have to obey the immigration policy of the state, which are regulations, court decisions, and immigration legislation. Immigration policy is not only about the control of who gets in and who gets out. It is also about the immigrant integration to the society. (Baglay & Nakache, 2014, p. 65)

Another obstacle they have to often face is discrimination. Discrimination might have many forms – health, work, education, or social security. Although immigrants struggle against prejudice and job discrimination, the majority of them are not segregated by the law, as were blacks. (Yans-McLaughlin, 1990, p. 295) I will deal with the problem of treating immigrants in the next chapter of the thesis.

4.1 THE TORTILLA CURTAIN

The biggest problem for the Mexican couple is fear of deportation because they entered the country illegally. An undocumented immigrant is a person, who has no green card or a current visa, and who is at risk of deportation, which makes a highly stressful and unstable living situation. According to Baglay & Nakache (2014), individual reasons why officials may stop someone's deportation order are pregnancy, illness, or other evidence of deservingness. (p. 173) According to Immigration and Enforcement statistics, more than 267,000 immigrants were removed from the country in 2019.

We learn from the book that Cándido was already working in the US before he came there with his wife América. In those times, he made more money than his father in a lifetime and was treated like a god. (Boyle, 1996, p. 50) But the first time he reflects the encounter with the Immigration officials is when he was working as a gardener. The Immigration raided his workplace and arrested many migrants, but Cándido was able to escape and run into traffic, where two young men, who were following him, got killed. "All he could remember was the shrieking of the brakes and the blare of the horns and then the sound of all the glass in the world shattering." (Boyle, 1996, p. 173) This passage of the book is important as it shows us how long Cándido was trying to have a good life in the US.

To get to the US, the couple had to pay to a *coyote*, who is a man ferrying the Hispanic migrants across the border. Even though they gave the coyote two-thirds of their savings, he abandoned them as soon as they crossed the fence. "One minute he was there, hustling them through a gap in the fence, and the next minute he was gone, leaving them in a clump of bushes..." (Boyle, 1996, p. 59) After leaving them in the bushes, a gang of Mexicans came, robbed Cándido and even tried to rape América. Their own people. They did not manage to rape her because a border patrol flew in a helicopter. The couple tried to run, but they were unable to outrun a helicopter. Twenty minutes later, they were back on the other side of the fence.

Getting a job is very difficult for immigrants. And it is even more difficult for the undocumented because not everyone wants to hire them. América and Cándido are struggling to get jobs every time in the book, especially after the labor exchange is closed. And when they are successful and find something, they are often treated badly or work in horrible conditions. For example, América got a job – painting and polishing Buddha

statues – two days in a row, but her employer does not give her a pair of gloves, so her hands end up burning and itching from the chemicals she uses.

Securing a living is a necessary part of an immigrant's life. One day, after they manage to collect some money, they are offered a cheap living. It would mean that they will not have to stay outside in the Topanga Canyon and finally have a roof over their heads. Unfortunately, Cándido is robbed. "They got everything. Every penny." (Boyle, 1996, p. 234) They realize, there will not be any kitchen, shower, or even dinner. After this incident, Cándido has to go dumpster-diving in order to get some food.

As mentioned above, undocumented immigrants are afraid to see a doctor, because they are scared of the Immigration. After América gives birth to her daughter, Socorro, they have nothing to eat and they live in a tool shed. As time passes, they realize that the child is blind. This could have been prevented if América got proper medical treatment. Cándido even has to steal, which is what he never did, in order to survive, and because they have no food to swallow, they decide to eat a cat. "It was at that moment, as if it were preordained, that the cat reappeared, delicate, demanding, one gray foot arrested at the doorframe." (Boyle, 1996, p. 308)

To sum up, life as an undocumented immigrant is challenging and they face many problems, not to mention the terrible treatment that I will focus on in the next chapter. The fear of Immigration officials is so big, that it must be very anxious to for example seek a job.

4.2 THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST

The problems, which the main protagonist in this book has to face, have nothing to do with him immigrating to the country. Changez is in the US legally. Although it is not written if he has a green card or only visa after graduating the Princeton University. The majority of the problems come in after the terrorist attack that happened on 9th September 2001.

The biggest problem after 9/11 is racism and according to Joppke (1999), once it is there, it will never go away. (p. 152) The view of Muslims in general dramatically changed after the attack. People were assuming, that every person from the Middle-East might be a terrorist. Renda (2015) writes in her work that someone told a student she was working

with, that all Arabs were terrorists after 9/11. (p. 177) “In a 2007 poll, 9 percent of African American Muslims expressed a favorable attitude toward bin Laden’s terrorist organization, while 36 percent held a very negative view.” (d’Appollonia & Reich, 2011, p. 6) If we look at it in Changez’s point of view, it is hard to say whether he would have a favorable or negative attitude. He was somehow pleased, as he watched the towers fall. He was not pleased that many people died that day, but he “was caught up in the *symbolism* of it all, the fact that someone had so visibly brought America to her knees.” (Hamid, 2018, p. 83) He was lately concerned about his friend/lover Erica, which got him the same feelings as any other American had – worry. His feelings about that event have nothing to do with being a Muslim – at least it is not stated- but according to d’Appollonia & Reich (2011), it is also assumed, that Islam is a thread in itself, which I believe is complete nonsense because that can be said about every other religion.

Apart from racism, his other problems are finances. He has to be on financial support and even work to be able to attend the university. It is also harder for international students to get in if they apply for financial aid. The fact, that he needed the finance and was not from a rich family actually helps him in the interview at the Underwood Samson because it shows that he is “hungry, and that’s a good thing.” (Hamid, 2018, p. 10)

As Changez was studying at Princeton, he never told anyone that he has to work in order to pay for his studies and his life abroad, and even that he has a scholarship at the university. He simply cannot show in front of his peers that he is not from a rich family that pays for him because he might end up being laugh at. He has to work hard to be accepted by his fellow comrades at Princeton, and later at work. Because of not being native-born American, he never fully integrates into the American culture and society.

To summarize, Changez does not have to deal with the problems of undocumented immigrants but on the other hand, most of his problems are rooted in his ethnicity and religion that is not very popular in the US after 9/11. He also tries to look good in front of his classmates by not telling the whole truth about himself and his family.

4.3 LUCY

Lucy does not have to face the problems as any immigrant might have. She has secured housing, a job, and even her education at nursery school. It is not stated in the book

whether she has working or studying visa for her staying in the US, but she has to be in the country legally to have permission to attend a school.

Most of Lucy's problems are caused by her relationship with her mother. As stated in the previous chapter, it is the reason why she left Antigua – to become independent and leave her past behind.

Her other problems are caused by things she never experienced, such as riding an elevator, using a refrigerator, or misunderstanding of the weather. "I did not know that the sun could shine and the air remain cold; no one had ever told me." (Kincaid, 2007, p. 5) She feels homesick after the thoughts about her home, which is probably what most people would feel at the age of nineteen, thousands of kilometers far from home.

Lucy also understands the racial environment in America. On a train to her host family's summer house, she notices the line, which divides the served and the servers. She immediately realizes that the servers look like she does. "The other people sitting down to eat dinner all looked like Mariah's relatives; the people waiting on them all looked like mine." (Kincaid, 2007, p. 32) This situation causes that Lucy is not feeling very well in that train to be served by her own people.

One day, Mariah has a party, which is a great opportunity for Lucy to meet some youngsters her own age but she does not connect with them. All of the young people are wealthy and looking like models from the catalog. All of them were to the islands where Lucy comes from but they made her "ashamed to come from a place where the only thing to be said about it was "I had fun when I was there."" (Kincaid, 2007, p. 65) After that, she has a problem with integrating with them.

Another problem the teenage girl faces is her sexuality. It is described how she discovers the excitement of touch on her breasts, how she loses virginity, and many sexual experiences with both men and women. She says that having a sexual encounter does not have to involve any emotional attachments. I think that if she would have stayed in Antigua, she would not have done things like that because of her culture, or at least because of her mother. Again, finding out who she really is, even in terms of sexuality, is a process of becoming who she really is and becoming independent.

The last problem she has to face is about her best friend in America, Peggy. Her host family does not like her because she is rebellious, smokes, and uses slang. She even quits her job as an au-pair, nursing school, and moves in with Peggy and starts to study

photography. Lucy's rebellion may be caused by the hatred she feels against her mother's oppression. Her mother lined up Lucy's life for her and she wants to become independent and start a new life, far from her past.

To summarize, many of Lucy's problems are caused in her past, by her mother. Most of her problems and solutions are similar to an ordinary girl, who is going through adolescence. She wants to be a rebel like any other teenage girl would want and start new, independent life on her own.

5 TREATMENT TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS

As a result of rising migration, many people started to fear their future, not only in the US but all around the world. That could be caused by the increase of people coming to the country, fear of unknown culture, or maybe because of some unfortunate encounters with people who migrate. There is no denying that living in a foreign country may be very difficult for immigrants, both legal and illegal.

How Americans treat people who come to the country may differ a lot. Obviously, people would be happier to see documented immigrants in their neighborhood more than those who come to the country illegally. Their treatment then depends on several aspects. For example, undocumented immigrants are more often treated poorly by their employers because they realize, that the immigrants do not know, that they have the same rights to get a fair salary and be treated humanely as born Americans. The other main factors affecting the view of immigrants are the language barrier, the number of immigrants in the city, and the political situation between the countries. There are, for sure, many more circumstances that influence the view of the immigrants.

In this chapter, I will describe and try to explain the way, how Americans treat immigrants in the books.

5.1 THE TORTILLA CURTAIN

This book is a lone case of illegal immigration into the United States of America. There is a dominance of negative treatment towards the Mexican couple and Mexicans in general. T. C. Boyle uses a symbol of a coyote when he describes the view of the Mexicans in the book. The coyote symbolizes the threat posed by the immigrants to the community of Arroyo Blanco, where most of the story takes place. The second symbol, I would like to mention, is the wall around Arroyo Blanco Estates. The wall itself can be interpreted as a treatment towards the immigrants because the wall is a powerful representation of the racist fear and resentment, which is permeated through the entire book.

The first occasion of the treatment is in the very first chapter, right after a car crash, when an American – Delaney, hits a Mexican man with his car. The first thought that would come to anyone's mind would be if the man is all right. But in this case, the driver is

thinking more about his car and insurance, than the other man's well-being. This moment has nothing to do with the fact, that the other man was not a legal citizen of the US. The crucial point is when Delaney finds out that the man he hit, is Mexican. He offers him a ride to the hospital but as long as Cándido says, with his terrible English, that he only wants "Monee" (Boyle, 1996, p. 9), Delaney gives him only a twenty-dollar bill. Later, when Delaney is telling his wife what happened, he assures her, that the man will not sue him because "he was Mexican" (Boyle, 1996, p. 15). Delaney is not the only one to blame here. His wife, as soon as she hears that the man was not an American, the first thing she asked was if he called their friend, who happens to be a lawyer. This moment is crucial for the story because there is a clash of two different cultures – an American middle-class man and an illegal immigrant, who barely has something to eat and lives in a self-made shelter in Topanga Canyon. It could be said, that this was not a negative treatment because Delaney offers him help and lift to the hospital, but all that Cándido wants is just money. However, the thinking that he will not sue him for the crash because he is "just a Mexican" seems racist. Delaney probably thinks that because many illegal immigrants do not know, that they have rights for a fair trial. On the other hand, the well-known fact about illegal immigrants is that they have almost no money and they have to live in fear of getting caught by the Immigration Enforcement. That means, that even if Cándido would like to sue Delaney, he would not be able to stay in the country after the trial, even if he would win. And Delaney and his wife know it very well.

The second example of behaving against other nationalities we can find in the book is when a camp, which is located in Topanga Canyon, of the Mexican couple, gets destroyed by two teenagers. The teenagers are encouraging themselves with racist speeches, such as: "Fucking Beaners. Rip it up, man. Destroy it." (Boyle, 1996, p. 62) The word 'beaner' is in general used as a derogatory and discriminatory term for describing a person of a Hispanic origin. The fact, that the boys used this word in a conversation and even painted a slogan that says 'Beaners Die' next to the camp, shows us that they knew, who was staying at the camp. The teenagers' feelings towards the immigrants are not based on any previous experience, it simply reflects how the racism and hatred are transferred from generation to generation when people live in a place with no love of immigrants. Not to mention, how it could escalate even more when a wall around their neighborhood is built.

One evening at dinner, Delaney and his wife Kyra are discussing a problem of overwhelming by the Hispanic immigrants. "Remember I told you about all those people

gathering there on the streetcorners—day laborers?” (Boyle, 1996, p. 184) Kyra has a problem with the gathering of Mexicans by the 7-Eleven store which happens to be next to the labor exchange, where the immigrants come to ask for work. She tries to have them banned from the streetcorner mainly because she wants to sell some properties there and the Mexicans are lowering the price of that area. She says that she is not proud of it and it would not matter if there is a lower number of them – ten is okay, but when there are sixty people, they are stretched out up and down the block. She collaborated with her business partner and her broker, who helped to remove the gatherings of the laborers. In this situation, Delaney was thinking about the Constitution. He thinks that it is their inalienable right to gather whether they are illegal immigrants or not. To defend herself, Kyra talks about the Mexicans overwhelming “schools, welfare, the prisons and now the streets” (Boyle, 1996, p. 185). Although overwhelming of streets by anyone can be a problem, the Declaration of Independence says that all men are created equal – that means it does not matter whether the immigrants standing by the 7-11 were in the country legally or illegally because they had the same right to gather as anyone else does. After all, there is an inalienable right to liberty. There is not mentioned what the broker Sid Wasserman had to do to make the streets deserted, but it is for sure against the fundamental right of liberty, if we assume they were just standing there waiting for a job offers and not violating the law.

The biggest problem in the treatment of immigrants is that people usually think, it is the immigrant's fault and they are to blame. In the book, the Americans always blame Mexicans for their failures and misfortunes. On the other hand, the Mexicans just say fate or something is not standing by them. There is more than one moment, where the Mexicans are blamed for something and it is not their fault. For example, when Delaney's car gets stolen, he immediately thinks, without any proof, that it must be a Mexican, who has stolen the car.

He tried to dredge up all he'd heard and read about car thieves, about chop shops, counterfeit, serial numbers and theft to order, and he tried to picture the perpetrators out there in broad daylight with hundreds of people driving obliviously by, but all he could see was the bruised face and blunted eyes of his Mexican. (Boyle, 1996, p. 120)

He thinks that it must be one of the Mexicans because they are poor and they are more likely to steal a car to earn some money. It is obviously discrimination against the Hispanic

minority. The prejudice against them even continues, when a Mexican guy is seen carrying a white sack and is accused of stealing. Again, with no proof. The next form of prejudice is when the gate to Arroyo Blanco, a neighborhood where the Americans live, is covered with graffiti. Again, the first ones to blame were the Mexicans, not to mention the lack of proof. But the biggest form of prejudice against the Mexican immigrants is when the Topanga Canyon is on fire. The Americans living near the Canyon immediately think that it must have been a Mexican, who ignited it because some of them saw some of them earlier in that area. "Fucking wetbacks," Jack growled. "I lay you odds they started this thing, smoking pot down there, cooking their fucking beans out in the woods." (Boyle, 1996, p. 286) This accusation led to a flood of racial slurs and the police handcuffing two Mexicans, who were in the wrong place at the wrong time. They do not even give them the benefit of the doubt and they accuse them of starting the fire, which turns out to be crucial for the two Hispanic men and they end up being dragged away by the police and probably being sent back to Mexico by the *La Migra*.

As I have mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, many employers are treating immigrants poorly, even when they should have the same rights as native-born Americans. América, the wife of Cándido, gets a job after a week in labor exchange. She oughts to work six hours for 25\$, but the working hours are way longer. The differences in behavior towards whites and other races are shown, when América's colleague gets more money for the same working hours, even though that América did almost all of the work. "Candelario Pérez had said twenty-five dollars, but maybe Mary was getting thirty or thirty-five, plus the extra two hours, because she was white, because she spoke English and wore a ring through her nose." (Boyle, 1996, p. 96) Later that day, when her boss is driving her back to the labor exchange, he puts his hand on América's thigh and then he kicks her out of the car and cheats her out of the extra money for the work she has done. This could be considered as sexual harassment and labor discrimination but again, the employer knew, that no one would do anything about it because she was just a Mexican woman.

Not to mention only the bad things that were done to the Mexicans, there was also the welcoming side of the US pictured in the book. One part of the side was a character called Señor Willis. This man is the only one, who gives Cándido a construction job after the closing of labor exchange. He gives him a high pay rate, 8\$. Even though Señor Willis has a drinking problem, he is very kind to him and all of the immigrants, and even tries to speak Spanish and not only yell in English. Thanks to him, Cándido is able to build up

some savings. Here we can see that even an old man with an alcohol problem can be a life-changing character for someone who desperately needs help to survive.

The other part of the good side in the book happens on Thanksgiving or *El Tenksgeevvee*, when two punk-looking guys give Cándido a turkey for free. Even though they got it for free themselves because they paid more than 50\$ in a supermarket, they dedicated it to the Mexican man – mainly because they do not know how to cook a turkey and it won't be possible to cook it in a microwave. They are told by the cashier that it is permitted to give the turkey to someone else, so they simply take it for themselves and give it to Cándido right after he pays for his purchase. These two men clearly fight against the societal norms we may see in the book, when they do this, even when they are told it is not how it can be done. Cándido feels shocked at first but then on the way to the canyon, he starts to feel as happy as he had ever been.

In conclusion, the dominance of negative treatment towards Mexican immigrants can be found throughout the whole book. As mentioned above, people treat them in a bad way because the Los Angeles area is flooded with undocumented Hispanic migrants, and the Americans are afraid about their safety. The racism against the migrants is transferred in the Arroyo Blanco community to younger generations, which also causes the bad behavior of the teenagers, and creates even more prejudice. Americans also use the immigrants as a cheap workforce even though they should have the same rights as anyone else.

5.2 THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST

Throughout the Mohsin Hamid's book occur many occasions or examples of behavior toward a Pakistani immigrant in America and other parts of the world. At the beginning of the story, he writes about the fear of beard, which is not the only symbol for wisdom but is also typical for Muslims. "Ah, I see I have alarmed you. Do not be frightened by my beard: I am a lover of America." (Hamid, 2018, p. 1) By identifying himself as a lover of America, he shows the Stranger that he means no harm and that the Stranger does not have to be prejudicial. Although it may be considered unimportant to say such a thing, after the catastrophic events that happened on 9/11, many people, especially from the US, are terrified of terrorists, which are almost always expressed with a long beard.

There were, of course, situations, where people treated Changez positively and not with any prejudice of being an immigrant from Pakistan. The best example I would say is in the first chapter when Changez wants to join a job for Underwood Samson & Company, which is a small firm that estimates the profit of businesses around the world. He and a few of his Princeton classmates are chosen for an interview. At this interview, he meets a man, Jim. He is the interviewer. He asks Changez about his abilities, where he comes from, and if his friends know, that he could not have studied the Princeton without a scholarship. Series of these uncomfortable questions leads to Changez almost losing a temper and asking Jim, what are the questions about. Until this moment, the reader might think, that Jim is prejudicial too or that he wants to make fun of Changez. But then, Jim reveals that he went to Princeton too and was not from a wealthy family, so he had to work night-shifts to be able to pay for his studies. In the end, Changez gets the job thanks to his correct approach or because Jim admires his social background and sees his potential.

To display another occasion of immigrant treatment, I will stay by the fear of Islamic terrorism. It happens during a holiday in Greece when Changez and his friends are talking about their ambitions and dreams for the future. When Changez said he wants to be “a dictator of Islamic republic with nuclear capability” (Hamid, 2018, p. 33), everyone was shocked and he has to assure them that it is just a joke. He means it clearly as a joke, but nobody except Erica gets it. I would say it has something to do with the fact, that he is Pakistani because if someone else made that joke, everyone would get it and would be laughing out loud. His friends are probably trapped with the stereotypes about Middle-Eastern people and that makes the joke rather terrifying than funny. On the other hand, maybe they did not laugh because they did not get the joke. After all, the saying about dark humor is that it is like food. Not everybody gets it.

The best example of negative treatment towards a Middle-Eastern immigrant is in the fifth chapter, after a few days after the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers. Changez and his colleagues are in Manila, Philippines, on a business trip. As Changez watches the news about the Trade Center collapse, he smiles. “Yes, despicable as it may sound, my initial reaction was to be remarkably pleased.” (Hamid, 2018, p. 83) He says that he was caught up in the symbolism of bringing America to her knees. (Hamid, 2018, p. 83) In front of his colleagues, he pretends the same shock as them. After the attack, they are unable to return to New York because many flights have been canceled. At the airport, Changez is separated from his colleagues and is escorted by armed guards into a secure room. He is

then forced to strip down to his underwear. It must have been a humiliating experience for him and it even caused that as a consequence of the inspection, he was the very last person, who got on the plane to the US, which is no less embarrassing than the examination of his body. As he says in the book, many of his fellow passengers were looking concerned. This horrible experience continues when they land at the New York airport. Even though he lives in the US for more than 4 years, he is separated again at the immigration. His team joined the queue for American citizens but Changez joins the queue for foreigners. After being interviewed by the officer, he is again sent for a secondary inspection. When he gets out of the examination, he finds out that his team already left the airport and he has to travel from the airport alone. Until this moment, Changez experienced only mild forms of racism in his life in America. But everything changed after the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York on the 9th of September. It may have been because of him being a Muslim and that Arabs, who committed the crime, were also Muslims. The fear created a negative stereotype and prejudice against the Islamic community, which, unfortunately, continues to this day. “A majority of Muslim Americans (53 percent) say it has become “more difficult to be a Muslim” in the United States since 9/11.” (d'Appollonia & Reich, 2011, p. 122) The Middle-East changed and the view of Muslims has not stayed the same either. “Some politicians and public figures stirred up controversy and created more anxiety by implying that all Muslims in the United States were potentially dangerous.” (Volkan, 2017, p. xii) This saying by the psychiatrist who spent most of his life bringing together clashing groups (in this case the immigrants and society) can be a piece of clear evidence, that the prejudice and fear continue to this day.

One day, Changez is approached by a man he does not know and cannot recall his appearance. The unknown man makes some mumbled noises – “akhala-malakhala” (Hamid, 2018, p. 133), probably trying to speak Arabic. Then a second man approaches and catches the first man and drags him away. The dragged man calls Changez “Fucking Arab” (Hamid, 2018, p. 134) as they leave, which is something that Changez does not like. Changez takes a tire iron from the trunk of his car and shouts at the guys to say it to his face and not to run like a coward. Fortunately, the two men leave and the whole situation is not ending with a fight. This encounter with the two strangers shows the growing prejudice, fear, and racism of America to foreigners, especially to the Middle-Eastern people. According to d'Appollonia and Reich (2011), fifteen percent of Muslim Americans say that they had a bad experience due to their ethnicity since 9/11, and have been harassed

verbally, discriminated against in the workplace, or otherwise targeted because of their religion and ethnicity. (p. 62)

I have previously mentioned the symbol of beard in a connection to Muslims and radical Islam. It occurs again, in chapter 9 when Changez comes back from Lahore where he was visiting his homeland. In the Underwood Samson, his workplace, he feels that there is not a pleasant atmosphere when he is around. It is because he has not shaved his beard. He makes it clear, that he is a foreigner, not an American. “I know only that I did not wish to blend in with the army of clean-shaven youngsters who were my coworkers, and that inside me, or multiple reasons, I was deeply angry.” (Hamid, 2018, p. 148) He gives many reasons, why he is mad – the most important, he realizes, that life in America changed him to be arrogant. Moreover, the atmosphere in the United States after 9/11 showed him that he is even now only an outsider, even though he has done everything to fit in. Regardless of graduating from a high-class university and working in a big, successful company, he is still seen as a dangerous foreigner from Middle-East. He is still being punished for the color of his skin and decides that he does not want to fit in anymore.

To sum up, the treatment towards the Pakistani immigrant was mainly positive – he got a scholarship at Princeton University, finds friends, and gets a good job. At least to the moment of the terrorist attack. After that, Changez faces prejudice almost everywhere – at the airport, in work, and even on the streets.

5.3 LUCY

There is more positive treatment towards the young Caribbean girl than the negative. It may be caused by the fact that she came to the country to work as an au pair for an upper-class family. The family she lives with and takes care of their four daughters is treating Lucy nicely, especially the mother of the family, Mariah. She serves as a maternal figure for Lucy while she is in America. There is an enormous chasm between Mariah and Lucy’s biological mother. Mariah treats her as her daughter, while the relationship with her mother is neglectful. Though she does a clearly defined role in American society, she does not see herself as an immigrant maid, but rather as a “young girl, who watches over the children and goes to school at night”. (Kincaid, 2007, p. 7)

The unpleasant experience of negative treatment is described in the very first chapter of the book. It happens after an encounter with an Afro-American maid that also works for the family. Right after meeting of maid with Lucy, the maid tells her that she does not like her because of the way of her speaking. Later, she says she does not like even the way she walks. She says that she speaks and walks just like a nun and it makes her sick to her stomach and sick with pity just to look at her. Then the maid challenges Lucy to dance, even though she knew that Lucy is not capable of dancing because she does not know how to do it right. When the maid starts dancing, Lucy does not join her and makes excuses about the music being shallow and meaningless. "From her face, I could see she had only one feeling about me: how sick to her stomach I made her." (Kincaid, 2007, p. 12) In this part of the chapter, the maid wants to claim power over Lucy through some kind of dance battle. The fact that the maid wanted to have power over Lucy, and even downgrade her self-esteem could have a racial undertone because the maid is an Afro-American, and Lucy is the Caribbean. The schism between these two races could be invisible for an outsider, but these two characters are well aware of it.

On one day, Lucy receives a letter from her mother stuffed with terrible and brutal things that happened on a subway she rides. It was from her mother, who read or heard about those things. She wrote her, that an immigrant girl probably the same or similar age as Lucy, has been murdered and "had her throat cut" (Kincaid, 2007, p. 21) on perhaps the same train she uses. Unfortunately, there is not enough evidence or details about this murder, so it is hard to say whether it was racially motivated homicide or just bad luck of the young girl. We can only guess what the reason for the murder was, whether it was because of money, jealousy, fear, or prejudice. If we assume it was racially motivated, we have another example of bad treatment of the immigrants.

There are a lot of occasions of positive treatment towards the Caribbean au pair, but in my eyes, the warmest is how Mariah treats her like she is one of her own children, which I already mentioned. "Mariah said to me, "I love you." And again she said it clearly and sincerely, without confidence or doubt." (Kincaid, 2007, pp. 26-27) Mariah says this quote when she talks about her children so that could mean that she really means it the way she says it and she thinks about Lucy as well as about her daughters. There are many more signs of Mariah's caring about Lucy but none of them is so intimate like this saying.

In short, Lucy is treated very well by the host family throughout the whole book. The hostile experience comes from the encounter with the maid, who wants to take power over Lucy, probably because of racial differences.

CONCLUSION

The “Tortilla Curtain” is the name given to the border between America and Mexico, which is used by the Hispanic immigrants to penetrate into the promised land of opportunity, the United States. In the novel, there are present two of the most common types of migration, which are mentioned in the second chapter of the thesis. We could say that labor migration is the only type occurring in the novel. But if we look at the situation in Mexico, it is generally known to be a country with a high rate of criminality and violence, which is one of the factors of the forced migration. Many of the immigrants mentioned in the book are in need, and they are seeking a job to afford better living in the right country, hoping that it would be the US. Chasing the American Dream is also important to mention as it summarizes how much the Mexicans are dedicated to fulfilling their dreams and are willing to risk everything they have to get to the US, even illegally, just to try to achieve it. The problem of integration to the host country in this book is caused mainly because of the language barrier, which does not allow the Mexicans to communicate with native-born Americans. The barrier not only causes the problems in the terms of integration, but it is almost impossible to find a job or living without speaking at least a little bit of English, which is the case in this book. And when they manage to find someone who would employ them, it is mainly for the manual working in bad conditions with a low pay rate. The language barrier is not easy to overcome due to a lack of time in the undocumented immigrant’s life because he has to worry more about food and living than overcoming it. Every undocumented migrant in the US feels the fear of deportation, and Immigration officials, not only in the book. In 2018, the Trump administration implemented a zero-tolerance policy, which means that authorities arrest and prosecute everyone who is caught crossing the southern border without authorization. Children are after the arrest held apart from their parents, which must be terrifying for them and may even cause traumas. The similarity between the book and the real world can be seen in prejudice and discrimination against immigrants. There are many situations in the book, which I mentioned in the fifth chapter, where the immigrants face discrimination, prejudice, and racism. It is also important to mention the dramatic change that Delaney Mossbacher, one of the main protagonists, is undergoing through the whole book. At the beginning of the book, he describes himself as a liberal humanist but since the car accident with the poor Mexican, we can see his racial prejudice. As the novel progresses, he becomes more and more obsessed with the immigrants and becomes paranoid racist

thinking that the Mexican man ruined his life. His point of view offers a clear image of how xenophobia and prejudice can develop in someone's mind, even without any valid reason. The prejudice, xenophobia, and racism might be then transferred to his family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues which would create only more prejudice and xenophobia.

It cannot be said that the type of migration in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is definitely labor immigration. Changez's first intention to go to the US was because of education as he got a scholarship at Princeton University, where he graduated and after that got a job. He accomplishes all of this thanks to his hard work and dedication to live his American Dream, which is portrayed as the firm where he gets the job. As stated in the novel, international students often have better scores in school, which might be caused by the motivation they have. They have to succeed in order to achieve a better life than they would have if they returned back to where they came from. In contrast with the first novel, the Pakistani protagonist has no problems with the language barrier, as English is one of the official languages in Pakistan. It certainly helps him to integrate more easily into the culture and society of the United States. On the other hand, he has problems to completely feel like an American. His peers treat him respectfully but they are aware that he is an outsider in the US. The point break of the novel is the 9/11 when Changez encounters more discrimination and prejudice than he felt before. The racism he feels turns him from a lover of America to become critical about the United States and drives him to leave his adopted country back to Pakistan. It is sad to see on the news that the racism and prejudice against people from the Middle-East and especially Muslims is still there and still controls someone's life. At the end of the book, Hamid does not reveal, who was right in their assumptions – if Changez became an anti-American terrorist, if the stranger is a spy, or neither of them is what it seems.

In the third novel, Lucy, the main reasons for immigration in the US are education and work, which means that it is also a labor type of migration. Lucy also wants to become independent from her mother and live the way she wants. She has no problems with the language as the official language of Antigua is English because it used to be a British colony. Although she integrates well with her host family, she has a problem socially integrate with a certain type of people from whom she feels soft racism – the family maid, and the youngsters at the party. On a train ride, she can feel a presence of discrimination to minorities when she realizes that servers on that train have the same ethnicity as she does.

Otherwise, she undergoes common teenage problems that are typical at her young age – discovering her sexuality, rebelling against her mother, and the lust of becoming independent.

In all three books, there is a concept of the salad bowl. It is a metaphorical model of integrating multicultural society, where people maintain their cultures and distinct qualities instead of combining the parts into a new one. All of the foreign protagonists keep their own culture at least slightly. Immigrants in those books are not completely integrated into the new society and in the case of *The Tortilla Curtain*, not even a little bit.

All in all, I would like to finish this paper with a reminder that even though all three novels are quite old by now, they are still relevant in these times as the migration crisis still takes place in the present times. It is important to talk about this topic to raise awareness about the problems the immigrants may face, such as prejudice, xenophobia, and racism. Immigration played a very important role in American history, and it is perhaps one of the greatest controversial issues of our present time.

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SUMMARY IN CZECH

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá tématem imigrace v novelách *The Tortilla Curtain*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* a *Lucy*. Cílem bylo tyto knihy porovnat a zjistit, jak a kde se tyto knihy shodují, či naopak rozbíhají, jak status imigranta ovlivňuje život ve Spojených státech a zda se migranti dokáží integrovat do cizí kultury. Bakalářská práce obsahuje pět kapitol. V první kapitole stručně prezentuji tři hlavní knihy a jejich autory, aby měl čtenář základní povědomí o rozebíraném tématu. V následující kapitole se zabývám důvody, které vedou hlavní postavy knih k imigraci. Tématem třetí kapitoly je vztah imigrantů k anglickému jazyku a jak jazyková bariéra ovlivňuje jejich život v cizí zemi. Poslední dvě kapitoly jsou věnovány problémům, kterým musí hrdinové knih čelit v knihách a jak se k imigrantům chovají rodilí Američané.