*The Reluctant fundamentalist*

Discuss structure in The Reluctant Fundamentalist to explain the function of the novel component parts. Conclude your short essay expressing your personal opinion on the novelist's choice of narrative strategy, underlining its pros and cons.

The Reluctant Fundamentalist is a novel written by Moshin Hamid in 2007.

The title “The Reluctant Fundamentalist” represents the complexity of the story. The definition of reluctant is: “unwilling and hesitant, disinclined” and fundamentalism is: “a movement or attitude stressing strict and literal adherence to a set of basic principles In that interpretation, the reluctant fundamentalist is an assimilate Muslim forced into anti-American radicalism by America itself.

The term “fundamentalism” often carries negative connotations and suggests a reactionary and radical brand of Islam. However, Hamid reclaims the term “fundamentalism” and applies it to economic institutions such as Underwood Samson, because of their focus on economic core principles.

Contrastingly, the author depicts Changez as a Muslim who is deliberately not “fundamental” in the traditional sense; he avoids alcohol, and embraces many

The story is written in a dramatic monologue, a strategy of telling a story where you have a voice speaking from the novelist’s voice, who speaks with somebody who is never identified but whose presence is recognizable. In this case the dialogue is between the protagonist, Changez (Pakistani man) and a mysterious American man in a café in Lahore. The protagonist tells his story in the United States before and after the World Trade Centre attack. This technique creates tension between two strangers and the novelist shows that they are uneasy about each other's motives and both, especially the American, jump to conclusions based on the appearance of their ethnic differences

The novel is divided into 12 parts and each part has a different function but every one is connected to the others with a central idea that bind the whole story (cultural differences, stereotypes-example: the beard of the protagonist, ...) The centre of the story is found in the chapter 5, where there is a turning point. In fact this chapter develops the function to emphasize how an event, like the Twin Towers attack, can change judgment and behaviour towards people, in this case Muslims. After this chapter all will change, also the protagonist. The first chapters have the functions to introduce the protagonist, the setting and the language-which is a formal, with some archaic and ambiguous word (chapter 1). This part introduces also other important characters, as Erica, who will be present also after the attack (chapter 2) and his family- who will shows Americans’ prejudice towards Pakistani (chapter 4); and the difference between the inhabitants of big city and inhabitants of the rest of America (chapter 3).

After the fifth chapter (6-7-8-9-10) the function is to describe the treatments of Muslims aftermath the attacks and also how the judgment and prejudice are able to change the attitude of some one. The last two chapters has the function to conclude the story of the protagonist in America. He returns to Pakistan, to work in a University, because he cannot bear more the way they treat him. The narration ends where it began, in Pakistan, therefore, we can say that the last chapter is well connected with the first and also with the title because Changez returns to his country but not of his own volition, so we can assign him the 'adjective "reluctant

The presence and disappearance of Erica link most of the chapters (chapter II,IV, VI, VIII, X and XI) and make the reader understand about a metaphor: like Erica is obsessed with her dead lover, tried to look back towards  a lost past and a lost lover, (Chris) American citizens turned back to a lost time when they dominated the world. In addition, all chapters are linked together by the prejudices of the American people about Muslim (all fundamentalists, terrorist, with a beard, ...) that facts after the fifth chapter are rendered increasingly evident.

In conclusion, I think the novelist, Moshim Hamid uses this narrative strategy to ensure that the reader remains more concentrated and empathize himself into the part, as if the protagonist was talking to him instead of the mysterious man. The reader has a different point of view of America: the Pakistani point of view. Moreover, maybe, Hamid wants to focus the attention on the dangers of racial profiling that fuels suspicion and promotes hatred, ultimately leading to violence. He taps into deep-seated frustration that surrounds minority racial groups towards the description of an example.